

Promoting languages in our schools

Three perspectives on languages in our schools:

- A. Curriculum For Excellence**
- B. Government commitment**
- C. Skills for learning, life and work**

A. Curriculum For Excellence

“...we expect the majority of young people to achieve by the end of S3 a level of performance in each language skill which approximates to the level of performance associated with SCQF level 4. The achievement of fourth level outcomes represents a substantial and useful level of competence closely linked to Basic User level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).”

Modern Languages: Principles and practice (Education Scotland, 2009)

A. Curriculum For Excellence

“... In secondary schools, there should be opportunities for young people to build on their language learning through their entitlement to a language learning experience until the end of the Broad General Education (BGE) in their L2. Young people are also entitled to have an L3 experience at some point within the BGE. In the senior phase, young people should be able to study more than one additional language to the level of a National Qualification...”

Modern Languages: Principles and practice (Education Scotland, 2009)

B. Government commitment

“We will introduce a norm for language learning in schools based on the European Union 1 + 2 model - that is we will create the conditions in which every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue. This will be rolled out over two Parliaments, and will create a new model for language acquisition in Scotland.”

Scottish Government Manifesto commitment, 2011

A 1 + 2 approach to language learning

Recommendation 16 states “that schools provide all young people with flexible opportunities and encouragement to study more than one modern language to the level of a National Qualification Unit or course in the senior phase, whether in their own school or through cluster arrangements with other schools.”

Language learning in Scotland: A 1+2 approach (Scottish Government, 2012)

A 1 + 2 approach to language learning

- Potential for improved fluency amongst learners and more learners studying languages at greater depth, with implications on certification.
- Schools and local authorities to ensure pupils have appropriate information linking certification in languages with access to further and higher education and employability.
- Greater potential in senior phase for course materials to be linked to the world of work, employability and the needs of a global economy as well as to global citizenship.

Language learning in Scotland: A 1+2 approach (Scottish Government, 2012)

C. Skills for learning, life and work

- 60% of employers are not satisfied with school/college leavers foreign language employability skills.
- 52% of employers perceive shortfalls in international cultural awareness among school and college leavers
- 77% of businesses have a need for foreign language skills amongst their employees.

CBI/Pearson education and skills survey 2015: Inspiring growth (CBI, 2015)

Languages for learning, life and work

Languages can develop in the learner:

- Better understanding of different cultures
- Improved self confidence
- Enhanced ability to build new relationships
- Improved literacy and reading skills
- Enhanced problem solving, interpersonal and communication skills
- Increased employability

These and other benefits can be found on the website [700 Reasons](#).

Only 6% of world population
are native English speakers.
75% don't speak English at all

Language skills are needed at
all levels in the workforce,
and not simply by an
internationally-mobile elite.

The UK has the worst foreign
language skills in Europe.
This is acting in effect as a
tax on UK trade.

Language skills were cited by
young people as one of the
top barriers to working and
studying abroad.

References:

Talk the talk: a guide to maximising your prospects using languages (British Academy, 2013) - http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Talk_the_Talk.cfm

Education and skills survey 2013: Changing the pace (CBI, 2013) - <http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/06/businesses-fear-skills-shortage-could-hold-back-growth/>

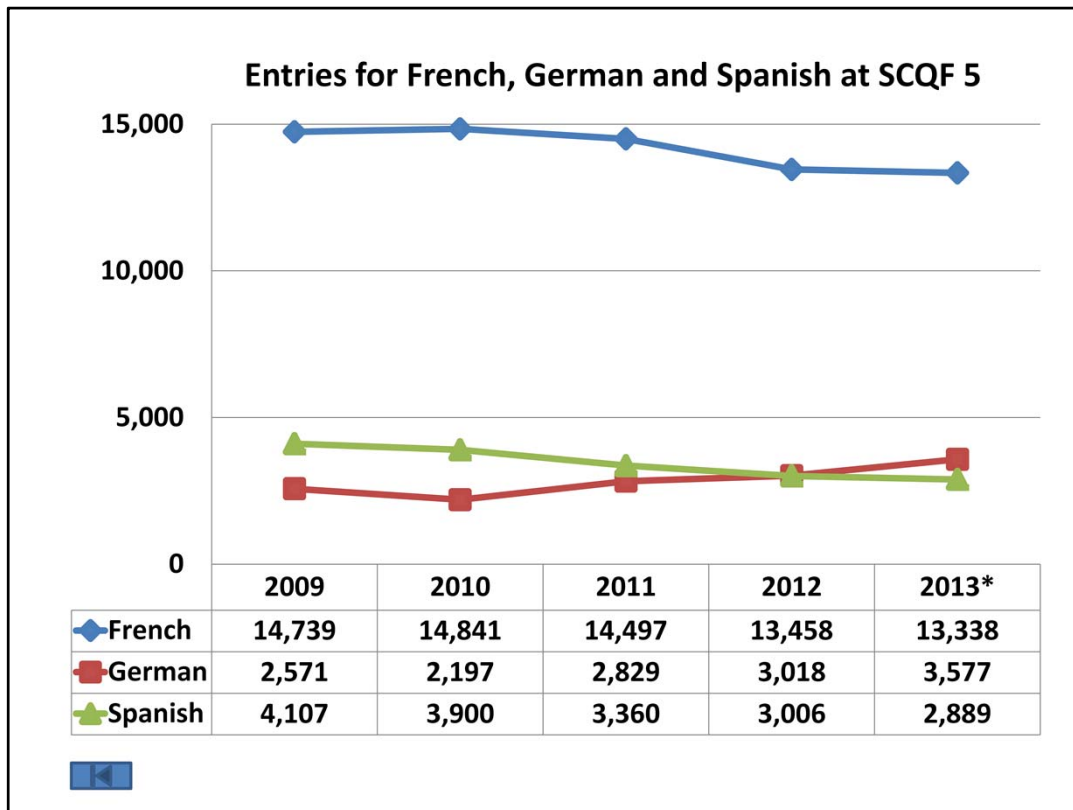
Languages: The State of the Nation. Teresa Tinsley, British Academy (2013) - http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/State_of_the_Nation_2013.cfm

Scotland's Future Workforce - "Keeping Pace in the Global Skills Race?" British Council / SCDI, (June 2014) - <https://scotland.britishcouncil.org/keeping-pace-global-skills-race>

Notes on slides 10

- The following slide compares languages uptake at SCQF 5 for the period 2009-2013.
- **Slide 10 shows that entries for French since 2009 have been on a downward trend and have declined by 10%.**
- Entries for German have increased by 39% since 2009 (after a dip in 2010).
- **Entries for Spanish have decreased by 30% since 2009.**

Data and analysis taken from Language trends in Scotland (SCILT, August 2013) - <http://www.scilt.org.uk/Library/StatisticsonlanguagesinScotland/LanguagetrendsinScotlandAugust2013/tabid/4244/Default.aspx>



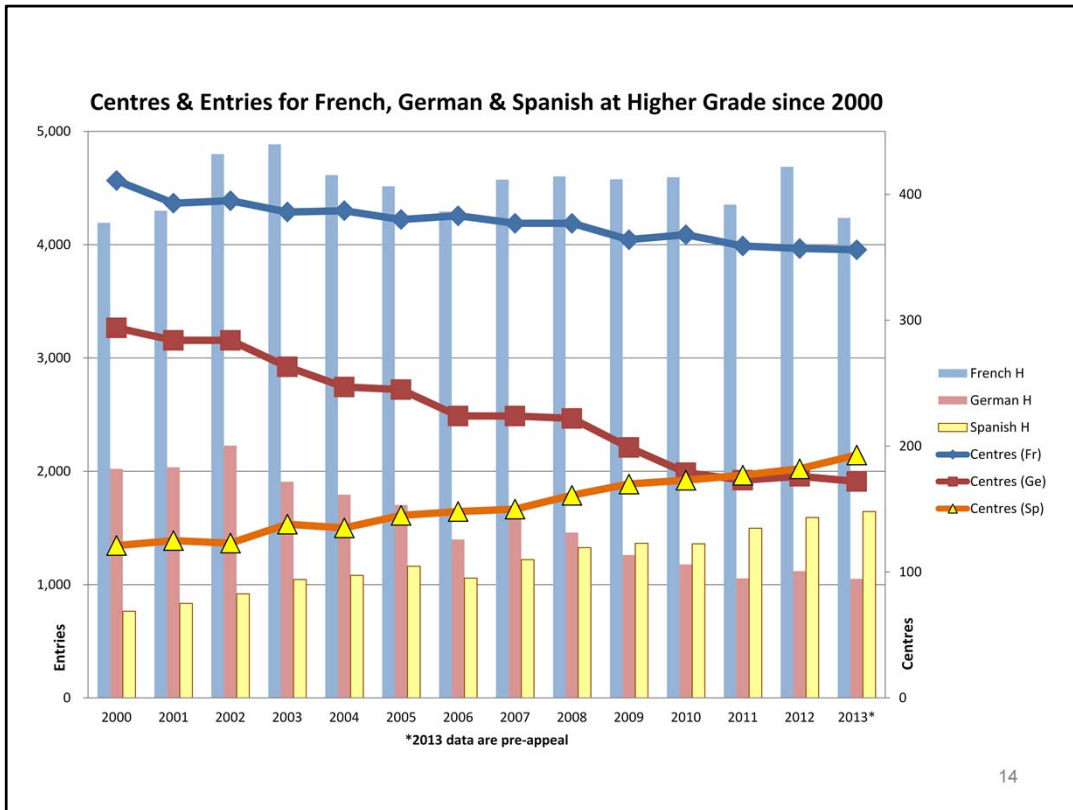
Data and analysis taken from Language trends in Scotland (SCILT, August 2013) - <http://www.scilt.org.uk/Library/StatisticsonlanguagesinScotland/LanguagetrendsinScotlandAugust2013/tabid/4244/Default.aspx>

Notes on slide 12

We examine long-term trend of uptake (2000-2013) in three main languages offered at Higher: French, German and Spanish. We look at number of candidates studying and number of centres offering each language.

- **French is dominant. Uptake is variable but overall entries for 2013 are 1% above entries in 2000. Number of centres offering French decreased by 13%.**
- **German second most common language until 2008. From 2009, entries for Spanish have overtaken German. Uptake of German on downward trend (-48%), and number of centres offering German also diminished (-41%). Since 2011, there have been more centres offering Spanish at Higher.**
- **Spanish on an upward trend, both in no. entries and no. centres offering the language. No. entries up by 115%, and no. centres increased by 60%.**

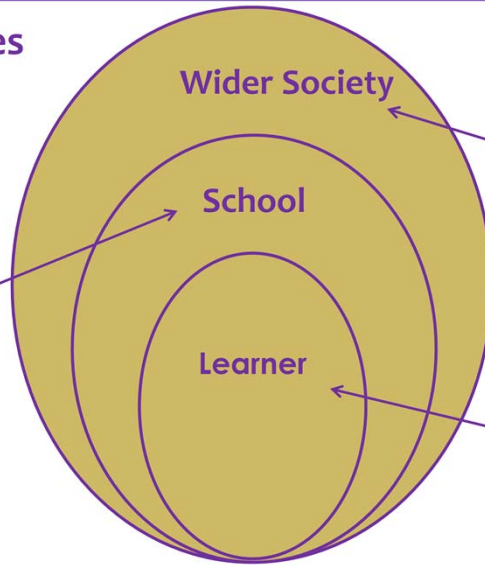
Data and analysis taken from Language trends in Scotland (SCILT, August 2013) - <http://www.scilt.org.uk/Library/StatisticsonlanguagesinScotland/LanguagetrendsinScotlandAugust2013/tabid/4244/Default.aspx>



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Opportunities created by language learning:

Global citizenship; international education; interdisciplinary learning; staff motivation...



Social cohesion; global outlook; employment opportunities; enhanced trade links; skilled workforce ...

Employability; literacy; cognitive skills; communication skills; organisational skills; interpersonal skills...

...and the alternative is...

“Unless the decline in Modern Languages is reversed, Anglophone Britons will become one of the most monolingual peoples in the world, with severe consequences for our economy, for business competitiveness, for international reputation and mobility and for community cohesion at home.”

Review of Modern Foreign Languages provision in higher education in England (HEFCE, 2009)

English is NOT enough

Together we must help Scotland's youngsters realise that "English is enough" is a dangerously misleading myth.

Modern Languages Excellence Report (SCILT, 2011)