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Bilingualism and Business: The Importance of Language in International Business

LILY PERSHICA  
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Reviewed and approved\* by the following:

Lauren Halberstadt, Ph.D.  
Associate Teaching Professor of Spanish  
Thesis Supervisor

Krista Brune, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Portuguese and Spanish  
Honors Adviser

\* Electronic approvals are on file.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the benefits of bilingualism in the international business workforce. As the world becomes more globalized, it is important that businesses adapt to the changing professional climate. Having a grand knowledge on the language and culture of the country that a company works with is imperative for best chances of success, therefore bilingualism is a key tool to possess as an expatriate (Peltokorpi, 2010). To understand why bilingualism is an important attribute to have in international business, the benefits will be examined and discussed from an international business perspective. Four main benefits will be analyzed:

1. Cultural competence and communication
2. Market penetration and competitive advantage
3. Human resources and internal development
4. Global leadership development

Finally, there must be consideration taken to the challenges that may be faced when bilingualism is involved in business.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

As the modern workforce becomes more and more globalized it is important that language is made a priority when dealing with international business. Language has the power to grow companies, grow partnerships, and grow markets.

While bilingualism has always been a staple of humanity, the idea of bilingualism as something to be learned started in the 60s and 70s as learning different languages became an option for schools in the United States. However, as the Reagan administration took over and the United States favored a more conservative approach to language education in the late 80s and 90s, educational language policy became prevalent and a new standard in the U.S. education system (Cahnmann, 1998). As the world has become more globalized the importance of bilingualism has become more prominent. Communication is the foundation of relationships therefore, with the new global context of the world, it is extremely important that people can communicate effectively with others all over the world. Recently, American schools are encouraging students to gain language education, and places of employment are looking for bilingual candidates to fill open job positions. It is especially important when dealing with a global marketplace because it gives more opportunities to the companies for expansion and competition. To truly understand what bilingualism means we must consider a definition. According to Grant (2008), bilingualism in its most simple definition is an individual's knowledge of two languages, however bilingualism can be so much more complicated than this. There are levels of fluency to factor in as well as education, cultural interactions, and frequency

of use of language. In this thesis, bilingual will be defined as an individual who has fluency in two languages and can successfully conduct business in either language.

The importance of the relationship of bilingualism and international business will be outlined here. First, the discussion of bilingualism's impacts on communication levels and cultural competence which will move into the examination of market penetration and competitive advantage when companies put effort into prioritizing bilingualism in employees. Next, there will be discussion on human resource management and internal training and development with bilingual employees and the impact it has on successful business for a company. Then there will be discussion of the impact bilingualism has on negotiation and conflict resolution, how it is helpful when dealing with legal and regulatory standards and how it offers acceleration in global leadership development. Lastly, there will be an examination of the challenges to consider when it comes to bilingualism in international business.

## Chapter 2

### Cultural Competence and Communication

Intercultural communication is a term that has become more relevant in current business practices. Defined by Piller (2007), intercultural communication is “linguistic and social practices that bring culture and identity into being” (Piller, 2007, p. 209). When it comes to business, it is extremely important to have a good understanding of the people with whom you are working, if a company does not understand the culture and language of the group with whom they are doing business, the success of their relationship may falter. As bilingualism has become more popular term in education and the workforce, intercultural communication has also become more frequently discussed. Although the two are not always an automatic duo of skills, one is not truly bilingual until they have gained intercultural communication skills (Vesa Peltokorpi, 2010). With that being said, the first benefit to bilingualism in international business is gained intercultural communication skills. To dig deeper into the importance of intercultural communication in international business, cultural competence and communication must be examined separately.

Cross-cultural competence, specifically in international business, can best be defined as “an individual’s effectiveness in drawing upon a set of knowledge, skills, and personal attributes in order to work successfully with people from different national cultural backgrounds at home or abroad” (James P. Johnson et al., 2006). According to the authors of this definition, in order to achieve cross-cultural competence, one must possess seven specific attributes, the two relevant to the writing presented here are:

1. Clear communication in the language of the cultural group

## 2. Active social relations with the cultural group

This demonstrates how one cannot be fully cross-culturally competent without being bilingual to some degree, and there are many benefits that come with this competence. Chen (2019) explains that “cross-cultural competence is positively related to the performance of expatriate employees. The stronger the cross-cultural competence of an expatriate employee is, the better the performance in the host country is and the higher the corresponding job performance is” (Chen, 2019). Chen then goes on to explain that the interestingly it has a direct impact on the stress levels of expatriates. The more cross-cultural competence an expatriate has, the more comfortable they feel in the host country which reduces stress as well as gives expatriates an opportunity to do stress relieving activities that someone with weak competence levels would not be able to successfully do (Chen, 2019). Additionally, cultural awareness minimizes misunderstandings between parties, resulting in smoother business transactions (James P. Johnson et al., 2006). Cultural competence is necessary in international business in order to have success. For bilinguals, not only does one understand a language, but they also understand a culture. Improved communication is also an important attribute of bilingual employees.

Communication is key in international business; it is one of the most important skills to garner for success; Mistakes are often made at the fault of miscommunication. Therefore, it is extremely important that businesses are sufficiently communicative in all languages in which they work with. If a company is doing business with a partner in a country who speaks a different language, it is vital to have an employee who is bilingual in that language and that that employee is the communicator between the country and the business. The more languages a company effectively communicate in, the more people you can reach resulting in growth and expansion into larger marketplaces. Bilingual business professionals are better equipped to create



connections and solidify a relationship between global partners, because they can communicate effectively and make clients feel more heard and understood (Ali, 2020). Furthermore, bilingual's literary competency is heightened. They not only can read effectively in their second language, but also their reading comprehension in their first language is strengthened. This will ultimately increase communication skills in both languages, setting them apart from a monolingual employee and doubling the benefits for the company (Fox et al., 2019). In addition, linguistic processing and reasoning skills are enhanced in both languages which result in a more developed vocabulary and an easier understanding of communication tactics (Fox et al., 2019). These skills are a necessary advantage for international business. There are many directly linked benefits in communication skills for bilinguals.

Cultural competency and communication are critical benefits of bilingualism within business that are woven tightly together to create intercultural communication skills. For example, someone who speaks Spanish, will be able to better understand the other party when dealing with Spanish speaking clients, not only in the sense of listening to their words, but understanding how to operate within the cultural space. This is because one cannot truly be bilingual without studying the culture of their second language. Many people who study languages want to have the firsthand experiences with people who speak the learnt language, which in turn will create a cultural understanding that will only help future companies in global relations. If one does not understand the culture in which they are working with, vast mistakes could be made which could harm the success of businesses deals, which is why it is important to have an abundance of intercultural communicators on the team. Cultural competency and communication are just the beginning of the necessary skillset that are gained by bilinguals who work in international business.

## Chapter 3

### Market Penetration and Competitive Advantage

Market penetration is a major benefit of utilizing bilingual employees and their intercultural skills. The more people in the company that can speak another language, the larger opportunity the company must explore other markets. This is because the employees who are bilingual can not only successfully converse with a larger client base, but they can also understand other cultures and practices as discussed in Chapter Two. Creating a larger consumer base is a necessity for success and bilingualism is a tool that can be used to penetrate new markets and grow the consumer base. In turn, businesses can then penetrate new markets by negotiations, relationship building, and market research which ultimately leads to increased market share and profitability (Tenzer, 2017). Market penetration also gives companies a competitive advantage, strengthening the ranking of the company in comparison to others (Tenzer, 2017). These are all important qualities a business must have to reach full potential and success.

Tenzer, Terjesen, and Harzing (2017) explain that bilingual employees aid companies to communicate effectively with potential customers, partners, and stakeholders in their native languages which is important as it strengthens these relationships. Their research highlights the importance of language in international business, emphasizing how bilingualism facilitates rapport-building by being able to communicate effectively with more individuals, negotiation as a bilingual employee will have an easier time selling a product in their second language than someone who is monolingual, and understanding of cultural nuances as discussed in Chapter Two bilinguals can better understand and recognize cultural differences. By speaking the

language of the target market, businesses can establish trust which will ultimately increase their chances of market penetration. Tenzer's (2017) research shows that language use in international business impacts the internationalization of MNCs and new ventures, which influences the company's market penetration by opening up new markets to explore.

Bilingualism is closely linked to cultural competence, as discussed, which is essential for successful market penetration in diverse cultural environments. According to Schomaker and Zaheer (2014), language proficiency enables individuals to understand cultural norms, preferences, and business practices. This understanding enhances the company's ability to tailor products, services, and marketing strategies to the preferences of the clients as they can better understand the cultural climate of the business deal. Bilingual employees have an easier time navigating cultural barriers and adapting business practices to align with cultural expectations. This helps to facilitate market entry and support of the company.

Bilingual employees can aid their company by engaging with customers on a deeper level which results in a stronger trust of the company trust and customer loyalty. A study compared business interactions between multilingual employees and then monolinguals. They found that managers and other leaders within the company who meet bilingual expectations and possess greater cultural empathy and communication skills which allows them to connect to customers and coworkers in meaningful ways. This is because they were more motivated to go out of their way to make the client feel more comfortable and to truly understand the wants and needs of the client. (Elrayah, 2024). By speaking the language of their target audience, companies can convey empathy, understanding, and respect, which are essential for building long-term relationships and brand loyalty in new markets which is important because it always ensures the relevancy of the

company in the global marketplace it also sets the company apart from others creating a competitive advantage.

In order to conduct successful business in the international market, extensive market research must be conducted. Bilingual employees often work directly in the research process to provide insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and trends at a level that a monolingual employee simply would not be able to attain. In their research, Johnson and Lenartowicz (2006) found that language proficiency opens the door to more opportunities for the company as they are able to communicate with more groups and clients as well as reach a larger audience of potential consumers. It allows the company to facilitate access to local networks, information sources in more languages, and consumer feedback. This is all important information that the company can then use to make informed decisions and if necessary, adapt their strategies to local market condition. Advertising is a perfect example of this because a company can then successfully communicate in another language within their advertisement and ensure that it is reflective of cultural norms and consumer behaviors.

Bilingualism presents a strategic asset that can significantly enhance a company's competitive position. Through various efforts, bilingual employees can provide their company with unique advantages in the global marketplace. Bilingual employees can hold their company responsible for adapting their products, services, and marketing strategies to diverse customer needs and preferences. Cultural competency and communication efforts strengthened when a company prioritizes bilingualism. By speaking the language of their target markets, companies can better connect with customers by tailoring their products to their consumers' needs. They can also anticipate evolving demands which results in a competitive edge in meeting customer expectations (Tully, 2020 This is because they can better read consumer norms and understand

the needs and wants of customers, based on news, reports, articles, and other local indicators that someone who does not speak the language would not be able to understand (Tully, 2020). These strengthened intercultural communication skills highlight how bilingual individuals can bridge linguistic and cultural divides more easily than a monolingual or internet help.

Bilingual employees help their company in strengthening their ability to build strategic partnerships and alliances across borders. Because of bilingual individuals' superior communication skills and cultural competence, they are able to build trust and rapport with potential partners from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. By facilitating effective communication and relationship-building, bilingual employees can help companies establish strategic alliances with other companies in other countries which in turn allows access to new markets so that the company can capitalize on emerging opportunities they may not be seen in the company's home country's consumer patterns. This ultimately ends up strengthening their competitive position in the global marketplace (Ali, 2023).

To conclude, bilingualism offers companies a strategic advantage in market penetration and a valuable source of competitive advantage in international business. It allows adaptation to diverse customer needs, facilitate global collaboration, and builds strategic partnerships. By leveraging the linguistic and cultural diversity of their workforce, companies can enhance their competitiveness, expand their market presence, and achieve sustainable growth and profitability in an increasingly interconnected and multicultural world.

## Chapter 4

### Human Resources and Competitive Advantage

In international business, human resource management, and training and development initiatives are essential components in a company's success as a company should always want their employees to exceed current standards. Whether it be workshops, trainings, extra classes, or check-in meetings with the HR department, it is important that companies invest in the future of their employees. Bilingualism helps strengthen these aspects which highlights another benefit to prioritizing language skills in employees in an international business context. A goal-oriented focus on bilingualism plays a pivotal role in leveraging the talents and capabilities of a diverse workforce while empowering employees thereby enhancing their skills and work ethic.

Bilingualism presents unique opportunities and challenges for human resource management practices and employee development. This chapter explores how bilingualism influences various aspects of human resource management and its implications for organizational success while also taking into account how organizations can leverage bilingualism to foster linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness, and intercultural competence among their workforces.

Human resource management is a vital department for current day business, and it can also be impacted by bilingualism. When HR professionals value bilingualism they can recruit and attract talent from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Bilingual individuals often command higher earnings and possess valuable language skills sought after by multinational corporations. Human resource managers can leverage bilingualism as a necessary skill for recruitment, identifying candidates who can effectively communicate with international clients, partners, and colleagues, thus strengthening the organization's global competitiveness (Bleakley, 2004). This

can encourage companies to invest in language training and development programs to enhance employees' linguistic proficiency and cultural competence.

There are many positive impacts of bilingualism on cognitive strategy and decision-making, suggesting that language training can improve employees' problem-solving skills and intercultural communication abilities (Adesope, 2010). The opportunity for employees to take language courses and participate in cultural immersion programs will ultimately foster a more inclusive and collaborative work environment. This will allow human resource managers to build and manage cross-cultural teams more effectively. Because bilingual employees tend to possess greater cross-cultural competence, communication skills, and empathy, they are more valuable to multicultural teams (Cavallaro, 2020). Human resource managers can use bilingual team members as cultural facilitators who are dedicated to promoting collaboration, creativity, and innovation across diverse teams and geographies as they are more aware of the environment and can better self-report and manage others (Fry, 2003). This ties into the idea that bilingualism can enhance employee engagement and retention by promoting a sense of inclusion, belonging, and cultural diversity within the organization (Grosbeck, 2012). Bilingualism is increasingly valued as a leadership trait in global organizations which gives the company an opportunity to develop global leaders who can navigate complex international business environments (Osland et al., 2012).

Training and development initiatives can alter the state of a company and its success. A strategic focus on bilingualism enables organizations to implement language training programs to enhance employees' linguistic proficiency in target languages. According to research done by Bialystok (2012), where bilingual children were studied and found a heightened rate of literacy development, they then found that this stronger literary competency can be seen in bilingual

adults as well, there is a positive impact of bilingualism on language and literacy development, suggesting that language training can improve employees' communication skills as a whole. By offering language courses and immersion programs, organizations can empower employees to develop fluency in foreign languages, enabling them to communicate effectively with international clients, partners, and colleagues, and thus supporting the organization's global expansion efforts (Bialystok, 2012). It also benefits the company to facilitate cultural immersion initiatives that expose all employees, especially those who are not bilingual, to diverse cultural perspectives and practices. Because bilingual employees possess greater cross-cultural competence, empathy, and understanding, they are ideal candidates for cultural immersion experiences because they can use these skills to better connect to clients and fellow colleagues (Cavallaro, 2020). However, it is essential to encourage all employees, including monolingual individuals, to participate in international assignments, cultural exchange programs, and virtual cross-cultural training sessions to expose them to different cultural contexts that can foster empathy and respect for cultural diversity, and develop their ability to navigate intercultural interactions more effectively. Bilingualism provides a foundation for the development of intercultural competence among employees, however there is always room for improvement and practice as cultures are constantly changing. Training and development programs can incorporate intercultural communication workshops, diversity training sessions, and cultural sensitivity exercises to enhance employees' ability to navigate cultural differences, manage conflicts, and build meaningful relationships with colleagues and clients from diverse backgrounds (Cohen, 2017). Training and development initiatives can provide aspiring leaders with opportunities to develop their leadership skills and prepare them for leadership roles in multicultural settings (Osland et al., 2012).



To conclude, bilingualism contributes to valuable opportunities for human resource management in international business as well as for training and development initiatives. By recognizing and improving the linguistic diversity of their workforce, organizations can enhance recruitment efforts, promote employee development, foster cross-cultural collaboration, and cultivate a more inclusive and globally minded organizational culture, ultimately driving organizational success in an increasingly interconnected and multicultural world.

## Chapter 5

### Global Leadership Development

With the rapidly evolving culture of international business, it is imperative that companies focus efforts on global leadership and how to effectively use bilingualism to aid in advancement. There are three main topics that will be discussed in this chapter; what does global leadership development look like from a bilingual point of view, how to use bilingualism to improve negotiation and conflict resolution skills, and how bilingualism aids in legal and regulatory compliance.

Effective global leadership is essential for driving organizational success across diverse markets and cultures. Bilingualism offers a unique advantage in the development of global leaders. Companies can leverage bilingualism to create leaders who can navigate cultural complexities and drive collaboration and innovation on a global scale. A company should offer global leadership development programs that emphasize the importance of cultural competence and language proficiency. Cultural competence is significant in preparing leaders to navigate diverse cultural contexts and build trust and rapport with stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds. A successful leader can properly communicate to all groups of people which makes language knowledge an essential leadership skill. Bilingual leaders possess the linguistic skills and cultural awareness needed to understand local customs and adapt their leadership style so that they can influence larger and more diverse groups of people (Osland et al., 2012). Additionally, bilingualism enhances leaders' cross-cultural communication skills, enabling them to bridge linguistic and cultural divides effectively. Bilingual leaders can communicate fluently with international colleagues, clients, and partners, fostering open dialogue, mutual

understanding, and collaboration across borders (Cohen, 2017). This is because bilingual leaders demonstrate greater adaptability and flexibility in navigating complex international business environments. Bilingual managers possess cognitive advantages, such as enhanced problem-solving skills and decision-making abilities, which enable them to thrive in diverse cultural contexts. Bilingual leaders can quickly adapt to changing circumstances, anticipate challenges, and leverage cultural diversity as a source of innovation and competitive advantage, thereby driving organizational performance and success in global markets (Elrayah, 2024). Leaders who speak multiple languages possess an enhanced global mindset and strategic vision among leaders which allows them to envision and execute strategies that capitalize on opportunities in diverse markets. Bilingual leaders are well-equipped to lead diverse teams and navigate complex international business environments. They can use their linguistic and cultural knowledge to identify emerging trends, anticipate market shifts, and develop innovative strategies that drive sustainable growth and competitive advantage on a global scale. Tenzer (2017) found that bilinguals have a stronger sense of self-sufficiency and because of this it is easier for them to work at an individual level and curate the necessary information a company needs for competitive advantages in the global marketplace.

A large skill that is benefitted by bilingualism is negotiation and conflict resolution. These are critical skills in international business, where diverse cultural contexts and linguistic barriers often present challenges. Bilingualism can play a significant role in facilitating effective negotiation and resolution of conflicts in multicultural settings. Bilingual individuals possess linguistic flexibility which allows them to switch between languages based on the environment and context. Divekar (2020) highlights how negotiation effectiveness is heavily impacted by bilingualism, because it allows negotiators to communicate fluently with counterparts who may

not speak their native language. Bilingual negotiators can adapt their communication style, employ appropriate linguistic and cultural cues, and build rapport with counterparts, thereby fostering trust and facilitating agreement in cross-cultural negotiations (Divekar, 2020). It also creates cultural sensitivity and understanding, which are essential for effective negotiations in multicultural contexts. Bilingual individuals possess greater awareness of cultural nuances, norms, and communication styles which strengthens their skills to navigate cultural differences and avoid misunderstandings during negotiations. Bilingual negotiators can better interpret verbal and nonverbal cues, identify common ground, and accommodate cultural preferences, thereby building bridges and overcoming cultural barriers in negotiation processes (Cohen, 2017). By hiring bilingual employees, companies have built-in mediators and facilitators in resolving conflicts between parties from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Effective conflict resolution and mediation are reliant on a company's ability to communicate and understand the perspective of other parties. Therefore, bilingual mediators can bridge communication gaps, clarify misunderstandings, and help parties find mutually acceptable solutions to conflicts which allows for reconciliation and preserving relationships (Reyes Ramirez, 2010). Companies can provide cross-cultural negotiation training to employees to enhance their negotiation skills and cultural competence. Research suggests that cultural intelligence training, which includes language proficiency and cross-cultural communication skills, can improve negotiation outcomes in multicultural contexts. By equipping employees with linguistic and cultural knowledge, organizations can encourage them to navigate complex negotiation situations, build trust with international counterparts, and achieve mutually beneficial agreements, thereby enhancing organizational competitiveness and success in global markets (Johnson, 2006). Bilingualism plays a crucial role in negotiation and conflict resolution in

international business because it fosters linguistic flexibility, cultural sensitivity, and mediation skills.

Legal and regulatory compliance is very important for multinational corporations operating in diverse global markets. Bilingualism can aid in the navigation of complex legal frameworks and regulatory requirements across different countries. With training, bilingual individuals possess the linguistic skills necessary to interpret legal documents, contracts, and agreements in multiple languages. Language proficiency can aid in understanding legal terminology and nuances of a given agreement, particularly in international business transactions. Bilingual employees can review legal documents accurately, identify potential risks or discrepancies, and ensure that contracts comply with local laws and regulations, thereby minimizing legal exposure and protecting the interests of the company (Hargitt, 2013). Additionally, effective communication with local authorities, regulatory agencies, and government officials in foreign markets can be highly successful. Language proficiency can help facilitate interactions with regulatory bodies and in the process of obtaining necessary permits, licenses, and approvals for business operations. Bilingual employees can liaise with regulatory authorities, clarify legal requirements, and address compliance issues proactively, reducing bureaucratic delays and avoiding legal penalties or sanctions (Bleakley, 2004). Additionally, studies by Tully (2020) and Grogan (2016) emphasize the significance of cultural competence in legal practice and dispute resolution. Bilingual legal professionals can communicate effectively with clients, witnesses, and stakeholders from different cultural backgrounds, recognize cultural nuances in legal proceedings, and adapt their strategies to suit the cultural expectations and norms of diverse audiences which enhances the effectiveness of legal representation and compliance efforts (Tully, 2020; Grogan, 2016). Companies can implement training and

compliance programs to educate employees about legal and regulatory requirements in international business. Language training and cultural competence development are essential components of effective compliance programs. By providing employees with language courses, cross-cultural training, and legal education workshops, organizations can enhance their understanding of local laws, regulations, and business practices, encourages them to identify compliance risks, and equip them with the skills needed to ensure legal and regulatory compliance are being followed (Grosseck, 2012).

In conclusion, global leadership development initiatives should recognize the value of bilingualism in nurturing leaders who can navigate cultural complexities, negotiate and resolve conflicts, and successfully follow legal and regulatory standards. By leveraging bilingualism as a strategic asset, organizations can develop leaders who possess the cultural competence, cross-cultural communication skills, adaptability, and strategic vision needed to succeed in today's globalized environment.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Challenges and Considerations**

While bilingualism offers numerous advantages in international business, organizations must also navigate various challenges and considerations associated with managing a bilingual workforce. This chapter explores some of the key challenges and considerations and provides insight on how organizations can address them effectively.

One challenge organizations face is the variability in language proficiency among bilingual employees. Bilingual individuals may have differing levels of proficiency in their second language, which can impact communication effectiveness and task performance. Therefore, it is important that companies assess and address language proficiency gaps through targeted training and development programs to ensure that employees possess the language skills necessary for their roles in international business contexts (Grosjean, 2010). Although bilingual individuals have greater intercultural communication skills, there will still be unknown cultural differences that can lead to misinterpretations and misunderstandings. According to 2021(2023), cultural differences in communication styles, norms, and values can impact business interactions and relationships again promoting the importance of training on cultural sensitivity and awareness among employees to mitigate the risk of cultural misinterpretations.

Additionally, bilingual individuals may exhibit linguistic and cultural biases that influence their behavior and decision-making. It has been posited that language use can shape individuals' cognitive processes and attitudes, leading to biases in decision-making and problem-solving (Li, 2020). To address this, Li suggests that organizations promote critical self-awareness among bilingual employees so that they can recognize and address linguistic and cultural biases

that may impact their interactions with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders. On that note, it is important that companies adopt a holistic approach to bilingualism that emphasizes the integration of language skills, cultural competence, and intercultural communication abilities to maximize the benefits of linguistic diversity and enhance organizational effectiveness in global markets (Cohen, 2017).

The last challenge that bilingual employees may face is maintaining their language skills over time, particularly if they have limited opportunities for language use and practice. Language attrition, the loss of language proficiency, can occur when people are not consistently exposed to their second language which overtime will decline proficiency levels (Gallo et al., 2021). -This is why companies must support bilingual employees in maintaining their language skills through language immersion programs, language exchange initiatives, and ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure that they remain effective communicators and continue to meet the companies' standards of business interactions.

In conclusion, while bilingualism offers significant advantages in international business, companies must also be aware of the various challenges and considerations so that they can effectively leverage linguistic diversity. By promoting language proficiency, cultural sensitivity, self-awareness, integration of language and culture, and ongoing skill development among bilingual employees, companies can enhance communication effectiveness and obtain maximum success in today's globalized business environment. A bilingual cohort of employees need and warrant continued support to be effective contributors to the business mission.



## **Chapter 7**

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the exploration of bilingualism's role in international business underscores its profound significance as a strategic asset. As organizations continue to expand globally and engage with diverse markets, the importance of bilingualism becomes increasingly evident in facilitating effective communication, fostering cultural understanding, and driving cross-border collaboration. Bilingual individuals serve as bridges between languages and cultures, enabling organizations to overcome linguistic barriers, navigate complex regulatory environments, and capitalize on global opportunities.

Moreover, the benefits of bilingualism extend beyond mere language proficiency. Bilingual employees often possess enhanced cognitive abilities, including improved problem-solving skills, cognitive flexibility, and creativity, which further contribute to organizational innovation and adaptability in a rapidly changing business landscape. Additionally, the ability to communicate in multiple languages enhances customer engagement, strengthens relationships with international partners, and fosters a positive corporate image in diverse cultural contexts.

Nevertheless, harnessing the full potential of bilingualism requires careful attention to the challenges and considerations associated with linguistic and cultural diversity. Organizations must invest in language training and cross-cultural competence development programs to ensure that employees are equipped with the necessary skills to navigate global markets effectively. Furthermore, fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment that values linguistic diversity can enhance employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention, thereby driving organizational success in the long term.

In essence, bilingualism emerges as a cornerstone of success in the contemporary global economy. By embracing and leveraging linguistic diversity as a strategic advantage, organizations can position themselves for sustainable growth, competitive advantage, and meaningful contributions to the global community. As we look towards the future of international business, it is clear that bilingualism will continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the success and prosperity of organizations worldwide.

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