



MULTI-SKILLED,
MULTILINGUAL,
MULTIMODAL - CAN
THE MODERN LINGUIST
REALLY DO IT ALL?

Who am I?

Postgraduate degree in Translation & Interpreting (2007-2008)

Holder of the DPSI (English Law)

Fellow of the Institute of Linguists

Chartered Linguist

Certified legal and medical translator and interpreter

Lecturer at Newcastle University on the T&I programme

AN 18-YEAR JOURNEY (CHALLENGES)

- Financial downturn in 2008 ("it is not possible to start self-employment in this context")
- The introduction of Trados and CAT ("computers are now taking over translation")
- The beginnings of Google Translate ("computers now do just as well at translation")
- AI and the launch of MTPE ("translators are now extinct")

Strategies to adapt

- **2008** = adaptation through multi-skilling (interpreting, translating and lecturing)
- **2010** = fighting competition through pricing (taking into account repetitions and CAT) / upskilling (learning various CAT tools)
- **2022** = adaptation through doubling-down on expertise / direct clients / niche sectors and specialisms

Holding on to traditions

- **Certified translations**
 - Medical documentation
 - Legal documentation
 - Civil registry documents
- **Specialist translation sectors** (with big stakes – pharmaceuticals)
- **Confidentiality** (medical records)

Languages in Education

- Demand? Do students still want to learn languages?
- Taking action with young learners
- Who is using social media to promote language learning? (Influencers)
- It's no longer about 'just T&I', it's about 'Medical Translation', 'Conference Interpreting' - **specialisms are key**
- Teaching has changed - are your students using ChatGPT?

Interpreting (the spoken word)

- **Local presence** -> Marketing (SEO, LinkedIn, What's your channel?)
- **In-person public service interpreting** (GP practice, law firm, local business, court)
- **National presence** -> sport, business, NHS, pharmaceuticals, law firms
- **International presence** -> remote or in-person?, Cost factors, interpersonal skills, networking.
- Do clients know about interpreting tools? Are they reliable? Do they trust them? How practical are they?

Translation (the written word)

- Membership of the Chartered Institute of Linguists
- It no longer pays to be a generic translator - offering 'translation' is no longer a stand-out factor
- Certified translations, specialist subjects and sensitive documents with high stakes require human translation 10%
- Types of translation required on the marketplace:
 - Certified translations
 - Legal translation
 - Medical translation
 - Creative translation for marketing, etc.
- Do not just offer 'translation', but consider what makes you different?
- How will you reach your clients? Channels? Effectiveness? Cost?
- Take care to ensure your specialism answers the question: 'How can I meet your need?' and **NOT** 'How can I live my passion?'

Conclusion

- To what extent is there still a need for top expert linguists (in education, research, translation, interpreting)?
- Double-down on your specialism? **BUT** make sure it meets a *need*, not a *want*
- Look at how you market yourself - direct channels, agencies.
- What skills does a successful translator/interpreter require? (SEO, marketing, T&I ability, what about prices?)
- Limits - time, ability, expertise, qualifications, cost

THANKS FOR LISTENING

ANY QUESTIONS?