

Ian Bauckham, CBE, (CEO of Tenax Schools Trust and Chair – Review of Modern Foreign Language Pedagogy in Key Stage 3 & 4, Teaching Schools Council): Enhancing MFL teaching Pedagogy to Improve Pupil Attainment. This keynote address was very well received by all in the room with Ian stating that *'languages matter because language is central to being human. It is indispensable because it allows pupils to see themselves from a different perspective and a key part of a general and liberal curriculum'*. Language knowledge is enriching and critical to help us all relate to others, stating clearly that *'languages are the ultimate in soft diplomacy'*. Therefore, the decline of languages is critical. The language teachers in the conference hall didn't disagree. Ian presented some worrying statistics highlighting the decline in MFL at KS4 and KS5:

- Of the 2018 cohort that take GCSE Maths, only 50% of these complete a language GCSE and dual linguists are less than 20%
- At KS5, the very steep decline of pupils taking languages is resulting in German being an endangered species
- 4% of KS5 students take a language

Ian termed A Level listening papers as *'impenetrable'* even to strong linguists. He stated that this decline also *'endangers home grown language teachers'* as there are simply not the volume of students required to become our language teachers of the future.

Ian asked the conference hall *how can we all make a difference and what can we do differently in MFL?* We are all aware that students need to know and understand the rationale for MFL. Evident in research is that students *do* understand this, but as a result of *'not enjoying'* languages throughout KS2 and KS3 uptake are struggling at KS4. In addition, the fact that many schools have reduced Key Stage 3 to only two years in response to the new GCSEs, limits the opportunity for language teachers to make significant gains in uptake. The pedagogy and practice of MFL teaching is critical and there are 15 recommendations to follow in the [Pedagogy Review](#) (November 2016); his advice, follow all, not some and do not *'cherry pick'*. Ian raised the issue of social disadvantage in MFL stating that these students are unlikely to learn or have access to a language.

Ian would like to see a bursary to encourage young people to opt for languages at University, quite like sports, so there is a real focus. Ian highlighted the work done by Cambridge University. There is a programme such as this across other universities, but this is only accessed by international students.