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Language as an Economic Resource

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Introduction

This research paper is a comparative study looking at the prominence and importance of languages within the local services and businesses around Greater Manchester. We have worked with numerous sources in order to effectively understand the experiences people have, and therefore the impressions that they gather, from language as an economic resource and a vehicle for employment. By doing this, we can see which languages are most desired whilst also asking who desires them. Furthermore we can ask questions about the status that multilingualism has within the workplace; if it has changed over time, and if the overall perceptions differ depending on whom we ask. Ultimately, this could show us the impact that our multilingual society has on the employment process and the corresponding relationship that is created.

Our initial fieldwork aim was to study the language provisions and services provided by The Jobcentre, an agency set up to aid people find employment whilst supplying the suitable financial maintenance for those who are entitled to it. We believed there was a gap in the Multilingual Manchester research project, which left questions to be asked about non-native speakers of English and their relationship with employment. The main approach to this research was to collect quantitative data from The Jobcentre and translation services in order to paint a statistical picture of the demand for different languages. We also aimed to ask what The Jobcentre offered for non-native speakers and what were the motives for such decisions.

There were numerous methodological factors however that prevented us from engaging with these original aims - the essential one being in relation to data. For instance, the logistical nature of gathering the data was too complicated, as the numbers we wanted were rather specific. Other more general data also was not retrievable for an abundance of reasons and this consequently left us with sparse and insufficient findings. A decision was therefore made to adapt and change our aims. This entailed altering the fundamental questions we were asking and who we were asking these questions to. As a result this forced us to focus our potential findings towards a more qualitative nature, utilising the medium of interviews for our study.

Our newly refined fieldwork method was to firstly conduct interviews with workers in the Human Resource (HR) department of various, large companies based around Manchester. This area of enquiry was chosen because these departments deal with the employment process, taking in applicant's CVs as well as advertising what businesses want in their employees. We can subsequently find out how valuable languages other than English are in a certain company and the roles in which they play - information that we can evaluate to judge the scale of language as an economic resource. We have also maintained a focus on The Jobcentre which has allowed us to gain the impressions and experiences of the staff who work there as they do work with those in both ends of the spectrum. This was done by conducting a short interview from members of staff from the Rusholme Jobcentre, one of Manchester's most ethnically diverse areas. Finally, research was done into the jobs that are advertised on the Universal Jobmatch website, a virtual forum that is used by with employers and potential employees. We searched for jobs that required multilingual aspects within their CV, excluding those jobs that would obviously need them (e.g. foreign language teachers and translators), and created a quantitative analysis on which areas of employment desired other languages the most.

Indeed, there are many methodological changes and our new goals are very different, yet we believe that this latest angle in fact proposes more interesting and relevant discoveries that are correspondingly more applicable to the society. We now have a broader perspective, taking

subjective and objective information from the people whom are seeking employment, advertising employment, as well as those amongst the process.

Findings

1. Interviews with people who work in the HR department of various companies

1.1 The role and value of multilingual attributes within the workforce

One aspect of multilingualism we wished to investigate was how valuable multilingual attributes were within a company. The responses varied from positive to indifferent, a result that was most likely because of the mixture of companies we engaged with. Nevertheless, there were some interesting findings, especially in relation to the great potential of multilingual qualities and how it can be used as a tool to expand the business. These impressions we received consequently gave us an additional insight in to the roles that other languages have.

Some of the feedback we had from interviews suggested that multilingual skills were valuable and thus played an important, specific role. Americana Ltd., a global company that runs the fashion label *Bench* explained how having multilingual staff enabled the headquarters of the company, which was based in England, to contact offices and clients outside of the UK in the most efficient way possible. Similar attitudes and reasons were expressed from AMEC, a leading engineering and consultancy company, as they desired the most effective means of communication across the various base countries. English could have been used, although they believed that speaking the national language of the corresponding base country was perhaps a superior option. The general notion we received from these two, along with others whom mentioned previous places of employment, was many global companies prefer such multilingual skills due to the international platform in which they stand on.

Another HR manager that believes multilingual attributes were valuable (yet for a slightly different reason) was the representative from Rent-a-Car. It was highlighted how it is in fact an important factor for both the business and the employees. Language skills aided the talent pipeline, enabling employees to advance within the hierarchy of a company whilst simultaneously elevating a business' overall functionality. From this we see how language can be an economic resource from two different angles in companies.

Although the value of multilingual assets were perceived as rather important for some, it is imperative that we make note on how some of the companies' HR managers did not share the same sentiments. This is not proposing that they did not see the benefits of speaking one language, as most did see the practicality. Instead the consensual notion was that it is not currently a necessity, or essential, to any business model. For instance, the global design and manufacturing company Trumeter conveyed how English was even used in training programmes which were outside of England. Furthermore, when there were employees who were fluent in other languages, it was described synonymously to a coincidental perk. Parallel views were expressed by other companies such as AJ Bell (a financial service) and Sainsbury's (one of the country's leading supermarket chains). This aspect highlights the current dominance of English across the corporate world and how the specific role of multilingualism is sometimes barely in existence.

A rather interesting discovery was that 30% of the workforce within Swizzels Matlow Ltd. was Polish, including their HR assistant. One would imagine that the recruitment of Polish speaking HR assistants would be a strategic decision, yet this was not the case. The role of the multilingual employees further up the company's hierarchy does seem to be quite influential nonetheless, with multilingual health and safety posters integrated around the factory and communication obviously aided. This ultimately shows how such a coincidental perk can be applied throughout a company when there are such large populations of multilingual workers. There is now an added administrative role and, even though the skill is not a necessity, the impressions we received was that it was valuable. Perhaps this implicates that companies are overlooking the skill? Indeed, this is only speculation although we will try to discuss this further on, once we have compared and analysed our other sources and data.

1.2 The role of multilingual attributes over time and its future

As one can see, there are conflicting opinions on the value of multilingualism from the employers' perspectives. However there was one significant pattern which emerged, the largest unanimity we had amongst all the interviews, and an indication of how the role of multilingual skills has changed over time. This is owed to the abundance of potential that multilingual attributes appear to possess. Many of the HR managers we interviewed did see the prospective advantages of such abilities, claiming how these capabilities are progressively getting more valuable as companies explore the economic horizons of other countries. HR managers from Sainsbury's, and The Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust explained how the current value of such skills may consequently change as they move overseas. We have already highlighted how Americana Ltd. and AMEC, companies who are already international, have utilised their multilingual staff. This overall shows how language can be an influential economic resource and how it is a role that can increase in importance over time. As companies expand, multilingualism allows greater cohesion between offices in different countries and this also make the exploration of foreign business ventures more realistic and achievable. Of course, English does act as a lingua franca within the world of business so multilingual attributes aren't necessarily compulsory for a company's progression, however the main impression we received was that in this context they are unquestionably valuable and there is a forthcoming role.

It is difficult because we cannot predict from a broad perspective how the role can change over time. The majority of the HR managers we spoke to did not have enough years under their belt to properly comment. However, if we look at this within the lifespan of a business, we can definitely state that the prevalent potential of multilingual attributes is a catalyst for the role's increasing significance over time.

1.3 The quantity and variety of multilingual applicants

There were many languages that were highlighted from the interviews, which in itself demonstrate the impact of our vast multicultural society. It is difficult to quantify the different languages within each company, and for this reason we are reluctant to elaborate too much. The most prominent languages however included Polish, Urdu, French, German and Punjabi. French and German appear to be used for mainly global businesses, which makes sense as these countries are quite common areas for expansion. Other languages such as Urdu, Punjab and Polish may be a result of immigration

to the UK. The census released this year did after all present these three languages as some of the most dominant in relation to speakers' whose 'main language' was not English.

2. Universal Jobmatch

The next angle we decided to investigate was the specific languages that were requested from employers, as well as what kind of roles were looking for multilingual applicants. We also felt that it was necessary to compile some quantitative data for our research. To do this, we accessed the Universal Jobmatch website, which is an online service open to any jobseeker regardless of whether they are claiming a benefit or not. One key part of this service is that it works by matching the applicants to jobs based on the CV they upload, specifically by a skills section in the application in which the jobseeker 'tags' key words that relate to their skills and so relevant jobs suited to them will appear in their search. To collect a relevant data sample, we created our own online profile in which we tagged the skill of 'bilingual' (we chose this term rather than 'multilingual' as bilingual is more of a laymans term). We also specified only for jobs from the area of Greater Manchester, to keep it relevant to the Multilingual Manchester project.

The data we accessed consisted of sorting 10 pages of job advertisements, with 25 job roles per page, totalling in 250 different jobs. However, a very large amount of these jobs were those of a foreign language teacher or translator roles and we eliminated these as the bilingual aspect was entirety of the role. Some of the jobs that appeared were also irrelevant and mentioned no multilingual skills and we did not include these either. In total, we analysed a total of 58 jobs which contained a total of 21 languages. Of these 58 jobs there were 32 different job titles, as some jobs were advertised more than once but with a different language in the specification. Some of the advertisements did not specify what languages they required and just highlighted a preference for bilingualism, and so when organising the data we coded these jobs' languages as 'multilingual' (Figure 1). Also, some roles asked for just one foreign language, whereas others asked for a few. We noted every single language that occurred, as well as the number of times that language occurred and under which of the 32 job titles.

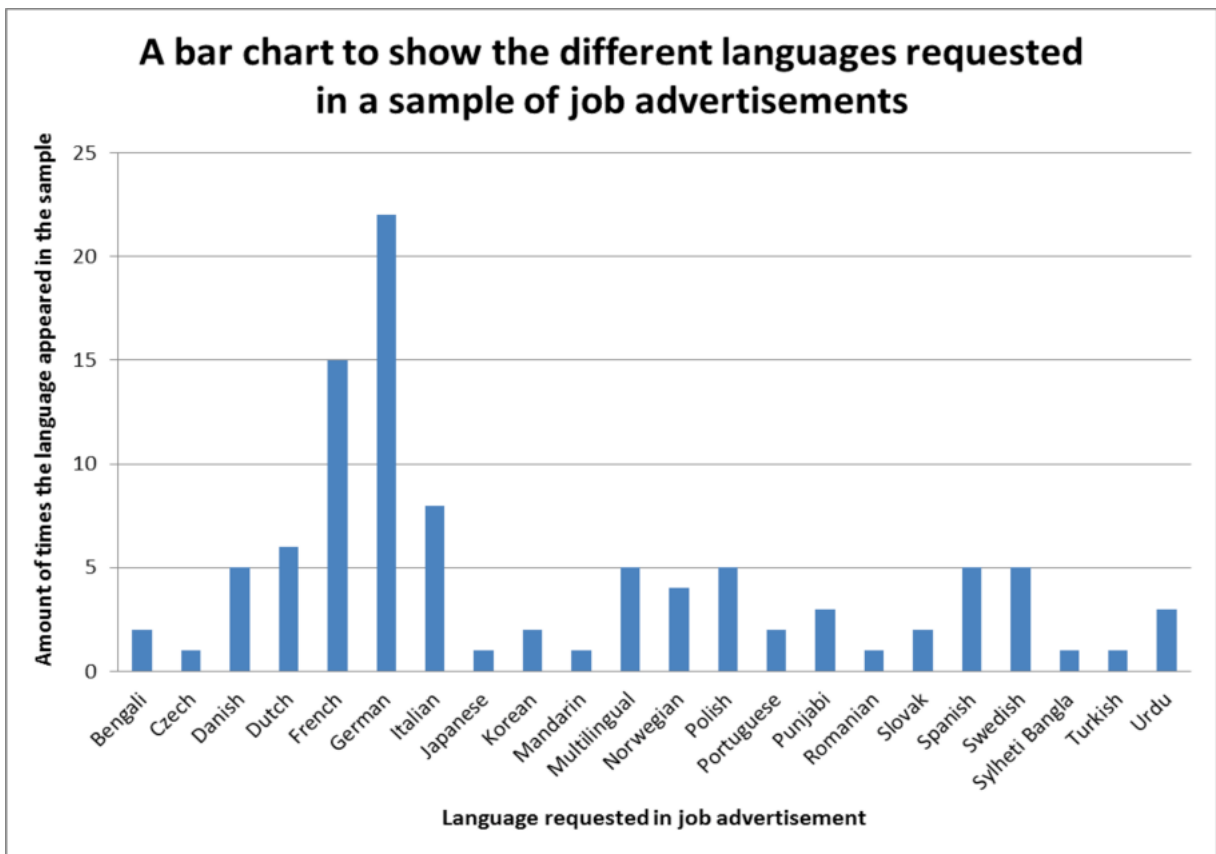


Figure 1: Which Languages are desired the most by companies on Universal Jobmatch

Bengali	Czech	Danish	Dutch	French	German
2	1	5	6	15	22
Italian	Japanese	Korean	Mandarin	Multilingual	Norwegian
8	1	2	1	5	4
Polish	Portuguese	Punjabi	Romanian	Slovak	Spanish
5	2	3	1	2	5
Swedish	Sylheti Bangla	Turkish	Urdu		
5	1	1	3		

Figure 2: Raw data: Which languages are desired the most by companies on Universal Jobmatch

Figure 1 is a bar chart detailing all of the different languages that occurred in the sample and the amount of times each language occurred. They are based on the raw numbers of the sample rather than percentages as the percentages would have been too small to show up on the graph. The table below it contains the numbers in which the graph is based on. As we can see, German is the most frequent language whilst Czech, Japanese, Mandarin, Romanian, Sylheti Bangla, and Turkish are the least frequent from the sample. However, the fact that they are least frequent in the sample should not take away from the fact that their very presence in the sample indicates at least *some* need for that language, as opposed to languages which do not appear at all e.g. Gujarati.

A pie chart to show the frequency of each job category in the bilingual job search

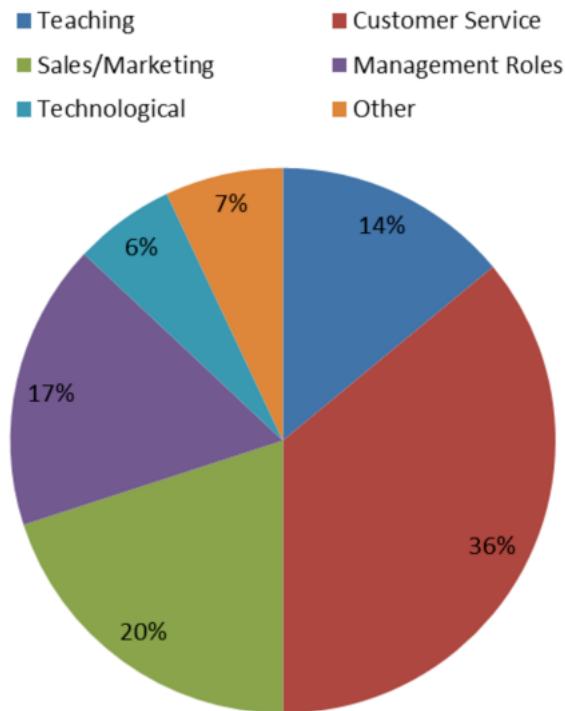


Figure 3: Sectors which require multilingual skills

Teaching	Customer Service	Sales/Marketing	Management Roles	Technological	Other
14	36	20	17	6	7

Figure 4: Raw data: Sector which require multilingual skills

Figure 3 conveys the different job categories that featured in the sample and the frequency of each one, the highest featuring being customer service roles whilst the lowest was technological roles. The table below it details the exact number of how many times each job category appeared in the sample. As displayed by the pie chart, we can see that customer service roles are the most frequent in the sample and these consisted of mostly jobs situated in a call centre environment. Technological was the least frequent, however it is important to note that although this was the case it does not necessarily mean that it is the job category with the least need for bilingual applicants in Manchester; it is in fact the category with the least frequency in the sample. The very fact that it, and all the other categories, are in the sample indicate they are the top job roles in Manchester which most require bilingual job applicants.

	Teaching	Customer Service	Sales/ Marketing	Management Roles	Technological	Other
Bengali	2					
Czech				1		
Danish		4	1			
Dutch		4	1	1		
French		5	5	3	1	1
German		6	6	7	2	1
Italian		2	2	1	2	1
Japanese		1				
Korean		2				
Mandarin	1					
Multilingual	3		1		1	
Norwegian		3	1			
Polish	1	1		2		1
Portuguese		1				
Punjabi	2			1		
Romanian	1					
Slovak	2					
Spanish		1	2	1		1
Swedish		4	1			
Sylheti Bangla		1				
Turkish		1				
Urdu						1

The above table details our exact findings i.e. which language was required in which sector. The table illustrates that German and French are the most popular languages required throughout the job titles, mainly coming under jobs roles within customer service, sales and management. Unpredictably, Dutch, Danish and Swedish numbers are also relatively high under the roles of customer service.

3. Multilingual communication in The Jobcentre

3.1 The provisions provided by The Jobcentre

The Jobcentre is aware of multilingual practices and the desire for multilingual skills in the workforce. If the customers cannot speak English then there are a variety of ways in which communication is carried out. One of the most popular is the 3-way telephone translation service 'Big Word' which is used in all the Jobcentres, whilst another is for jobseekers to bring in a family member or friend who can translate for them. The focus at the Jobcentre is mainly on assimilation – teaching jobseekers English so they can communicate in the jobs they get – rather than promotion of community languages, for practical reasons. They offer many different English language courses and make an effort to understand the needs of their ESOL (English Speakers as a Second Language) customers. They are trialling English language classes at the Jobcentres which are deemed to have the highest proportion of multilingual clients, which appears to be a success. The classes are well-attended although each jobseeker can only attend a couple each week, so the need for practice is recognised. Practise is hard for jobseekers who speak another language at home and with friends, so there are various volunteering opportunities which have been set up, both by the Jobcentre and by community-funded means.

The Jobcentre is actively working to ensure that their employees are aware of the needs of multilingual clients, by providing ESOL awareness training for staff at the Rusholme Jobcentre. The Jobcentre provides leaflets in English, with instructions on the ways to gain support for speaker of other languages written on the back. This is so that employees are aware that the leaflets are available in other languages too. The Jobcentre value the attributes of multilingual employees, but this is not something that they look for when recruiting their own staff, however they do keep an online database of employee's language skills in case any are needed when dealing with clients. Three members of staff in the Rusholme Jobcentre speak Urdu or Punjabi, which is found to be useful.

3.2 The usage of the Big Word translation service

As we have touched upon previously, the Jobcentres in Rusholme and Longsight have many dealings with multilingual clients every week. As highlighted in figure 6, usage of the Big Word telephone translation service averaged at 5.63 and 7.9 times per week respectively. Didsbury had a smaller number as expected, the telephone translation service being used 2.4 times per week.

This contrasts to the census data (appendix 1), which showed that the area around Rusholme Jobcentre had a higher proportion of bilingual speakers. However, The Jobcentre in Rusholme told us that they normally saw clients bring in a family member or close friend who spoke English to translate for them meaning the Big Word would not been in use, therefore not recorded in the data. The Jobcentre advisors also greatly value online translation services such as Google Translate when communicating with clients who cannot speak English, which highlights the importance of the internet in the current climate.

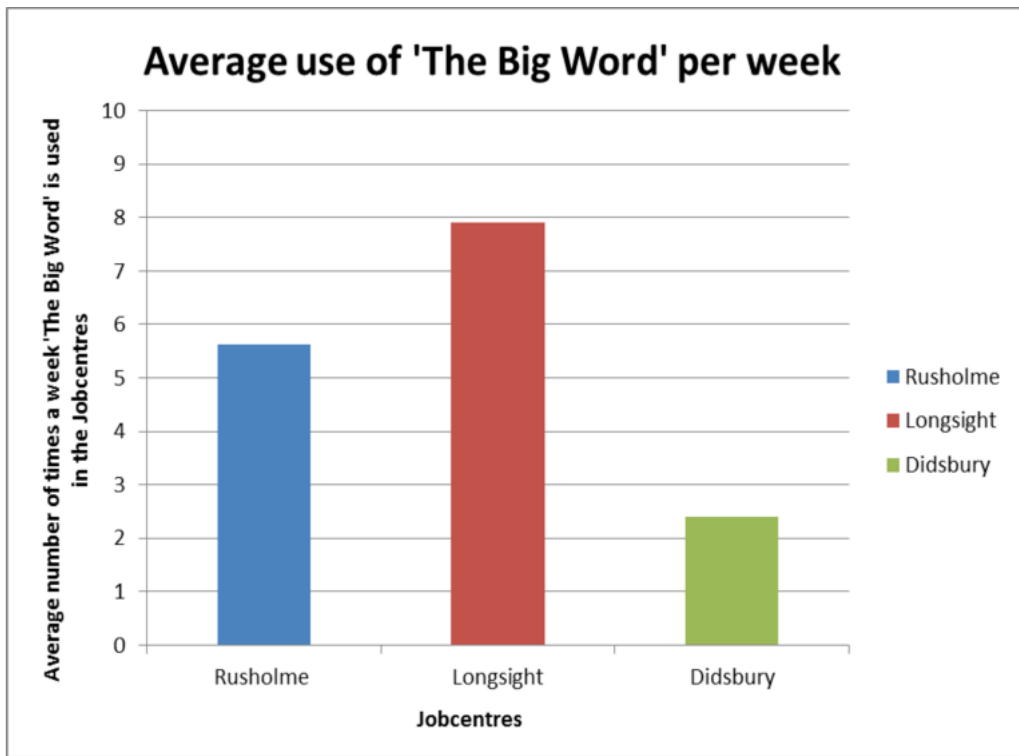


Figure 6: How often 'The Big Word' is used on average within the Jobcentres per week

Figure 7 outlines the census data that shows how many non-native English speakers there are in the 3 areas, and compares it to the amount of times the Big Word is used on average within the Jobcentres per week. The graph illustrates that there is a rather high percentage use of interpreters needed each week even compared to the large amount of non-native English speakers within the area.

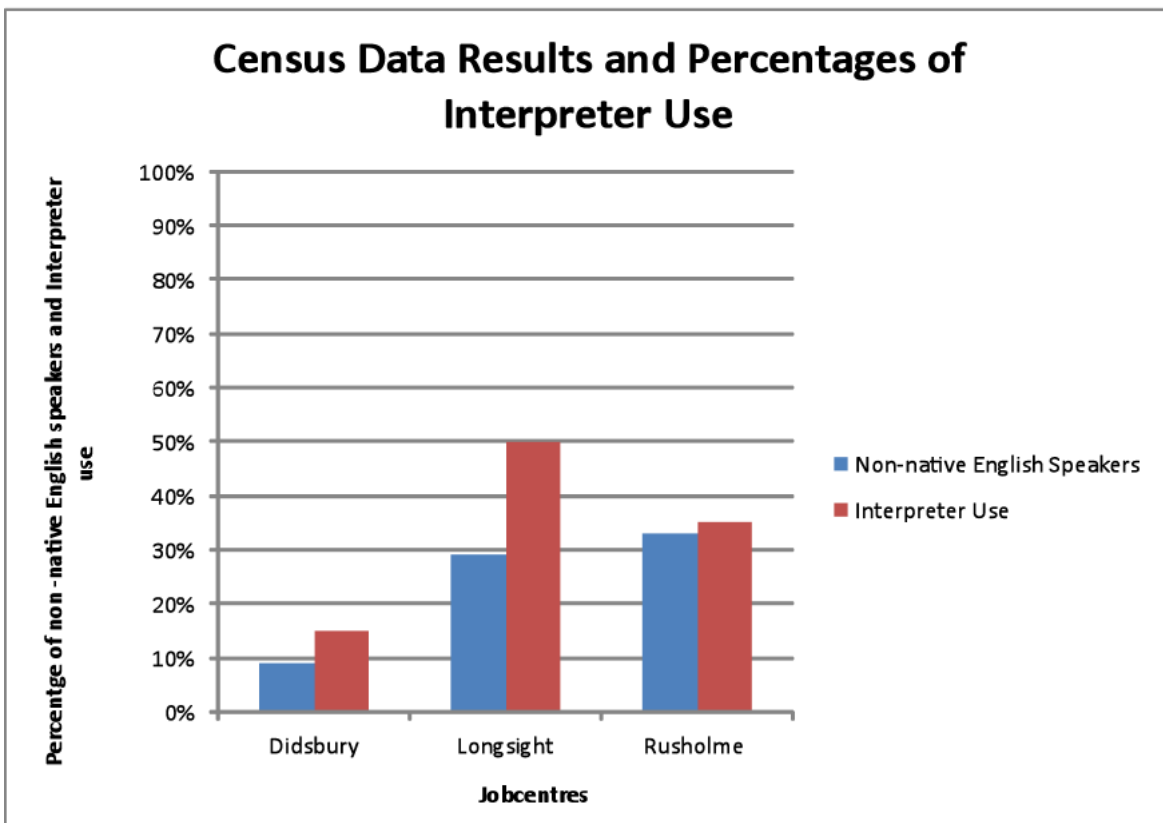


Figure 7: Census data results showing percentage of how many non-native English speakers compared to Interpreter use percentages

3.3 Other services set up to aid multilingual jobseekers around Manchester

Gateway Protection is a scheme run by the government to help asylum seekers and refugees, which often provides ESOL classes, funded by the Skills Funding Agency. The ESOL classes are run by MAES (Manchester Adult Education Service) and are available four mornings a week within the Jobcentres, trialling a pilot scheme: Rusholme, Longsight, Openshaw and Cheetham Hill. These have been selected because they have been identified by Jobcentre Advisors as having a high demand for ESOL provisions on-site, compared to other Jobcentres in Manchester. In some classes there are around ten different languages spoken by the pupils, which mainly consist of Arabic, Spanish, Persian, Lithuanian, Urdu, Somali and Bengali. The ESOL classes are for all Jobcentre clients who do not speak English to ESOL Level 2 or equivalent.

The provisions for ESOLs is improving, partially thanks to Agenda 2010 (Manchester City Council, 2009), an initiative aimed at closing the gap between black and minority ethnic communities (BME) in Manchester. The Jobcentre was responsible for the employment scheme, which looked at the recruitment process and why employment rates were low for the Manchester BME community and what could be done to combat this.

Following Agenda 2010, Manchester City Council has made a commitment to the 'Skills Pledge' as an employer. This is a commitment to support all employees to develop basic skills, including numeracy and literacy, including English as a second language and to work towards a relevant qualification to at least level 2. Whilst this is only one company who supports multilingual people, it is significant because Manchester City Council is a highly-respected employer and role model for other employers.

Another result of the scheme is Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC), which has supported 419 BME clients (70% of total number of clients) in 2006-07, 836 BME clients (55%) in 2007-08 and 780 BME clients (93%) respectively in 2008-09. NDLC funds community projects which teach transferable skills to the community, which are invaluable and demonstrable when applying for jobs. The figures show that these are incredibly useful for the ethnic community, subsequently Manchester's multilingual society.

The NDLC is similar to 'Work Clubs,' (part of the Get Britain Working scheme) of which there are 24-27 within the Manchester area. They are centres that Jobcentre clients can visit to use computer with which to apply for jobs. Volunteers help them fill out their applications or help them to look at job advertisements so that clients can find a job. If clients cannot speak English to a proficient level then there is help available, from many Jobcentre clients who volunteer at Work Clubs as a means of boosting their CVs and practising the English that they have been taught in MAES classes. Multilingual people are found to be very useful as many of the work club attendees do not speak English to a proficient level; the Work Clubs are mainly attended by young people 18-24 years old.

The Work Clubs are only a small part of volunteering schemes which are useful to help ESOLs practice their English whilst gaining experience. Another voluntary scheme of interest is the REACH scheme at Salford Hospital. This offers training for ESOLs who were doctors or nurses back in their home country but do not possess the qualifications or language skills that are needed to work in those roles in England. Salford Hospital provides training and they are often given a minor position afterwards, enabling their skills to be put to good use. 'In Touch' scheme ran in 2010 with Manchester University, to make the university accessible to everyone by employing jobseekers who did not speak English as a first language.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

4.1 The Universal Jobmatch

From our research of the Universal Jobmatch website, it is clear that there are some languages which are more prominent than others, as well as employment roles that require more bilingual applicants than others. The amount of languages featured (21 in total) and the variety of different language families in which they originate from highlight that the multilingual attributes which attract employers are not just confined to a select few, and in fact span across many different languages.

In terms of job categories, the five groups of customer service, management roles, teaching, sales/marketing and technology are all greatly in need of multilingual applicants. Customer service takes up 36% of the sample with the highest frequency in total, and German was the most popular. Most of these roles were within call centre environments, and it is translatable that the bilingual skills are required as the applicants would be utilising their language on the phone to people overseas. For instance, one advertisement states that the position would be within a small international customer service team where the role involved speaking the French customers daily, taking orders.

Sales and Marketing accounted for 20% of the sample, again with German as the most popular language required. One of the roles advertised is for 'creating adverts on international marketplaces in a foreign language' and asks for French, German, Spanish and Italian. This again indicates the need for bilingual applicants for correspondence internationally i.e. *outside* of Manchester. Another advertisement requests for fluency in French as well as English, which is an interesting observation that the employer has to specify the applicant is able to speak English too. This may be due to problems arising from only asking for fluency in a foreign language, as applicants may see this to mean that fluency in English is not necessary.

Management roles constituted of 17% of the sample. It is notable that one job asks for fluency in German 'with a good command of English'. The fact that German has such priority over English indicates that this role is almost solely dependent on the applicant's knowledge of German, which stresses how multilingualism can be utilised as a skill. 14% of the roles were involved with teaching, either as a KS1/KS2 teacher or a teaching assistant. One interesting advertisement states under job purpose that the role will involve acting as an intermediary between school and parents for Mandarin speaking pupils in the borough, which is explicit to show that the role in question has a clear communicative purpose, and that the employee would be acting as almost a representative of the institution. This also indicates that there are a lot of Mandarin-speaking (as their first language) children at schools across the borough and can directly highlight how immigration has led to more job openings for the bilingual.

The other percentile was taken up by Technological roles (6%) and a handful of other jobs which were not sufficient for their own category (7%). One notable advertisement was that of a 'warehouse operator/forklift driver', which requested for the ideal candidate to be able to read and write English as well as speak Punjabi/Urdu. This specification of being able to read/write English again may be due to applicants assuming that the role could be taken up by someone who can only speak Punjabi or Urdu. The other interesting point about this advert is that the nature of the role actually requires a bilingual speaker; the job would assumedly quite manual, which is comparable to the vast majority of other jobs advertised which are office-based.

Drawing upon all the data collected and analysed, it is clear that there is no one coherent pattern and rather there are a few similar occurrences in the advertisements. The majority of the jobs ask for a specific foreign language as well as fluency in English, which is what we assumed, would be the case. However, on top of this, some advertisements say it would be an advantage if the applicant spoke another language to the one advertised. This highlights the idea of a language being a skill, similar to others found on job advertisements such as 'knowledge of excel' or 'possessing a full driving license', as it implies that although it is not crucial for the role it would be advantageous for the applicant. Some of the jobs did not emphasize the applicant's knowledge of English as much, stating the foreign language as their main priority or only asking for basic English skills. This confirms that the current job market is expanding and bilingual jobs are no longer confined to translator or foreign language teacher roles (where fluency in English is essential), and in fact are spreading to roles in which their grasp of English is not pivotal.

4.2 Multilingualism within The Jobcentre

The Jobcentre uses the translation service more than the census results indicate it needs to. This suggests that the Jobcentre has a high volume of multilingual clients who do not speak English, although it is not possible to know this for certain because there are no records kept on the nationality of clients. The top five languages that were used by the translation services showed some differences in comparison to the local areas, with regards to each language. Surprisingly, Didsbury used the translation service for Kurdish 8% of the time, in contrast to the census data which showed that there are 0 Kurdish speakers living in the area. Another interesting feature is Longsight, which used the translation service for Polish 11.9% of the time, contrasting to the census data which indicates that there are more Polish speakers who use the Jobcentre than compared to those who live in Longsight. However, these figures must be treated with caution because there are more areas than there are Jobcentres, so people from other areas will attend the Jobcentre in Didsbury, for example.

The Jobcentre's primary focus is on assimilation rather than promotion of community languages, which is understandable considering that proficient English skills are essential for most jobs. Due to budget restrictions, they do not have many provisions for speakers of community languages and face-to-face communication is preferred, rather than developing new leaflets.

The ESOL awareness training for staff and the recent scheme which is trialling in-house Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) classes illustrates that the Jobcentre recognises that there are a high proportion of clients who speak community languages. The Partnership Manager, Christine Hulse, also mentioned that she emails leaflets to Jobcentres if she comes into contact with any that communicate in languages other than English. This explains the sporadic leaflet distribution that was demonstrated in our preliminary visits, for example: Rusholme had leaflets in French, but other languages which had a higher proportion of speakers in the area – such as Kurdish – were not represented at all.

'Language: The state of the nation' (Tinsley, 2013) states that language policies must now respond to new economic realities and also diversify language provisions, rather than replace them. As we are aware, language provisions are extremely important, in terms of where they must be available and to what extent. The Jobcentres within the areas we have looked at are highly multilingual as of immigrants within and around the areas, applying for jobs, and needing certain provisions and help. The Jobcentres cater for the applicant within their area, they follow a language policy and provide various language provisions to improve communication and also help them succeed to learn a new language. We have been shown the numerous policies and actions The Jobcentre, as well as the Government, have undertaken to ensure that the English skills of non-native, potential employees

are to a high standard. The consequence of this is that we can maintain the diversity of our multilingual community, with the intention of promoting linguistic abilities in the most efficient way for future employment.

The Jobcentre is evidently increasing support for non-native speakers of English but whether this is in line with the demand for languages remains to be seen. The Jobcentre are trying their best to prioritise language provisions in a way that will aid the greatest chance of employment. It is the balance between community languages and English with regards to how beneficial each language is. It is also a balance that deviates depending on whom we ask. This characteristic can be examined further as we look at the HR interviews from a wider context.

4.3 Multilingualism from the perspective of HR

The copious amount of potential that is encompassed within multilingual skills appears to be one of the fundamental findings of our research with the HR managers. Nearly all of the businesses we spoke to agreed that, under the right circumstances, the ability to speak more than one language can be a key asset. More specifically, the extra-national expansion of a company acts as a catalyst, consequently increasing the value of language as an economic resource. Language therefore becomes an integral tool for a company, as it makes foreign business ventures more realistic due to a greater cohesion in communication.

The British Academy provides articles including information regarding language skills, which push forward the argument of how there is more of a demand for languages nowadays within job requirements. They state how this is mainly due to pupils opting against taking languages at GCSE level and A Level, preventing them to study a language at University, resulting in a lack of language skills which many jobs require. They state that the economy is being affected by the vast amount of monolingual speakers. There is 'increasing concern' and 'action must be taken' due to this high demand for skilled linguists. Indeed, the languages taught at school are traditionally German, French and Spanish, whereas the most common languages spoken around Manchester are Urdu and Polish. The statistical findings from our other sources show us that German is by far the most desired language and this could lead us to speculate that businesses aim towards these economically powerful European countries for expansion and partnership. This could also entail that such European languages are the most resourceful for large companies, highlighting the importance of certain languages in comparison to another.

This is not to say that languages such as Urdu and Polish are less common in the workplace, as we saw one company which had a large portion of Polish speaking workers. However, in the current context German appears to be one of the main languages that carry such elusive potential for a growing company.

It is important however to re-establish the fact that this property of multilingualism is in no way a necessity for a company, and so another finding of this study is the further confirmation of English's global dominance as a language. This is one of the most interesting aspects we have been able to gather from enquiring different avenues of the employment process, for we have seen non-conformity which displays the importance of the context of a company and the associated viewpoint. The British Academy's report is also subsequently doubted by certain companies, which highlights how there is much debate on the requisite for speakers of a foreign language.

The fact that many companies had no immediate desire for multilingual skills is evidence of how English is perhaps already a lingua franca of business, as the growing multilingual community around Manchester seems to have had a comparatively minor effect on the roles or requirements inside a company. The Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1992) highlights how English has had a profound influence on even countries which have no historical roots in the language. English is incorporated in to the education systems due to the economic benefits and is done to such an extent that the majority of the educated populations are fluent. This is probably the causation of numerous things - why multilingual skills are not a necessity, why there is such a low number of multilingual applicants, and why The British Academy have seen a drought of graduates who have a degree in languages. One could imply that although there is a lower population of French and German speakers doesn't necessarily entail that the economy is 'at risk'. Overall the dominance of English has thus had numerous effects and ultimately reduced the value of other languages as an economic resource.

Multilingualism has a dynamic role which displays value and purpose. The requirement for such ability is nevertheless non- compulsory. Additionally we believe these impressions are not limited to Greater Manchester, regardless of its highly diverse, multicultural society. These impressions are applicable to the rest of the United Kingdom and do bear some consequence on employment and business in general. One key point that we can draw from our research is that multilingualism is most definitely becoming an economic tool, and will continue to grow as long as companies continue to expand and immigration continues to occur.

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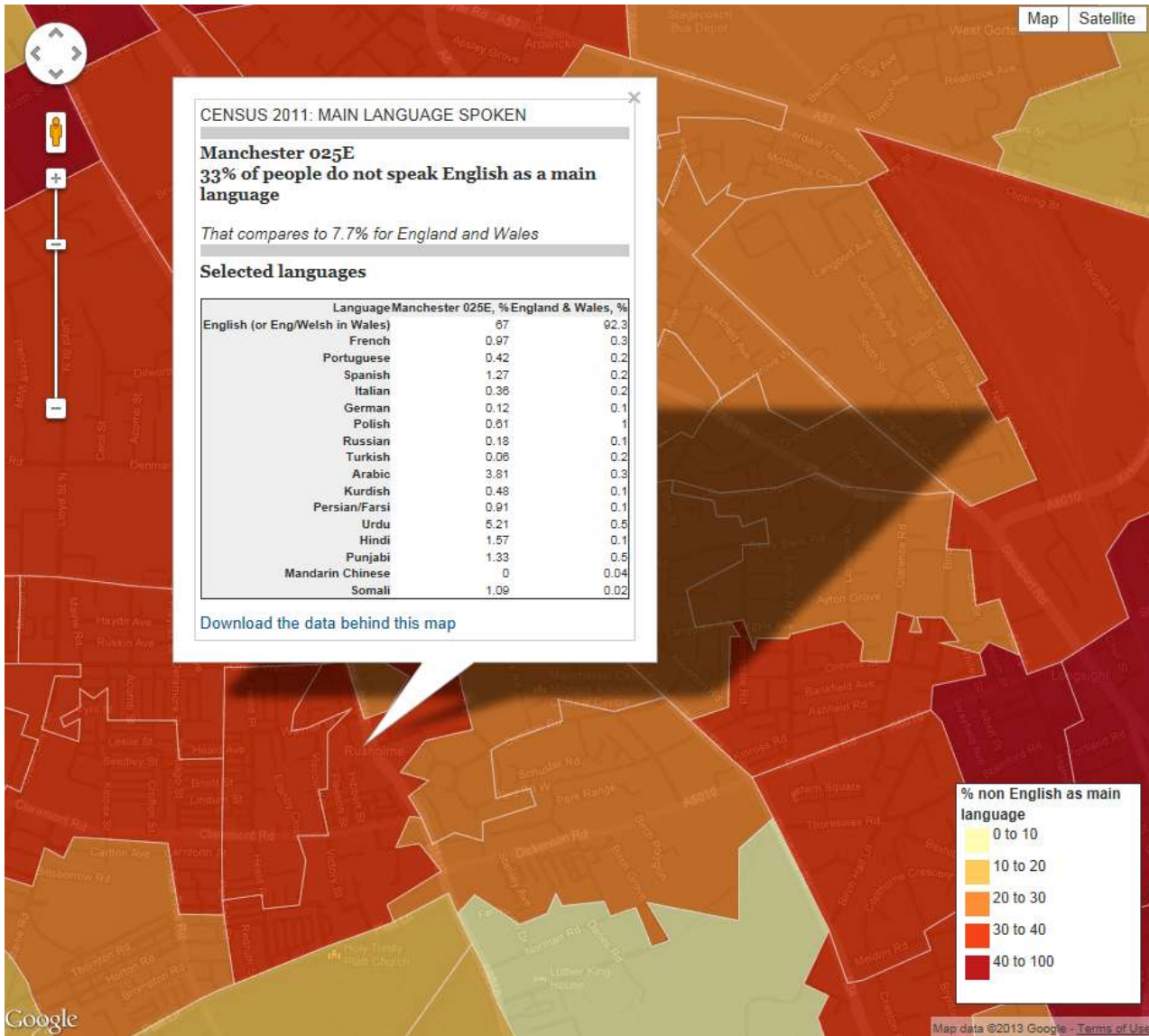
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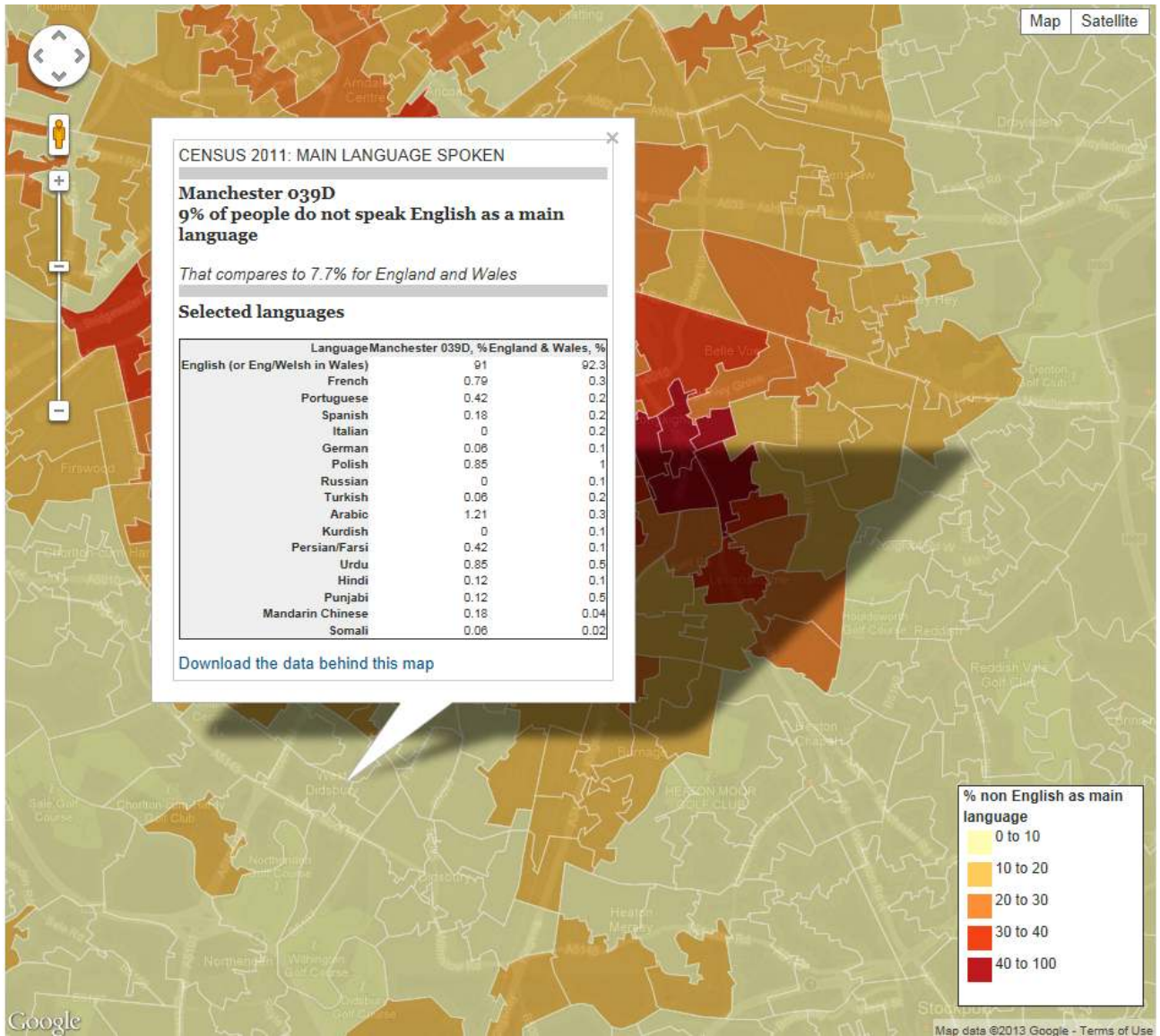
Appendix 1

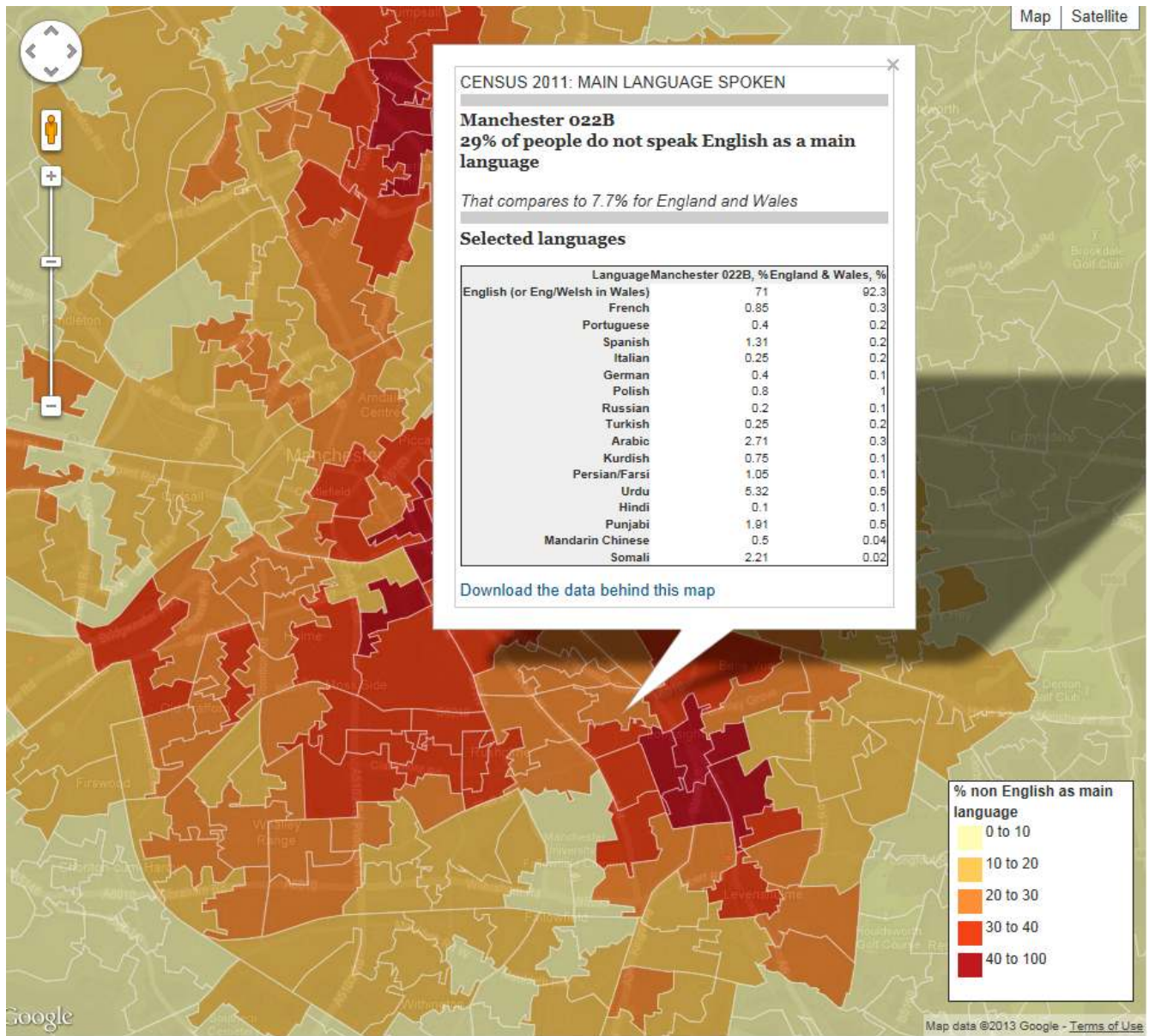
Rusholme Job centre

Wilmslow Road

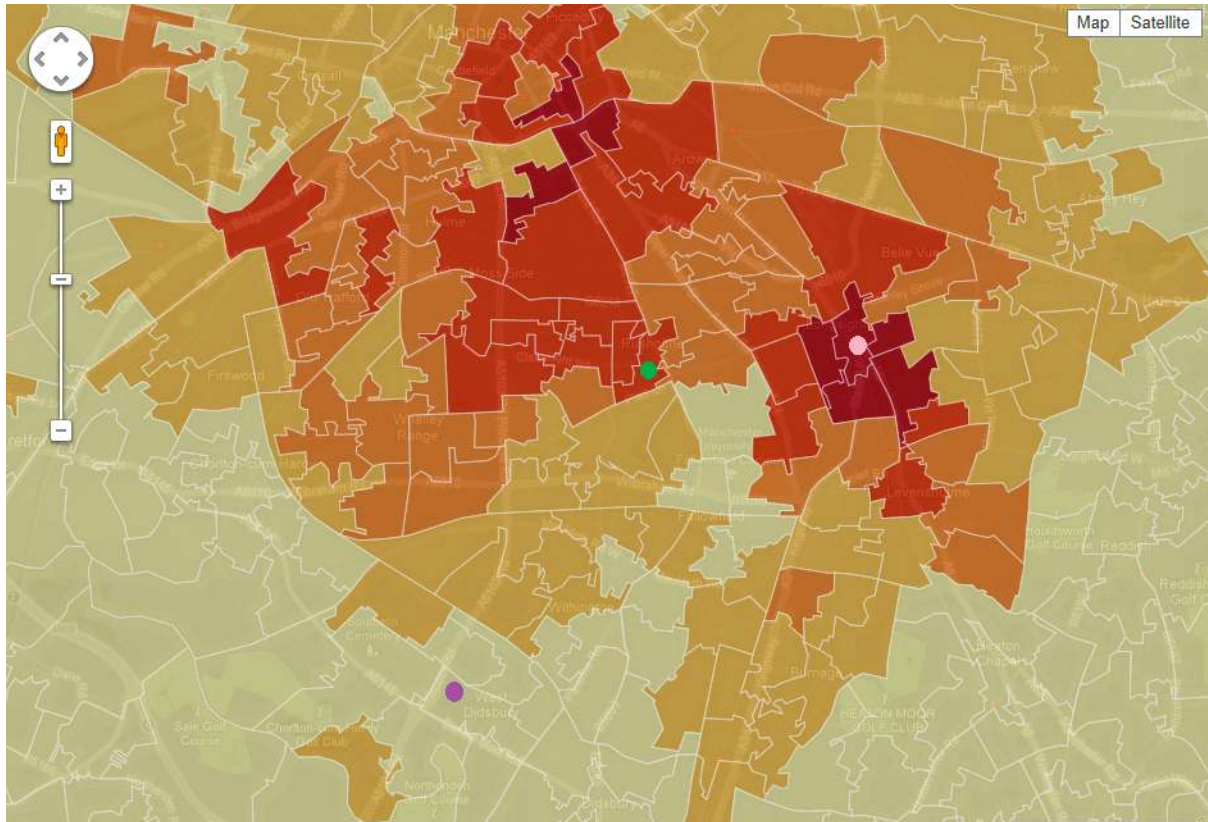
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Locations of The Jobcentres



● Job centre in Rusholme

● Job centre in Didsbury

● Job centre in Longsight

Appendix 2

HR interview via email

Americana international – HR Manager

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

Valuable, the business is international and is expanding all the time. The main places where multilingualism is required are call centres. Some members of staff in the call centres speak French.

2. Has the role that languages play in your recruitment policy changed over time?

Yes, and it is likely to get bigger. They recently recruited a Spanish-speaking Credit Controller. The reason they recruited him was because they wanted a person based in the UK, to bring the business back to the UK and make it easier to deal with. Previously they had used a Spaniard but they did not get much contact with him – he was based in Spain. The Credit Controller is an example of how they are bringing people in who can speak other languages so that the headquarters (England based) can easily contact everyone, rather than relying on someone who is in the country in question to translate.

3. Which languages are the most valuable and why?

At the moment, German is the most valuable for recruitment because they are in the process of opening offices over there. The Finance Manager could not speak German when he was recruited but the company is paying for him to have lessons.

4. Do you receive a lot of multilingual applicants?

Normally they look for applicants on LinkedIn, and they always seem to list a language skill if they have one. She didn't know the exact number. However she didn't really trust it for language skills because sometimes people oversell themselves – they may say that they are proficient in French – when they did it at GCSE level 10 years ago.

- Previous job (Law Firm)

- o There was a higher demand for multi-linguals because of the type of company it was. People who couldn't speak English but needed lawyers meant that they kept a list on the staff intranet of the people who spoke another language.
- o The most desired languages are Hindi and Urdu

Appendix 3

HR interview via email

Pure Innovations – HR Director

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

Of limited value but we do seek to recruit a diverse workforce. As some of the clients we work with do not have English as their first language it is useful, but not essential, if some of our recruits are able to converse in other languages.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

Nothing specifically, but if we had a client who did not speak English we would try to recruit someone who spoke their language (as well as English) to support them.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

No.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

English

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

Not many.

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

English and/or other European languages.

Appendix 4

HR interview via email

HR Manager – Trumeter

Preliminary: Which company do you work for and what is your role?

My job title is HR Manager, and I work as a sole practitioner, but with a small team of only 26 employees I also have other duties eg H&S, Quality and supporting our sales engineer. The company designs, manufactures and distributes measuring devices and lighting applications. The designs are done in our offices in Bury, Lancashire, and are manufactured in our factory in Malaysia. We have distribution outlets all over the world with offices also in USA.

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

We have very limited multilingual attributes in our business in the UK. We have undertaken product training with our distributors from France, and the training was done in English for them. We recently recruited for a Distributor Sales Manager for UK, Scandinavia and Ireland, and although international travel is a requirement of the role, languages were not an essential element of the selection process. The previous incumbent happened to be Venezuelan so spoke fluent Spanish with a smattering of Portuguese, but these language skills were never utilised. We have a partner company based in Turkey. All of their employees speak excellent English. Our CEO speaks reasonable French and one of our engineers speaks fluent Italian but that is co-incidence rather than planned.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

We do not specify languages in our recruitment policy here in the UK, although it is important that our Malaysian employees speak good English as a lot of communication is via web-ex type meetings with the UK.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

I have been with the company 7 years and the policy re languages in recruitment has not changed over this time.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

As our distributors in France and Germany are very well established and speak excellent English, if we were to specify languages the most desirable would be Spanish and Italian as we have less representation on those areas.

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

We did receive some multilingual applicants but as we have not specifically advertised for this, I would say the percentage was only about 5%

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

I would say German and French generally, but when we advertised for the recent sales role covering Scandinavia, we did get Swedish and Finish speakers.

7. Any other comments on language policy in recruitment?

In previous companies I have worked, international sales people generally had language skills. I worked briefly for a small importer who bought in from China – they actively sought Chinese speakers and the founder was learning Mandarin.

Appendix 5

HR interview via email

Swizzels Matlow Ltd - HR & Training Manager

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

Fairly valuable as not required for job roles or customer requirements but useful to communicate with Polish employees in HR situations.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

Our workforce is made up of 30% Polish. Our HR Assistant is Polish so this is an advantage and helps with recruitment but is not essential as generally Polish applicants command of English is improving. Language does not specifically play a role in our recruitment policy as health & safety signs are also displayed in Polish and we are fortunate to have a multilingual HR Assistant. We do not specify any language requirements in our adverts or verbal specifications.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

Not in the policy although it is helpful if basic English is understood for Health & Safety and HR support purposes.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

English

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

Yes, Polish friends and family of existing staff and via agency. Otherwise, mainly English as we are the main employer in New Mills and tend to get applicants from the immediate area which has a very small ethnic population hence term English and not British as no Welsh, Scottish or British Citizens in immediate area either.

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

English and Polish

7. Any other comments on language policy in recruitment?

Should include willingness to learn English, we have provided courses for Polish workers and some do not wish to take advantage of this. This does cause some communication issues and makes it difficult for HR to support these employees when having to go through a translator.

Appendix 6

HR interview via telephone (called 10.05.2013)

AMEC - HR Business Partner MCIPD

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

More and more valuable as the company expands and looks to place people overseas, particularly Europe.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

Willing to recruit French people and give them English classes, and vice versa. Previously, employees could get away with only speaking English but it is becoming more and more important.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

The role of languages has changed as the company is expanding globally; they have recently recruited a French Country Manager who is bilingual in French and English.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

French, Romanian and Slovakian are the most desired languages, to communicate with bases in those countries.

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

They receive few, if any multilingual applicants. There is an in-house resourcing team who look at an internal database where people list their specific skills. If languages are listed then this is a definite positive and puts an edge over another candidate.

6. Any other comments on language policy in recruitment?

They have manager's meetings in all the base countries – France, Romania, Slovakia- and it is becoming increasingly valuable to speak one of those languages so all the employees can communicate with ease.

Appendix 7

HR interview via email (sent 09.05.2013)

Sainsbury's - HR Team Leader

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

To Sainsbury's as it only operates in the UK currently then not that valuable however we are looking to expand into Asia so possibly in the future

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

None currently, however future requirement could be different due to possible expansion in to Asia.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

No

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

Possible languages spoken in Asia in the future

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

Yes

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

English but it is clear that a lot of Indian people apply and that English is not their first language.

Appendix 8

HR interview via email (sent 09.05.2013)

HR Manager, MCIPD - AJ Bell

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

As a regulated UK financial services business, all client interactions must be carried out in English whether written or verbal. We do employ a number of people who are able to speak/write in more than one language, but English is vital to our business.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

The majority of our employees are Administrators, who deal with clients on the phone or by email. In terms of recruitment, we advertise that candidates must possess English Language GCSE Grade C or above (or hold an equivalent qualification) to demonstrate a minimum standard of ability with the English language.

Our selection processes include ability tests which are administered in English (e.g. Verbal Reasoning, Spelling, Numerical Reasoning).

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

No – we have always had this policy as a minimum.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

English – as a regulated UK financial services business, our employees must be able to communicate to a good standard in English.

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

Yes

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

English, Urdu, Punjabi

Appendix 9

HR interview via email

Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust – Senior HR Advisor

Preliminary: Which company do you work for and what is your role?

I work for the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust. My role is Senior HR Advisor to the division of Core Clinical and Non Clinical Support Services. This involves providing guidance on legislation and policies procedures to managers of a division of 2,000 staff.

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

These can potentially be valuable when dealing with patients. The hospital is based in the city centre of Liverpool, a city which comprises of a diverse range of ethnic and social groups who use the hospital. Currently we use translation services to assist with language barriers which may occur during day to day work.

In terms of wider business ventures these are very slowly being explored as we look at working with partnership organisations in other countries. This is in the very embryonic stages though.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

Support is offered to applicants who may experience language difficulties in applying posts. I would say, however, we very rarely actively recruit for people who can speak languages other than English.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

No because I feel it is an area we have yet to explore.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

English

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

Yes

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

English, Hindu, Urdu, Polish, Filipino

Appendix 10

HR interview via email

Enterprise Rent-a-car – Talent Acquisition and HR Specialist

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

Languages can be important in our business but not just for us as a business but for the candidate also as they will open up opportunities for them if opportunities arise in other countries. It helps us with our talent pipeline also. As large employers become multi national it will continue to be important although companies do struggle to recruit language students.

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

They don't currently play a massive role but they have done when we advertise internal jobs.

They do play a role in our international management training program where we look for Spanish and French speakers.

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

Not really to be honest although having a 2nd language (in addition to English) has always been an advantage.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

Currently, French, Spanish and German are the most desired languages.

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

We get a healthy number of applicants that are bilingual and multilingual but I'm afraid I couldn't give you an exact proportion!

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

The largest proportion of bilingual applicants are British Asians (Bengali, Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi). But we are increasingly receiving more applications from European candidates who speak German, French, Spanish.

Appendix 11

HR interview via email

Bupa – HR Reward Manager

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

Not in the UK business it is important but as we become more of a global focus and move talent around / career development etc it will be

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

None in overall policy – if languages were required it would be role specific and advertised as such – necessary or desirable

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

Not really – although knowledge skills and experience are categorised as necessary or desirable – of which languages would be one.

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

In the UK really only a good command of English – globally various – Spanish probably being the most as we have businesses in Spanish speaking countries

7. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

Could not say

8. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

In the UK it is English, do not have the data or monitor this I'm afraid.

Appendix 12

Email sent out to HR managers thanking them for their participation

Script

Dear

Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in our research. We will send you a copy of the report once it's finished. Here are the questions, it would be great if you could answer them, feel free to add anything you think may be of use to the study.

Preliminary. Employer: Job Title:

1. How valuable are multilingual attributes in your business?

2. What role do languages play in your recruitment policy?

3. Has the role of languages in your recruitment policy changed over time?

4. Which (if any) are the most desired languages when recruiting?

5. Do you receive a lot of bilingual/multilingual applicants? What is an approximate breakdown of languages/ percentage of bilingual/multilingual applicants?

6. What are the most common languages that applicants speak?

Thank you again.

Best wishes,

Kim, Ella, Melissa, Oliver