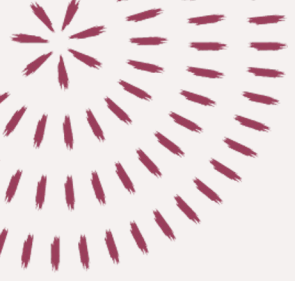


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UCML > UCFL THE UNIVERSITY COUNCIL FOR LANGUAGES

- The [University Council of Modern Languages](#) has changed its name in its 30th anniversary year
- Now **UCFL: The University Council For Languages**
- Consultation said: association of 'modern' with European languages, and colonial discourses
- 'Languages' aligns with ALL languages: spoken, signed, written, home and community, indigenous, ancient and modern (also with the British Academy's [Languages Gateway](#))
- 'Languages' is inclusive and can signal whole HE disciplinary field not just languages per se
- 'For' indicates our mission of advocacy and promotion/defence of Languages
- Need to maintain link with primary and secondary, through to HE and FE
- UCFL's remit covers several subject benchmark statements incl. LCS, Area Studies and Linguistics and covers IWLPs as well as degree programmes



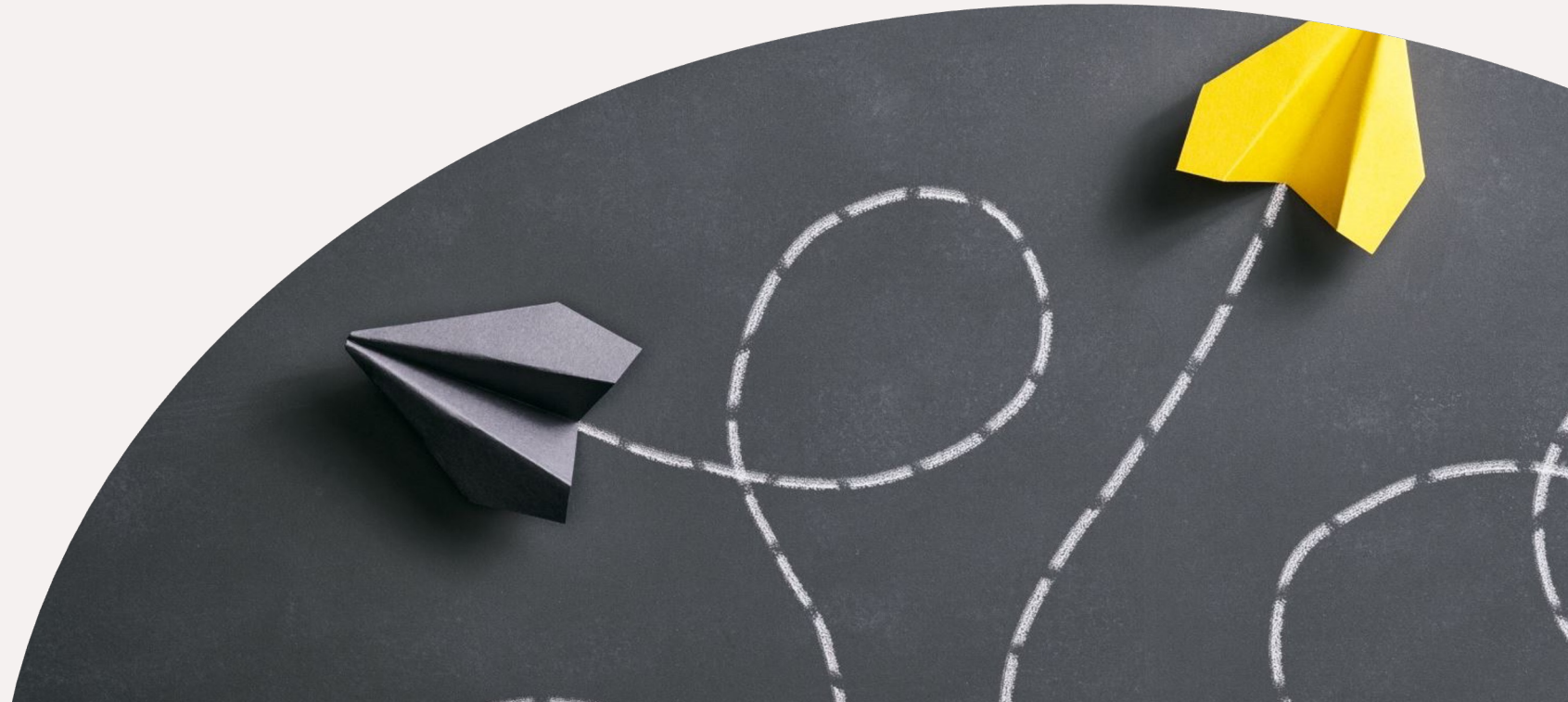
Emerging language skills gaps in the UK job market

APPG ML presentation

17 July 2023

Dr Begoña Rodríguez de Céspedes

University of Portsmouth



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Background and context

Knowledge Exchange and Innovation Project: Identifying New Roles in the Language Professions for Employability Growth (2022-2023)

Phase 1- Job opportunities for graduates

Report- Findings [Language Skills Still Needed in the UK's Job Market - The Association of Translation Companies \(atc.org.uk\)](https://www.atc.org.uk/reports/language-skills-still-needed-in-the-uk-s-job-market)

Phase 2-Plenary panel- public and private language sector stakeholders and institutions to reach recommendations and action plans

Background and context

The UK is the largest single-country market for language services in Europe (ATC, UK 2021)

If Arabic, Spanish, French and Mandarin speaking populations could communicate seamlessly with the UK, it would increase UK exports by £19 billion per year, consistent with the “Global Britain” agenda (Ayres-Bennet and Hafner, 2022)

SMEs embracing language capabilities are 30% more successful in exporting than those who do not (LO-C report ATC, 2021)

Documented decrease in language learning in the UK at all levels

Pipeline of linguists in the UK is drying up



- ❑ Callum Walker (representing APTIS and T&I Studies, University of Leeds)
- ❑ Raisa McNab (ATC, representing Language Service Providers)
- ❑ John Worne (representing CIOL)
- ❑ GCHQ
- ❑ Tanya Riordan (Leader of the PGCE MFL programmes at University of Portsmouth)
- ❑ Bernardette Holmes (representing the new NCLE)

UCFL Plenary Panel- Translation and Interpreting Studies in the UK today: Humanistic and Economic Value of the discipline and the Profession in an Automated World

Callum Walker APTIS



1. Misconceptions about Translation Studies in the age of Machine Translation and AI
2. Contextual obstacles

UG language degree recruitment and PG recruitment

T&I programmes under threat

All posing a threat to the pipeline of linguistic talent in the UK (“insufficient to meet the needs of public services and business”, CiOL 2020)

Begoña Rodríguez

Added value of T&I/language graduates

- Unlike machines, humans offer critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity which are much needed skills in the industry and the profession
- Humanities students have strong analytical and communication skills needed to combat the dehumanising effects of automation
- No machine has the power to communicate efficiently across cultures like a human does

John Worne

The logo for CIOL (Center for International Online Learning) features the letters "CIOL" in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a black rectangular background. A small red square is positioned at the bottom right corner of the black rectangle.

CIOL

1. We can't stop technology but may need to selectively oppose it
2. The human is- and will continue to be essential
3. New models will mean new opportunities
4. Much more content will (need to) be translated
5. The most skilled linguists will be in greatest demand

Raisa McNab



- AI-enabled services with specialist humans-in-the-loop
- Skills gap between basic level education and specialist requirements

Future pipeline of linguists, translators and interpreters given the current climate-what skills do we need?

- **Very strong comprehension of written and spoken foreign languages** including dealing with a) technical and professional specialisms b) dialects and accents, c) formal and informal language situations, with fluency and when under pressure, d) non-standard and unclear input materials, e) obfuscation and coded language.
- Active and passive **applied language skills**. It is not enough to be academically excellent - we need skills that can be practically applied in context and deployed in a range of challenging circumstances.
- Language learning anchored in cultural knowledge and awareness. Practical language skills and cultural/geopolitical and modern historical context will be more useful when applying for us .
- An interest in, and aptitude for technology and analysis, good written English, a strong teamworking ethic combined with an ability to take independent responsibility

Tanya Riordan



Challenges for the recruitment of EU students and retention of MFL teachers:

- an ever-changing curriculum (reset and redo curriculum)
- loss of teacher agency (give them more agency to teach)
- Visa requirements (=not enough language teachers in the UK)
- Cost of living

Bernardette Holmes, National Consortium for Languages Education (NCLE)

1. (Advanced) language skills, global mindset and cultural agility equip young people for life and work in our highly competitive labour market (domestic and global)
 2. Above is true for **professional linguists** and for those working across all sectors (value added recruit)
 3. **Interpreters and translators bring significant added value to business/diplomacy/defence/ security/social cohesion.** But this **doesn't convert to high status or high salaries** for professional linguists. Why not?
 4. Disruptive technology/AI perceived to usurp the place of professional linguists. False perception
 5. Pre/Post Brexit effects. Pre-Brexit multi nationals tended to value cultural agility more than language skills because they had access to a multilingual global workforce. Post Brexit, there is less mobility and less access. That **puts language skills at a higher premium** (or should do).
- SMEs with limited or no access to language skills tend to trade only with English speaking customers. Reluctant exporters. We need case studies and business language champions across sectors to bring the value of languages to life.

Actions and recommendations

1. Invest in language learning at schools & promote value of languages in society and the economy (including community lang)
2. Reach out to EU nationals and create schemes to make it easy to work in the UK post-Brexit (retention of current teachers and career progression)
3. Collaborate and work with different actors and stakeholders
4. Given the gap between supply and demand of linguists, the skills they bring need to be appropriately valued (salaries & status)



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