



Linguistics Career Launch 2024

The new role of faculty in advising linguistics students:

Data on the employment landscape for Linguistics grads

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“Learn to code!”

“You could always
teach K-12 or
community college”

Your student asks you, their faculty member:

*“I could/should be a professor...
but if not, then what?”*

“You do such great
work...try another
cycle on the
academic market!”

“Go into ‘industry’
and make a lot of
\$\$\$—more than I
make as a prof!”

“Get a postdoc”

What are we going to talk about?

1. Employment realities for LING PhDs seeking academic TL jobs
2. What do linguists in business, government, technology, and nonprofits actually *do*?
3. You and your department's contributions to **student career success**

→ for Bachelor's, Master's & PhD students

1. Free resources for you & students of ALL degree levels

POP QUIZ:

You're a faculty member. At your orientation meeting with your incoming grad students, you:

- a. Explain the program: First-year coursework, degree milestones, conference funding, etc.
- b. Tell them where to find the first party of the semester!
- c. Discuss the **realities of the academic job market** and explain how your program addresses these realities
- d. None of the above? All of the above?

Pop quiz

True or False

In 2022, < 15% of **social science PhD holders** got jobs in academia

Pop quiz

True

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Pop quiz

True or False

A draft-eligible baseball player has *better odds of playing Major League Baseball* than a new Linguistics PhD has of getting a tenure-line job

Pop quiz

True

A draft-eligible baseball player has *better odds of playing Major League Baseball* than a new Linguistics PhD has of getting a tenure-line job in the United States

9.9% of NCAA draft-eligible players got drafted (NCAA 2020)

RQ: What is the likelihood of a **new LING PhD** getting a tenure-line job in Linguistics?

1. How many LING PhDs graduate every year?

- Sourced **number of LING PhD graduates 2020-2023**
 - NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates
 - Added the number of **LING PhDs grads (CIP code 16.0102) + Applied LING PhDs grads (CIP code 16.0105)** for each year of the study
 - Excluded: Neuro LING, Psycho LING, and all LANG grads
 - Reason: Classified separately under different CIP codes

*CIP code = “classification of instructional programs”, a standardized identifier for every academic program. Part of the taxonomy of academic programs developed in 1980 by the US Dept. of Education National Center for Education Statistics

Pop quiz

How many **Linguistics PhDs** graduated in 2022?

a. 44

b. 70

c. 263

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How many **Linguistics PhDs** graduated in 2022?

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RQ: What is the likelihood of a new LING PhD getting a **tenure-line job** in Linguistics?

2. How many jobs in LING are advertised every year?

- Collected all **US-based tenure-line job ads**
 - Excluded all contingent & term-limited (postdocs, non tenure-line, VAP)
 - **3 job cycles**: May-Dec for cycles 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-2024
 - **Job ad sources**: Linguist List, social media, other higher ed publications
 - **Coded**: Formal, applied, sociolinguistics, computational & “general”
 - “General” = smaller subfields (historical ling, typology)
 - Coded & **excluded**: LANG + LING, neuro LING, psycho LING, cognitive LING

Pop quiz

How many domestic **tenure-line Linguistics jobs** were advertised in 2022?

- a. 44
- b. 70
- c. 263

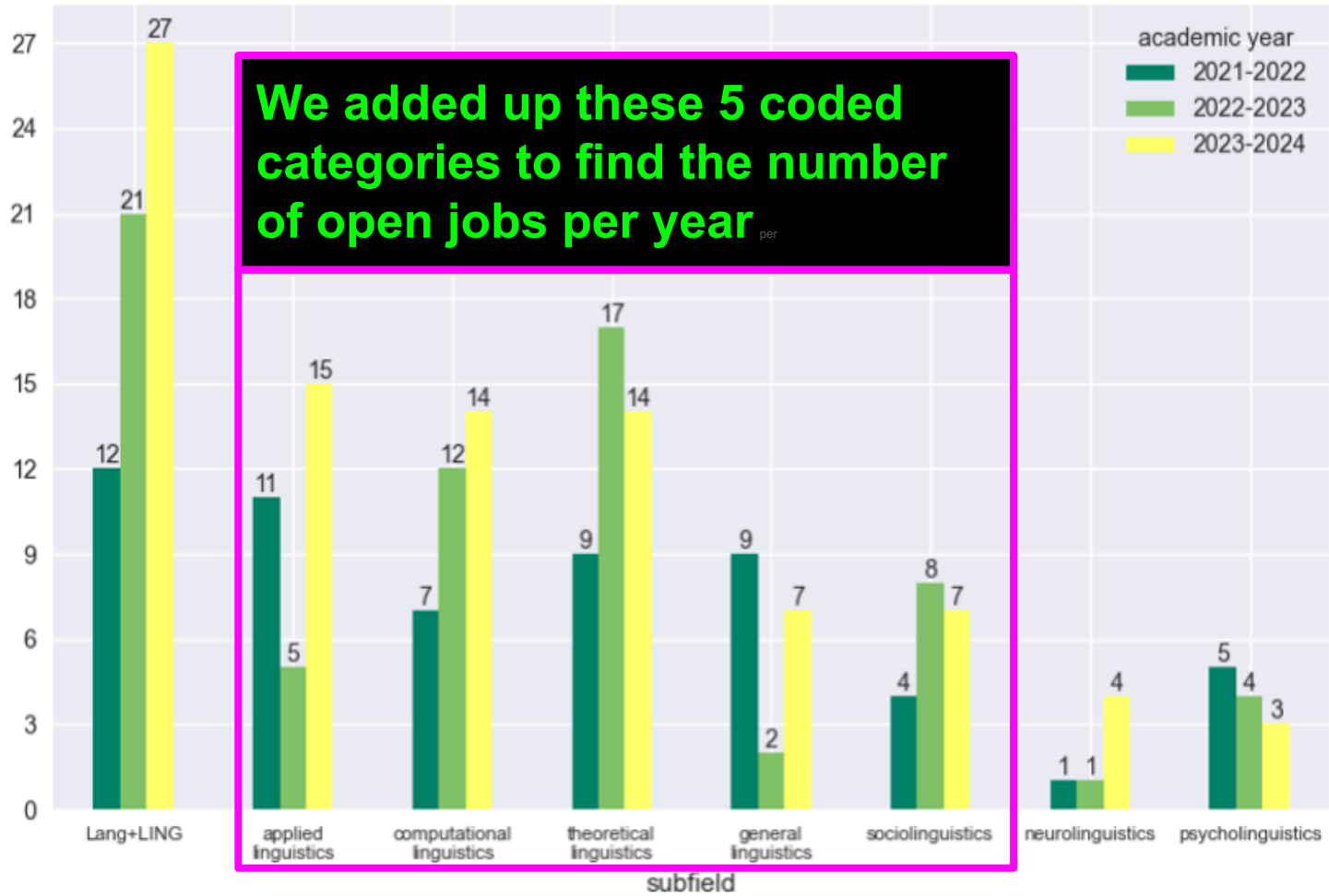
Pop quiz

How many domestic **tenure-line Linguistics jobs** were advertised in 2022?

a. 44

b. 70

c. 263



We added up these 5 coded categories to find the number of open jobs per year

263 grads and 44 TL jobs in 2022?

....So the odds aren't *that* bad...?

16% of 2022 LING PhDs might land those **44 jobs**
if they didn't have any other competition, but...

they're joining PhDs who go on the market year
after year...

...after year...

The 263 LING PhDs from 2022 join a pool of

1,087 PhDs from the 3 years prior so only about

4%

of eligible PhDs might fill those 44 jobs in 2022

(if they're all seeking TL jobs, that is...and not all of them are! But also: we erred on generosity in counting those open positions)

What do your PhD graduates who **don't** pursue an academic career **actually do**?

Let's look at **publicly available employment data** for
Linguistics PhDs from one *anonymous* LING
department

This is a model for the type of data your Department or Program should collect



Given that ~ 96% of LING PhDs will do something OTHER than TL academia...

*(and **nearly all** of the Master's and UG LING majors, too, which means that TL academic jobs are the most 'alternative' career choice of all! 😊😊😊)*

What jobs *DO* our LING grads get?

First “Career Linguist” Survey 2019

- 139 respondents
- Highest linguistics degree
 - 25 Bachelor’s
 - 41 Master’s
 - 73 PhDs
- Surveyed for both **first position** titles post-grad, subsequent and **current position** titles to follow their career development

Interviewer: So why do you want this job?

Me: Well, I've always felt passionately about not starving to death



First job titles for LING grads (all degrees)

Academic Course Scheduler

Accessibility Specialist

Administrative Assistant

Analyst

Annotator

Artificial Intelligence Engineer

Audio Coordinator

Behavior Interventionist

Bilingual After-School Curriculum Developer

Career counselor

Computational Linguist

Content Creator

Content Specialist

Consultant

Cross-cultural Communications

Specialist

Data Specialist

Design Researcher

Editor

English teacher

ESL instructor

Fundraising grant writer

Government Contractor/Analyst

Independent contractor

Interpreter

K-12 teacher

Linguist

Linguist/Junior Programmer

Linguistic Project Manager

Linguistic Researcher

Localization Manager

Machine translation specialist

NLP Engineer

Non profit research

Partner Development Representative

Product Analyst

Production Assistant

Program Coordinator

Project Associate

Project Coordinator

Project Manager

Research and Product Development Asso

Social Media Analyst

Social Listening

Software Engineer

Speech Data Researcher

Speech Language Pathologist

Student loan counselor

Teacher

Teaching Assistant

Technical Staff

Test Developer

Translation Project Coordinator

UX Researcher

Voice User Interface (VUI) Designer

Web Technologist

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English teacher

ESL instructor

Fundraising grant writer

Government Contractor/**Analyst**

Independent contractor

Interpreter

K-12 teacher

Linguist

Linguist/Junior Programmer

Linguistic Project Manager

Linguistic Researcher

Localization Manager

Machine translation specialist

NLP Engineer

Non profit research

Partner Development Representative

Product **Analyst**

Production Assistant

Program Coordinator

Project Associate

Project Coordinator

Project Manager

Research and Product Development Assoc

Social Media **Analyst**

Social Listening

Software Engineer

Speech Data **Researcher**

Speech Language Pathologist

Student loan counselor

Teacher

Teaching Assistant

Technical Staff

Test Developer

Translation Project Coordinator

UX Researcher

Voice User Interface (VUI) Designer

Web Technologist

Let's put the faces to these jobs

INDUSTRY | TECH

Head of Product/Conversation Designer

- **Linguistics BS**, Univ. of Colorado, Boulder
- Qualitative research, discourse and conversation analysis, user experience
- Lead all aspects of product design within conversational app canvas; Voice user interface research & design



[Brielle Nickoloff, BS](#)
Head of Product
Walmart Global Tech
(formerly Botmock)

INDUSTRY | CONSULTING

Namer (Strategist and Linguist)

- **Linguistics MA** (Phonetics & Phonology) | **ABD** Univ. California Berkeley
- Naming, intercultural communication, qualitative research
- Develop & deliver detailed linguistic reports for naming projects including information on pronounceability, negative meaning, and existing brands for target countries & audiences



[Laurel Sutton, MA](#)
Founder and Linguist
Sutton Strategy

INDUSTRY | CONSULTING

Anti-bias Initiatives Director

- **Linguistics PhD** (Sociolinguistics), Georgetown University
- Key training: Qualitative research, strategic communications, discourse analysis, cross-cultural communication
- Leads the Anti-Bias Review Board, a panel of subject matter experts advising brands on inclusive content through research, production support, editing, and sensitivity reading



[Mackenzie Price, PhD](#)
Director, Anti-bias Initiatives
Dotdash Meredith

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Applied Research (Higher Education)

- **Linguistics PhD** (Applied Linguistics), Georgetown University
- Qualitative & quantitative research, program evaluation, survey design
- Sets strategy for the organization's internal and external research agenda, leads large-scale impact measurement and program evaluation research



[Ayşenur Sağdıç, PhD](#)
Director, Market research
Amplify

NON PROFIT | MEDIA

Radio/Podcast News Program Producer

- **Linguistics MA** (Sociolinguistics),
Georgetown University
- Radio production, social media
management, discourse analysis,
content strategy
- Produces and manages a daily
morning news podcast (*Axios Today*)



[Alexandra Botti, MA](#)
Supervising Producer
Axios
(Formerly NPR / PRI)

GOVERNMENT | LOCAL

Language Access Policy Researcher/Consultant

- **Linguistics MA** (Sociolinguistics), Cal State Long Beach
- Language access, equity initiatives, regulatory requirements, operations research
- Led hiring & training of the first in-house translation and interpretation team for City of Long Beach, CA. Responsible for developing language assessment materials



[Juan Rosas, MA](#)

*Language Access Policy Coordinator
City of Long Beach
Now: Senior Health Equity Educator*

GOVERNMENT | FEDERAL

Research Scientist

- **Linguistics MS** (Phonetics), University of Florida
- Mixed methods research, technical writing, interdisciplinary methods
- Researches AI system trustworthiness & social impacts; Drives understanding of socio-technical systems within computational environments (“the social scientist voice in the room”)



[Reva Schwartz, MS \(LinkedIn\)](#)
Principal Investigator for AI Bias
National Institute of Standards
and Technology (NIST)

Where are you in your journey of supporting students' career exploration?

1. I'm **opposed** to industry career preparation as part of a linguistics program!
2. Isn't understanding the current theoretical landscape enough??
3. I've spent my whole life in academia...**I'd like to help but I'm at a loss**
4. I **enthusiastically encourage** my students to explore all career possibilities
5. I **invite alumni back to talk** to my students about their careers in industry
6. I **help my students build networks** with their fellow students and alumni using tools like LinkedIn
7. **My syllabi include** readings and projects that pertain to industry
8. I've **created a project in collaboration** with depts like Computer Science and our School of Business so that interdisciplinary teams of students can develop products & services for academic credit and industry prep

If you'd like to help your students, but you feel at a loss....

Remember: You are already teaching **highly
valuable, transferable skills**

→ *Action:* *Name and emphasize those
skills*

Transferable skills: If you are a linguist, you can...

1. Develop a good **research question**
2. **Design** and **execute research** “end-to-end” projects
 - both as part of a team and as an individual
1. Manage **large quantities of unstructured data**
2. Do **pattern analysis** of that unstructured data applying tools such as:
 - Qualitative, quantitative or computational methods of analysis
 - Discourse analysis, ethnography, survey instruments, R or Python...
 - Playback analysis with research partners to gather more, and more meaningful, insights

(but wait, there's more...)

Transferable skills: If you are a linguist, you can...

1. **Recruit** and **train** appropriate participants for interviews, focus groups, and research projects
2. Develop **rappport** with participants and trainees
3. Perform **semi-structured** or **cognitive** interviews
4. Act as a **participant observer** and use **ethnographic methods** of qualitative inquiry
5. Lead a **playback analysis** or **think-aloud protocol** with your research participants (this is a method of “user research”!)

(and more...!)

Transferable skills: If you are a linguist, you can...

1. Submit an IRB proposal
 2. Comply with data privacy and storage protocols
 3. **Deliver research results** in **tight turnaround times**
 4. Deliver analyses, results & rec's ("insights") in different formats:
 - executive summaries
 - white papers
 - multimedia presentations
1. Adapt presentations to **general and specialist** audiences

Remember: You are not alone.

→ Action: *Take advantage of our amazing linguistics career community (LCL and beyond) and all of our available resources!*

Direct your students to existing free resources

1. Campus Career Centers can be spotty, especially for graduate students. But check yours out to see if they could give a **resume workshop** in your department and/or an **in-person** presentation of Career Center resources for your department
1. Give students names of **alumni** who've made the transition
1. Use LinkedIn as a first-stop **research database** on careers, language & keywords from different sectors, and the types of jobs your alumni do

In sum, *you* as a faculty member and advisor can:

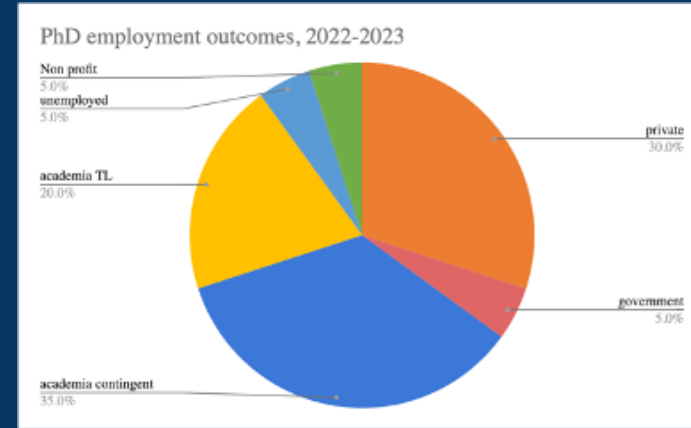
1. Understand (a bit!) about the **employment landscape**
2. Emphasize the **transferability** of the linguistic training you offer at ALL degree levels to ALL of these sectors
3. Know how to **direct your students** to career management resources
4. **(Re)connect** with your graduates who work outside of academia
5. Incorporate **team-based learning and projects** into your syllabi and frame as preparation for the workplace



What *your department* can do:

Build a departmental consensus about the necessity of encouraging diverse career pathways

1. Collect comprehensive employment outcomes by sector / position
2. Discuss outcome data in a **faculty meeting**
3. Present outcome data to your current students & prospectives → *transparency + recruitment*
4. Connect your **course learning goals with potential employment paths**



I want every department to have pie charts and data on all their graduates PLUS those who 'left' mid-degree. Don't lose their stories & expertise.

What *your department* can do

Leverage your alumni community

1. Track **ALL** your alumni (including those who “leave”)
2. Track **ALL** employment outcomes
3. **Invite alumni** to give talks
4. Host a **career mixer** with those alumni (online and/or in person)
5. Encourage your students to **build relationships** with your alumni





Free Linguistics Beyond Academia (LBA) & Linguistics Career Launch (LCL) resources

- [Linguistics CareerCast](#): the *only* podcast featuring linguists discussing their career journeys
- [Linguistics Career Launch YouTube Channel](#): 75+ videos featuring linguists & their career journeys + career management strategies
- [LCL Career Resources Guide](#): A how-to manual to advising your students
- Join the [LBA SIG](#) → [LSA website](#)





If you can only watch TWO webinars from the Linguistics Career Launch YouTube Channel:

- Free, easy steps to make your department open to non-academic careers with Anne Krook
- Human Language Technology (HLT) Jobs with Kelsey Krause



Books about linguists & careers

OUT NOW: (buy these with your faculty development funds 🥰)

Trester, Anna Marie. 2022. [Employing Linguistics](#). Bloomsbury.

Trester, Anna Marie. 2017. [Bringing Linguistics to Work](#). Lulu Publishing.

FORTHCOMING: (buy in future??)

Stewart, Christopher, Joseph Tyler & Ann Thyme-Gobbel. Forthcoming. [An Introduction to Language Technologies](#). MIT Press.

Johnston, Alexandra. 2025. In preparation. [Career Pathways for Linguists](#). Wiley. (please urge me to finish this... 🙏)

You got this, linguists.

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