

# Careers for linguists: job titles and job ads

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Contact Hadas Kotek for any questions!

Ask: Hello AltAc linguists and other social scientists, please drop your job title and a very brief description here. If you have a link to a relevant job ad, all the better! As titles often vary by company, please add that info too if you're comfortable doing so.

Since responsibilities vary even under the same title, if you see your title represented but the description isn't right, please add yours, too! I've done my best to add some structure around the different titles – hopefully they're generally representative but some mistakes are possible.

Promise: I will add the resulting information into a broader document that I plan to share with the linguistics community after the Fall semester is over.

Other resources:

<https://www.superlinguo.com/post/173873032222/superlinguo-linguist-job-interviews-full-list>

<https://josephctylerswords.medium.com/companies-hiring-conversation-designers-4f74ac9a84f3>

<https://bootcamp.uxdesign.cc/iw/so-what-does-a-conversation-designer-do-a-no-nonsense-look-at-the-job-role-d8de6102c76a>

<https://voicelunch.com/> (possibly no longer active)

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## Research

### Manager of Ethnographic Research

Design and carry out ethnographic research projects using a variety of qualitative methods (focus groups, surveys, participant observation, etc.) to study and improve guest experiences at a theme park.

### Director of Research

I supervise a team of researchers engaged in studies related to language learning and its importance in our multilingual world, as well as program evaluation for large-scale language learning and teacher training programs. Equity of opportunity for language learning is a focus of both our research and our program evaluation work.

### Head of Research (Mango Languages)

As Head of Research, I draw on my interdisciplinary background in linguistics, language learning, pedagogy, educational technology, psychology, and cognitive neuroscience to drive research initiatives and collaborations at Mango Languages.

### Research-Innovation Lead

I connect up research teams with commercial product and service teams at an ethical AI company. Former academic, doing political discourse analysis.

### Marketing Researcher

As a Marketing Researcher I conduct business-to-business (B2B) and consumer-focused surveys to gauge brand and consumer needs and pain points, with an eye towards highlighting how my company's products uniquely solve the pain points. I draw insights to support sales & marketing

### Data Quality Curator, Researcher, Growth Strategist

I work to help clients better understand their customer's pain points and improve their marketing/product design to promote growth. Not a lot of linguistics, but definitely a lot of research and fun questions!

### Senior Research Analyst

Consumer research, analysis, & insights—secondary research, ethnography, designing projects, evaluating proposals, analyzing primary and secondary data, generating insights. I use many of my skill sets, there's a place for sociolx, and it's fun

### Staff Research Scientist

I'm a cognitive scientist at IBM Research. I do basic science research on speech production adaptation and dementia. Here's a link to my website with a better description of what I do:  
<https://researcher.watson.ibm.com/researcher/view.php?person=ibm-rachel.ostrand>

#### Solutions Innovator

As part of Innovative Solutions in an EdTech startup, I conduct research in education, psychology and neuroscience fields in order to develop products that can improve learning and build competencies for industry talents

## UX research or design

#### ux research scientist, audio

I do quantitative behavioral/attitudinal human subjects research to evaluate how people use, perceive, and experience novel audio tech

Social scientists at reality labs research tend to have titles like: research scientist, applied scientist, UX researcher, and sometimes specify specializations. Other jobs I've considered seriously include quantitative UX researcher, and analytical linguist

#### Manager, UXR (User experience research) & Content Design

I managed a team of UXRs and content designers. UXRs conduct end-to-end research in the product lifecycle, which means they do foundational research to understand the problem space, they do concept testing in partnership with product designers and product managers, and then validate final designs with usability studies before they go to developers/engineering to be built/shipped. Content designers/strategists partner closely with product designers and product managers during the development process to make sure the visual designs and content align to help users meet their goals. They can do anything from writing UX copy, communication emails to end users, and develop the whole messaging strategy for a feature. (e.g. how do we 1. Introduce the feature, 2. Communicate the value, 3. Write copy in the user interface that supports the user goal/task)

#### Principal/lead UXR/human factors engineer

I was a consultant who did both user experience research and human factors research, which are related but not the same. HF often focuses on physical products and ergonomics, so you would work with folks with advanced degrees in ergonomics, but the general process of HF research and UX research is very similar. They both have to do with understanding the problem space, helping designers iterate on their concepts, and then validating the final solution before it gets handed off to engineering/development to make the final product. Mostly qualitative, but did do some mixed methods research.

#### Content Design/Content Strategy/UX writing

These titles mean something or nothing, depending on who you ask. By that I mean you will find folks who do the exact same thing and they all have different titles, OR you will find folks with the same titles who do different things. This is largely dependent on the maturity of the design organization within a company and whether they think one title is trendier than the other. Basic duties can include: writing copy for user interfaces (explanatory text, button copy or CTAs, localization (translation) work, content audits (collecting all the writing on a whole site and making sure it's in alignment), creating voice and tone style guides, developing taxonomies, developing messaging strategies, developing marketing campaigns and materials (includes stuff like ad copy, emails, outreach/text messages, etc.) Can sometimes do content-based research. (again, this will depend on the maturity of the design org and whether they have UXRs, etc.)

### UX researcher

I use quantitative and qualitative research methods to learn what features our customers like/don't and make recommendations to the designers and devs about what to change to improve the user experience

### Conversation Designer

- I map out the interaction model for new features on my assistant product. I advocate for UX in the face of technical constraints: what our voice assistant says and doesn't say (+ the how! literally writing nlg templates), and brainstorm what Assistant \*should\* say (guidelines)
- startup cxd, enterprise cxd, and others have their own flavor. That said, dialog management and content (bot flow, bot words) seem important regardless. Then lots of other responsibilities too! Eg NLU intent matching, analytics, chat UI, among others
- Conversation design for chat versus voice, while with many similarities, are definitely distinct crafts. And, as with other software teams, there can be specialized roles in each craft, such as data annotation, content strategy, conversational copywriting.
- Senior conversation design for customer service interactions. I design how interactions could/should work for various companies, and partner with engineers to make it happen.

content designer (sometimes called UX writer, <https://linkedin.com/jobs/view/3326099934>).

### Dialogue Designer

an end-to-end owner of the whole conversation experience, running the gamut from coaching voice talent to helping script dialogue flows in the codebase

## DEI focus

### Director, Anti-Bias Initiatives

Collaborate with SEOs, marketers, editors, and journalists to improve brand health and safety. Integrate anti-bias editing into Content Integrity and DEI strategies company-wide. Train editors on inclusive and anti-bias editing.

## Language Science and Design Manager Situated in DEI

I work with people both in DEI and language science/tech to develop frameworks and resources for identifying and working through bias in and about language.

## Linguist / language engineer / annotation / data / AIML

### Product Operations Manager

I set up and run data annotation projects at a late-stage startup. This involves creating taxonomies for annotating data, training groups of annotators, and doing various analyses of accuracy and speed to maintain annotation quality.

### Annotation Project Lead

Design, run, prioritize, and generally own everything about annotation projects at a large tech company. Create annotation guidelines, create and maintain the ontologies used in annotation, create trainings, answer annotator questions, provide ongoing feedback to annotators to improve their work, propose ways to improve the tasks to improve the speed and accuracy of the overall process.

### Analytical linguist (multiple answers below)

- Ontology or taxonomy building. Can be directly for NLP purposes, or not. Often benefits from linguists' persistence in wanting a rational, consistent system for analyzing things.
- Anything touching data in the NLP space. Deciding what data to collect, how, how to annotate and evaluate it, how to evaluate systems that use it. At higher levels, identifying "data" that needs to be analyzed that currently isn't.
- My job is largely collecting and improving datasets for training and eval, developing/improving evaluation methods, and sometimes going over the results of an evaluation to identify areas where a system can improve, etc.
- And many ALs find themselves doing things like project management and technical writing for a limited stretch of time, even if it's not their core job description.
- We do a mixture of quantitative and qualitative analysis and a mixture of automated and manual evaluation/review of data

### Principal Computational Linguist

When the computer doesn't do what we want in and around the kind of legal contract language we work on, I've gotta figure out how to get it to do what we want.

### Computational linguist/data scientist at a startup

My day to day is actually mostly taking socio-ling stuff and trying to translate it in quant models to help understand users. It's fun some days, and really frustrating on others when the engineers ignore what you do.

### Language Engineer

Are at the beginning of the pipeline as the builders of language modeling artifacts (e.g. FSTs, TTS voice models, slot catalog ontologies)

#### Language Data Researcher

Are at the other end of the pipeline, analyzing the performance of language models and their impact on conversational user experience, feeding their recommendations back to Lang. Engs and scientists to improve/expand models. LDRs are expected to have data analysis skill and be able to query data, but don't have the same expectations on the building side.

#### Data Specialist/Linguist

fit in throughout the pipeline to provide things like annotation of data, doing data collections for model testing, and localizing language artifacts for additional languages. This is considered to be a non-technical role.

At Amazon, in terms of technical skills required: LE (technical) > LDR (analysis skills) > DS/L (non-technical)

#### Computational linguist / "AI Linguist"

I work with AI/ML engineers to build content understanding models. I define concepts & write annotation guidelines, collect labeled data via crowdsourcing, do model evaluation, etc.

#### Data Scientist

- experimental design + testing, data visualization, modeling, setting up + monitoring data pipelines, thinking through strategy, setting/tracking goals/metrics, and explaining all of the above to other people.
- Analysing the problem, figuring out the best architecture to solve it, sometimes some data annotation, then writing code to pre-process your data and to either train a model or use an existing model, then analysing the performance of the model/figuring out ways to improve it.

#### Conversational AI Engineer

front-end dev for voice assistant, training and evaluating STT models (corpora development, phonetic pronunciation mapping, WER testing etc), TTS tuning with SSML

#### Data Scientist and Applied Scientist

I prototype current deep learning and other machine learning techniques in natural language processing and computer vision, to develop solutions in applied problem areas.

## Ontology/taxonomy/knowledge engineering/...

#### Taxonomist

managing metadata to help organize data like shopping inventories, medical data, etc

### Lexical Developer (Wolfram Alpha)

I work for a small tech company that makes software for researchers, academics, think tanks, and similar. We have lots of searchable data, and my job is to make sure that all the data is properly tagged and organized so that it can be accessed easily. We also make our data available to technologies like Siri and Amazon Alexa, so part of this tagging involves writing code that can interpret natural language queries. Since we only have a finite set of data, this code is closer to computational sentence diagramming and writing generative grammar rules than it is to machine learning.

### Product Hierarchy Specialist

Responsible for ensuring products are assigned to the correct taxonomy. This is relevant for retailers and brands who want to see their sales reports by product category and need to make sure therefore that products are classified correctly. (example job: <https://careers.walmart.ca/job/mississauga/can-specialist-product-hierarchy/4853/35010354160>)

### Content specialist (tech startup)

I do anything from conducting interviews, research on specific subjects, internal & external trainings & training materials on our SaaS products, chat logs, AI training stuff, etc.

### Knowledge Engineer

my role is a combination of ontological design + data analytics + product management

## {Project, Program, Product} manager

### Project manager

we're going to do a thing! I'll make sure everyone knows what they have to do when, and has everything they need

### Program manager

now let's do a bunch of projects! How do they build on each other? How can we do better next time? Where are we going long term?

## Editing and writing

### Lexicographer

write (along with many others) dictionaries (monolingual, bilingual, for learners &c); also involves specifications, usability & project management

### Commissioning editor for language learning materials

work with some publisher to identify gaps or areas of growth and then identifies authors who might contribute content in those areas. Also reject or tweak unsolicited proposals -- very few are ready to go as is

#### Managing director (Language Science Press)

I run a scientific publisher; Typesetting, some scripting, some web programming, conference book stands, strategy, funding, accounting, PR, some staff development, some design and cartography.

#### Editor/producer (at Young W)

Content development and copywriting, social media, marketing, creating an arts & letters directory, currently working on a series of coffee table books on various languages (see here under Language: <https://www.youngw.ca/get-involved/>)

## Curriculum/instructional design

#### Curriculum designer and editor (at e-learning companies),

creating subject content (eg language arts, foreign language) and evaluating effectiveness

#### Instructional Designer

As an Instructional Designer I created online course content as a part of a digital training session. In general, instructional designers create instructional content—it's sort of like the prep part of teaching without the actual in-class instruction.

#### Educational Developer

I work in a teaching and learning center where I support the campus community in the design, implementation, and evaluation of various learning experiences. I facilitate a lot of workshops and longer courses, most of which focus on eLearning, internationalization, and the scholarship of teaching and learning

## Work at educational institutions

#### Academic librarian ("Digital Scholarship Specialist")

focus on text + data mining ( -> came from historical sociolx + corpus stylistics).

#### Subject librarian at a large university library

- I maintain the collection for Linguistics, Dutch and German, give various skills trainings to students & researchers, and am one of the library's Open Access specialists.
- Subject and liaison librarian for languages and literatures plus open access



## Director of Education and Professional Practice

I work at a professional association where I'm in charge of professional development, public / youth outreach and research on the profession. It's mainly program management, service design and evaluation

## Freelance consulting & coaching

### Transformational Coach (also, career, business, and life coaching)

Through structured conversations held in a safe, confidential and non-judgemental space, I help clients overcome limiting beliefs as they navigate change to achieve their goals. I use a variety of techniques from psychology, UX, management, development and of course, linguistics. Key skill areas include deep listening, data analysis, conversation analysis, semantics, metaphor, pragmatics, and understanding of sociolinguistic principles. Also, research methods, esp qualitative and ethnographic approaches.

### CEO of my own firm, Worthwhile Research & Consulting

Anti-bias consultant and researcher, book author, e-learning course creator/presenter.

## I don't have a good category for these ones but they're cool

### Test Developer

Worked with large-scale (statewide and nationwide) clients to develop equitable, reliable, multi-modal assessments of English language proficiency for students in K-12 settings. Supervised freelance test item writers, trained instructors on giving the test instrument, and supervised raters of student scores on qualitative assessments.

### Analyst

Consultants who analyze language patterns to solve business problems.  
(I don't work here, but I've always wanted to: <https://linguisticlandscapes.com/team>)

## A list of other titles that don't have a description

Localization project manager  
Machine Translation engineer  
Academic Services Manager  
Program Manager & Linguist  
Senior technical program manager  
dictionary editor  
textbook editor  
textbook writer

communications consultant