

Bilingualism in the Canadian Labour Market

Canadian Parents for French – Nova Scotia
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Canadian occupations where bilingualism is an asset

Business and Administration Industry

Court Officer

- Bilingualism is necessary in some regions
- A high school diploma is required
- A community college diploma in office administration or university degree in Business or Public Administration is preferred and, in some cases required
- Community college courses in law and security are an asset
- Work experience in general office procedures including filing, keyboarding and using a computer
- Keyboarding skills are required

Average Salary: \$ 43,223
Low Average: \$ 27,932
High Average: \$ 63,107

Executive Assistant

- Fluency in both official languages is often essential for government or political positions
- A high school diploma is essential
- A college diploma in business or office administration plus related experience may be sufficient for some positions, but more and more a university degree is preferred
- Advanced experience using a computer is required
- Familiarity with the area or department in question is a definite asset
- Volunteer experience with a political party will be an asset when looking for positions in government

Average Salary: \$ 39,200
Low Average: \$ 23,087
High Average: \$ 56,946

Payroll Clerk

- Bilingualism may be an asset, especially in national organizations and government offices
- A high school diploma is usually required
- A community college diploma in a related field such as human resources, accounting, or business is usually required
- Experience with computers is definitely an asset

Average Salary: \$31,420
Low Average: \$ 20,053
High Average: \$ 42,827

Business and Administration Industry cont'd...

Receptionist

- Bilingualism is an asset and may be required
- A high school diploma is usually required
- Previous office experience is an asset
- Union membership may be required in government departments

Average Salary: \$32,530
Low Average: \$ 12,993
High Average: \$ 33,739

Secretary

- Knowledge of a second language is very useful
- A high school diploma is usually required
- A one- or two-year community college program in office administration
- Knowledge of computers and a variety of office equipment is an important asset
- Voluntary certification is available through International Association of Administrative Professionals, a Canada-wide association that offers part-time courses and exams that qualify you for senior secretarial positions
- Telephone skills

Average Salary: \$27,293
Low Average: \$ 15,036
High Average: \$ 38,122

Shipper / Receiver

- Bilingualism is an asset for dealing with companies in all regions
- A high school diploma is usually required
- A driver's license is often necessary
- No other certificates or registration are needed

Average Salary: \$27,798
Low Average: \$ 14,012
High Average: \$ 43,192

Canadian occupations where bilingualism is an asset

Tourism, Recreation and Sports Industry

Tourism Visitor Information Counsellor

- Fluency in a second language is an asset
- A high school diploma is usually required
- Some post-secondary education is an advantage
- Computer knowledge of databases and the Internet
- First aid certification is recommended
- Professional certification is available from the Canadian Tourism Resource Council

Average Salary: \$ 29,544
Low Average: \$ 14,977
High Average: \$ 43,925

Flight Attendant

- Bilingualism is mandatory if applying to most scheduled air carrier companies in Canada (Air Canada)
- Be a Canadian citizen or have landed immigrant status
- You must be at least 18 years old
- A high school diploma or equivalent education is required
- Most airlines require one or two years of experience working in a service industry (e.g. restaurant, retail)
- Union membership may be required – Airline Division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
- You may have to pass a medical examination
- some airlines have height restrictions (a minimum of 157 cm and/or a maximum of 186 cm tall)
- An up-to-date passport

Average Salary: \$ 35,036
Low Average: \$ 20,077
High Average: \$ 47,916

Maitre d'Hotel

- Bilingualism is a definite advantage
- A high school diploma is usually required
- Previous experience in the service industry
- Computer skills
- A college diploma in food and beverage management or business administration is an asset
- Union membership may be expected
- Professional certification may be available for this occupation

Average Salary: \$ 19,202
Low Average: \$ 7,491
High Average: \$ 33,742

Canadian occupations where bilingualism is an asset

Sales and Services Industry

Air Pilot

- Fluency in French is an asset
- A high school diploma is a minimum requirement
- Good physical and mental health
- A minimum requirement is a Canadian Commercial Pilot's License

Average Salary: \$ 67,937
Low Average: \$ 23,947
High Average: \$129,635

Air Traffic Controller

- In Quebec, New Brunswick and some areas of Ontario, fluency in French is required
- You must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant and a minimum age of 18
- A high school diploma is required
- Hobbies or experience involving knowledge of air regulations or aircraft is an asset
- You will have to pass a medical exam and get security clearance
- Good vision and hearing are essential
- You must pass the Air Traffic Controller basic aptitude exam, interview and physical exam

Average Salary: \$ 59,502
Low Average: \$ 30,030
High Average: \$100,257

Dispatcher

- In some regions, you must be bilingual
- A high school diploma is usually required
- Formal on-the-job training
- Good knowledge of geographical area
- Keyboarding speed of 50 words per minute may be required on a computerized system
- Emergency medical dispatchers require CPR, a first aid certificate and in some provinces/territories, an emergency medical dispatcher course or public safety communications course
- Police and emergency dispatchers may require a radio-operators' certificate acquired through provincial/territorial transportation and communication ministries
- Background in communications or a related field is an asset

Average Salary: \$ 33,571
Low Average: \$ 16,026
High Average: \$ 50,021

Sales and Services Industry cont'd...

Customs Inspector

- Some customs inspectors are required to provide services to the public in both official languages
- A high school diploma
- Two years in related position, such as investigative work, providing information to the public, law enforcement or managing a business
- A community college diploma or university degree related to law enforcement
- Applicants must pass a written test of the necessary job-related abilities
- Successful applicants currently must complete an intensive, 14-week, all expenses paid, training program at the Customs and Excise College in Rignaud, Quebec
- Trainees proceed to their home region to complete 38 weeks of on-the-job training
- A good way to get experience and find out if this work is for you is to get a summer job with Canada Customs

Average Salary: \$ 38,740
Low Average: \$ 28,018
High Average: \$ 50,075

Customer Service Representative and Information Clerk

- Bilingualism is definitely an asset
- A high school diploma is usually required
- Increasingly, employers are looking for people with Education at either the college or university level in areas such as communications, public relations, or even psychology
- Experience dealing with customers in any retail setting is an asset

Average Salary: \$ 29,544
Low Average: \$ 14,977
High Average: \$ 43,925

Messenger and Courier

- Depending on the work, bilingualism may be an asset
- A high school diploma is usually required
- Computer skills may be required in order to be accepted into an in-house training program
- A driver's license or ability to ride a bicycle may be required
- In the case of delivery trucks, a special license may be required
- Security clearance and/or medical exam may be required
- Good physical condition is required
- A working knowledge of the area or city where you will be delivering may be required

Average Salary: \$ 26,696
Low Average: \$ 9,614
High Average: \$ 42,793

Sales and Services Industry cont'd...

Teacher Assistant

- Fluency in an additional language is an asset and may be required depending on the work setting
- A high school diploma is generally required
- A one- or-two-year Teacher Assistant or Rehabilitation Services program from a college is preferred
- First aid and CPR training may be required

Average Salary: \$ 24,199
Low Average: \$ 8,415
High Average: \$ 41,466

Guide of Canadian companies hiring bilingual people

3

3M CANADA COMPANY

A

A.C. NIELSEN
ACCPAC INTERNATIONAL
ACCUTEL CONFERENCING SYSTEMS INC.
ACER AMERICA CORP.
ADECCO PERSONNEL
AETNA LIFE INSURANCE
AGF MANAGEMENT LTD
AIR CANADA
AIR FRANCE
AIR ONTARIO
AIR TRANSAT
ALEXENDRE APT HOTEL
ALL COMMUNICATION NETWORK OF CANADA
ALLIANZ CANADA
ALLSTATE INSURANCE
AMERICAN AIRLINES
AMERICAN BANKERS INSURANCE GROUP
AMERICAN EXPRESS CANADA
AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL ASSURANCE LIFE COMPANY LTD
ANDERSON SECRETARIAL ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL (ASAP)
ANNE WHITTEN BILINGUAL
APPLE CANADA
APPLEONE EMPLOYMENT
ARCHITEL SYSTEMS CORPORATION
ARETCOM CANADA
ASH GROUP
AT & T CANADA
AVENUE MOTEL
AVENUE PARK HOTEL
AVION INTERNATIONAL

B

BANK OF AMERICA CANADA
BANK OF MONTREAL
BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA
BBM BUREAU OF MEASUREMENT
BED & BREAKFAST HOMES OF TORONTO
BELAIR BELL CANADA
BELL & HOWELL LTD.
BEST WESTERN
BILINGUAL PERSONNEL
BILINGUAL SOURCE

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B cont'd...

BILINGUAL TARGET
BOC GASES
BORLAND CANADA
BOWMAN DISTRIBUTION
BRADSON BILINGUAL PLUS
BRIDGE STREET ACCOMODATION
BRITISH AIRWAYS
BROWNE & CO. LTD.
BRYAN, JASON AND ASSOCIATES INC.
BUDGET RENT A CAR OF CANADA
BULOVA WATCH COMPANY LIMITED
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OF CANADA
BUSINESS VISION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INC.

C

CAMCO INC.
CANADA COLORS AND CHEMICALS LTD
CANADA LIFE ASSURANCE
CANADA POST
CANADA TELECOM NETWORK INC.
CANADA TRUST CANADIAN AIRLINES
CANTEL
CARA OPERATIONS LTD
CARLSON MARKETING
CARSEN GROUP INC.
CASTEK SOFTWARE FACTORY
CFDS LIMITED
CHUBB SECURITY SYSTEMS
CIBC INSURANCE
CIBC MELLON GLOBAL SECURITIES SERVICES COMPANY
CIBC OPERATIONS & TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE CENTRE
CIBC PERSONAL BANKING
CIBC WOOD WUNDY SECURITIES INC
CIGNA INSURANCE
CIT CANADA INC
CITADEL ASSURANCE
CITIBANK OF CANADA
CITIZENS BANK OF CANADA
CITY OF ST.JOHN
CLARICA LIFE INSURANCE CO.
CLEARNET
COGECO
COMMERCIAL UNION LIFE ASSURANCE OF CANADA
COMPAQ CANADA
COMPUCENTRE
CONFEDERATION LIFE INSURANCE
CONSUMERS GAS
CONTINENTAL AIRLINES
COREL CORPORATION

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C cont'd...

CREDIT SUISSE CANADA
CREDIT UNION CENTRAL OF ONTARIO
CROWN-LIFE INSURANCE
CUBANA AIRLINES

D

D+H FORMS & SYSTEMS
DAISYTEK CANADA INC.
DANKA OFFICE MANAGEMENT LTD.
DELL COMPUTER CORPORATION
DELTA AIRLINES
DELTA CHELSEA INN
DELTA HOTELS & RESORTS
DELYNN PERSONNEL
DIGITAL EQUIPMENT OF CANADA
DIRECT CAREER CONCEPTS INC.
DISCOUNT CAR & TRUCK RENTALS
DMR GROUPE INC.
DRAKE INTERNATIONAL
DUN & BRADSTREET CANADA
DUN & BRADSTREET INFO SERVICES

E

ELECTRONIC DIRECT MARKETING
EQUIFAX / CREDITEL
EQUINOX FINANCIAL GROUP
ESP INC.
EXP TECHNOLOGIES INC.
EXP TECHNOLOGIS INC.

F

FEDERAL EXPRESS CANADA
FONOROLA

G

GEAC
GENERAL PUBLISHING COMPANY INC.
GLOBAL CROSSING
GLOBE-TEK SYSTEMS LTD.
GREAT-WEST LIFE ASSURANCE
GREYHOUND CANADA
GSI

H

HALIFAX INSURANCE COMPANY
HARLEQUIN ENTREPRISES LTD

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H cont'd...

HARPER & COLLINS BOOKS OF CANADA
HEIDELBERG CANADA
HEWITT ASSOCIATES LLC
HEWLETT-PACKARD
HOLT RINEHART & WINSTON OF CANADA LTD
HONG KONG BANK OF CANADA HYUNDAI AUTO CANADA

I

IBM CANADA
IKON TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
IKON TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
IMPERIAL LIFE FINANCIAL
IMPERIAL OIL LTD
INDAS LTD
INDEPENDENT ORDER OF FORESTERS
INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT
ING INVESTEMENT MANAGEMENT
INGRAM MICRO INC.
INSUREBEST INC.
INTEGRA PERSONNEL
INTELLECT CANADA
INTRIA CORPORATION
ISCO CANADA INC.
ISM INFORMATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

J

J.M. SCHNEIDER INC.
JOHNSON CONTROLS LTD.
JOHNSON INCORPORATED
JOINVIEW CANADA

K

K-G PACKAGING
KEATING TECHNOLOGIES INC.
KEITH BAGG PERSONNEL LTD.
KELY SERVICES

L

LABATT BREWERIES
LANSOURCE
LAURENTIAN BANK OF CANADA
LAURENTIAN FUNDS NAMAGEMENT
LIBERTY HEALTH
LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE
LIFELINE SYSTEMS CANADA
LOMBARD CANADA
LONDON LIFE INSURANCE

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L cont'd...

LONDON TELECOM
LOTUS DEVELOPMENT CANADA LTD
LOYALTY GROUP

M

MACKENZIE FINANCIAL CORP
MANPOWER
MANULIFE FINANCIAL
MARSHALL MACKLIN MONAGHAN LTD
MARUSA MARKETING
MCBEE SYSTEMS
MEDI TRUST
MICRO-BOUTIQUE BUSINESS CENTRES
MICROSOFT CANADA
MIDLAND WALYNN INC
MITSUBISHI
MONTGOMERY KONE ELEVATOR
MOORE CANADA
MOORE CORP LTD
MOREAU SOBECO COOPERS & LYBRAND
MULTISERVICES CANADA
MULTIVISION DATA SYSTEM INC.
MUTUAL LIFE GROUP
MYRON MANUFACTURING

N

NATIONAL BANK OF CANADA
NATIONAL BANK OF GREECE
NATIONAL LIFE OF CANADA
NATIONAL UTILITY SERVICE (CANADA) LTD
NCR CANADA
NET INTEGRITY
NETCOM CANADA INC.
NEW HOLLAND CREDIT COMPANY
NEW HORIZONS COMPUTER LEARNING CENTRE
NORTH AMERICAN LIFE ASURANCE
NORTH DIRECT RESPONSE INC.
NORTHERN TELECOM LTD
NW AIRLINES

O

OPTEL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION
ORACLE CORPORATION OF CANADA INC.

P

PAGEMART CANADA LTD
PARADIGM TECHNOLOGIES CORP

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P cont'd...

PAUL REVERE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
PERSONNEL OPPORTUNITIES LTD
PERSONNEL SERVICES
PHH VEHICULE MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC.
PHONETTIX INTELECOM
PINSTRIPE
PITNEY BOWES
PMJ & ASSOCIATES
PRAXAIR CANADA INC.
PREMIER FARNELL CORPORATION
PRIMERICA FINANCIAL SERVICES
PRIOR DATA SCIENCES LTD
PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE
PUROLATOR COURIER

Q

QUADRAVISION COMMUNICATIONS LTD
QUANTUM
QUEBECOR PRINTING

R

R-M TRUST COMPANY
ROGERS CANTEL INC.
ROYAL BANK OF CANADA
ROYAL TRUST
RR ENTREPRISES LTD

S

SAN MAR CANADA
SAP CANADA INC.
SAVILLE SYSTEMS
SCHNEIDER CANADA SERVICES
SCIENTIFIC ATLANTA
SCINTREX LTD
SHERWOOD MEDICAL
SIGNATURE VACATIONS SIMPLEX
SITEL
SKYHIGH COMMUNICATIONS
SPHERION WORKFORCE ARCHITECTS
SPRINGBOARD PERSONNEL
SPRINT CANADA
STAR CHOICE
SUN LIFE OF CANADA
SWISSAIR
SYMCOR SERVICES INC
SYNREVOICE.

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T

TEKLOGIX
TEL-E CONNECT SYSTEMS LTD.
TELCOPLUS
TELECREDIT CANADA INC.
TELESPECTRUM
TELUS MOBILITY
TEMPLETON MANAGEMENT LIMITED
THE CENTRE FOR CORPORATE
THE COLLECTION HOUSE
THE HR VISION CORPORATION
THE PEOPLE BANK
TILDEN CAR RENTAL INC.
TORONTO DOMINION BANK
TOSHIBA OF CANADA LTD
TOTAL CERDIT RECOVERY LTD
TOYOTA CANADA INC.
TRANS CANADA CREDIT CORPORATION
TRANS-AMERICA LIFE INSURANCE
TRIMARK TRUST
TRIMAX RETAIL SYSTEMS
TV ONTARIO

U

UNILEVER
UNISYS
UNITED AIRLINES
UNITED PARCEL SERVICE
UNITEL COMMUNICATION INC.
UNIVERSAL TELERESPONSE
UNUM CANADA
USAIR
UUNET CANADA

V

VANCOUVER CITY SAVINGS CREDIT UNION
VERSUS TECHNOLOGIES INC.
VIA RAIL
VIKING PUM OF CANADA INC.
VISA CANADA ASSOCIATION
VOGUE BRASSIERES INC.
VOICE RECOVERY SERVICES
VOYAGEUR INSURANCE COMPANY

W

WARD ASSOCIATES
WATTS COMMUNICATIONS
WAWANESA INSURANCE
WELLINGTON INSURANCE COMPANY
WESCO

Guide of Canadian companies hiring bilingual people

W cont'd...

WESTBURY CANADIAN LIFE INSURANCE
WESTERN DIGITAL CAN
WPS NORTH AMERICA

X

XEROX CANADA INC.

Z

ZURICH CANADA
ZURICH LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA

Research on the benefits of bilingualism in the labour market

The Benefits of Bilingualism in the Labour Force

In Canada

Researchers have been studying the benefits of bilingualism in the labour force over the last few decades. According to an article by Dr. Harold Chorney, “the knowledge of both of the official languages of the country, with the accompanying cognitive changes, is a clear asset with employers” (Chorney, 1998). Chorney concludes there is concrete evidence that shows bilingualism has a significant impact upon access to employment. According to the 1991 census, unemployment rates were lower for bilingual groups versus groups who spoke only English or French. Bilingual groups also had a higher rate of employment. Chorney interviewed the five largest companies in five different industries and concluded that bilingualism was clearly an asset in gaining and retaining a job in these firms. One employer commented that having bilingual skills in a rapidly changing world made employees much more flexible and more valuable to the company in their capacity to adapt.

Ghislain Savoie, Chief of the Social Research Group for the Department of Canadian Heritage, concluded that bilingual candidates can enter the job market and change jobs more easily than unilingual persons and, at the worst bilingualism has a neutral impact (Savoie, 1998).

In the United States

Bilingualism is not only an asset in Canada but also in the United States.

According to an article entitled “*Fluency in a foreign language can translate into a world of professional possibilities*”, the ability to speak and write a second language, such as French, in some US careers is considered a specialized skill and employers are willing to pay for this talent. Donna Sabitino, operations manager at Career Blazers employment agency in New York City says that French and Spanish are the dominant languages in the social services and medical fields in the United States (Stokely, 2000).

Benefits of Bilingualism in Job Search: Preliminary Evidence

By Dr. Harold Chorney

Education, in general, is best understood in economic terms as investment in human capital. The bundle of attributes associated with a skilled or well-educated worker must clearly include language skills. As such, one would expect that knowledge of both of the official languages of the country, with the accompanying cognitive changes, is a clear asset with employers. To test this proposition, I undertook an unscientific sample of some of the largest firms in five industries. These industries included construction, automobile manufacturing, banking, pharmaceuticals, and retail merchandising and manufacturing. In each case, leading firms were selected and their human resources department contacted. A brief telephone interview was held to discuss whether or not bilingual skills were considered an asset by the company in their hiring policy.

The results of these surveys (See Table 1) confirmed that from the point of view of the employee, bilingualism is a clear asset that helps workers secure a position. The firms that were sampled account for some 120,000 jobs. While bilingualism was rated as an asset, in none of the cases did it appear to involve higher pay. However, bilingualism was clearly an asset in gaining and retaining a job in the firms we surveyed. This applied not only in Quebec but elsewhere in the country as well. Perhaps the most insightful comment of one employer was that having bilingual skills in a rapidly changing world made employees much more flexible and more valuable to the company in their capacity to adapt. A number of firms stated that bilingualism was required of employees dealing with the public in Quebec and New Brunswick.

Other firms stated that knowledge of French was a requirement in Quebec. Several firms stated that in British Columbia knowledge of Mandarin or Cantonese was a definite asset. Some firms, while not paying special bonuses for bilingual capacities, did however provide educational assistance to employees seeking to improve their second language skills.

Table 1					
Bilingual Skills in Job Recruitment					
Industry	Construction	Auto Manufacturing	Banking and Finance	Pharmaceuticals	Retail Trade
1. Are bilingual language skills considered an asset when recruiting employees?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Outside of Quebec are they considered an asset?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. Are bilingual staff paid more?	No	No	No	No	No
4. Are bonuses paid to staff who become bilingual?	No	No	No	No	No

Table 2

Persons aged 15+ not attending school full-time reporting English / French as mother tongue by ability to speak English/French/both by labour force status in percentages*

	English Mother Tongue			French Mother Tongue		
Region	Canada	Canada excluding Que.	Quebec	Canada	Canada excluding Que.	Quebec
Labour Force Participation Rate in Group						
Total	83	83	78	78	79	78
English only	83	83	70	78	79	100
French only	72	-	71	72	-	73
Bilingual	86	88	82	84	81	85
Unemployment Rate in Group						
Total	9	9	11	11	11	11
English only	9	9	14	12	12	0
French only	0	-	0	13	-	12
Bilingual	8	7	10	9	10	8
Employed as % of Total Population in Group						
Total	76	76	69	69	70	69
English only	75	75	60	69	70	63
French only	63	-	61	63	-	64
Bilingual	80	82	74	77	73	78

Source : 1991 Census of Canada, Public Use Sample.

* Numbers are rounded to the nearest percentage.

NOTE: Companies which answered yes, answered yes to questions 2, 2.1 & 2.2. Companies which answered no, answered no to the same questions.

There is other concrete evidence that shows that bilingualism has a significant impact upon access to employment. There are, according to the 1991 Census, higher rates of labour market participation, employment and lower rates of unemployment among bilingual people in Canada. The salient aspects of this data are reproduced in the following table.

The Comparative Advantages of Bilingualism on the Job Market: Survey of Studies

GHISLAIN SAVOIE

CHIEF, SOCIAL RESEARCH GROUP, STRATEGIC RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS
DIRECTORATE
DEPARTMENT OF CANADIAN HERITAGE

Introduction

The idea of undertaking this review came to me when I was watching television programs on second-language immersion and the great popularity of - and debates surrounding - these programs in Canada (more than 300,000 students are now registered in an immersion program). I was particularly struck by the consistency with which the students or their parents cited economic reasons for registering in immersion programs. In effect, although they frequently cited cultural and 'patriotic reasons', nearly all those interviewed said that they had decided to learn the other official language because it would more easily help them find a job or a better job.

Since second-language immersion programs have existed in Canada for twenty-five years, one might wonder what has become of the students who emerged from these immersion programs with the hope of finding greater success on the job market. Did they in fact find a job or a better job thanks to their knowledge of both official languages? Given the amount of time that has gone by, the large amounts of money that have been allocated to these programs and the large number of people who have participated in them, one might reasonably have thought that a number of program evaluations or in-depth studies would have been conducted to answer these questions. It was, therefore, with the intention of compiling the conclusions of these evaluations or studies that I initially undertook this project.

However, my search for documents, which is not exhaustive, has revealed that very few published surveys have been done to attempt to determine in a rigorous and scientific manner the comparative rate of success on the job market of students who have completed an immersion program, in comparison with that of the general student population. The surveys that have followed up on students after their participation in immersion have, above all, tried to measure such things as the quality or level of retention, several years later, of the language learned in immersion. More general studies look at certain aspects of the issue from the economic angle of employment, but most often, the conclusions relate to very small samples (sometimes a few dozen candidates or even fewer) or amount to a few generalizations that are accompanied by little empirical evidence.

This lack of research on graduates of immersion programs is no doubt a result of the difficulty encountered in finding these persons several years after their entry into the job market and in creating valid samples. In effect, there are no effective and affordable ways to create samples that are wide enough for solid conclusions to be

drawn, and the researchers have had to neglect this subject. However, the partial elements available to us indicate that very conclusive results might be obtained if more detailed studies could be undertaken. The summary studies we have examined, which consist of interviews with former immersion students who have entered the job market lead me to conclude, with reservations, that immersion has helped them find a job. I will come back to these encouraging results later.

While there may have been few methodical studies done on access to the job market of persons who have benefited from immersion, which remains a promising field of study, there has been quite a bit more work done on the links between language and income. One of the prominent leaders in this area is Professor François Vaillancourt. Census data, among other things, lend themselves more easily to this type of analysis. To our knowledge, the studies looking at these issues were done mainly by researchers in Quebec and were based primarily on the situation in Quebec. In addition, the great majority of these studies were done in the 1960s and 1970s. This is no doubt explained by the specific sociological and historical situation in Quebec, where these issues are of particular interest, and by the existential questions being asked by Quebec Francophones and Anglophones regarding their future and their fair place in the economy. It seems to me that there have been fewer such studies since the mid-1980s.

As the title of my paper indicates, I plan to survey the main conclusions flowing from the studies on the comparative advantages of bilingualism on the job market. Therefore, this is not intended as primary research; rather, it is intended as an overview of the conclusions that have come out of existing research in this field. This work, however, is not strictly a summary of these observations. I have analysed them with a critical eye, making judgments as to their explanatory value, pointing out some conceptual and methodological shortcomings, and identifying, where necessary, promising avenues for further research.

This document focuses on the bilingual individual who is trying to sell his or her labour power on the job market. However, from the economic point of view, the advantages of bilingualism are not evident solely at the individual level. Several researchers also look at bilingual companies (Professor Grin and Professor Breton, for example). Thus, aside from the fact that it has bilingual employees, a company may very well adopt a policy of bilingualism in its advertising or may use translators and interpreters for its communications with persons outside the company, rather than hiring bilingual personnel. However, for the purposes of this survey, I will focus on bilingual individuals, looking at the other levels of analysis only where this is relevant.

As any economist will tell you, measuring the economic advantages of bilingualism is much more difficult than measuring its costs. The benefits to be drawn from an investment in languages are as difficult to measure as the private and social benefits of education or of a library: it is understood that education pays and that a library is an investment in the future, but one would have to be very clever to truly measure all

their economic benefits.

The problem is that, in addition to the direct benefits that can flow from education, a library or, in the present case, knowledge of both official languages (higher salaries, access to jobs and promotions, increased mobility, larger clientele, and so on) and that are relatively easy to measure empirically through compilation of statistics, surveys or polls, and so on, there are also a large number of other benefits that are plausible, more subtle, less direct, but no less real and that do not lend themselves as well to quantitative measurement. For example, there is reason to believe that knowledge of both official languages may lower the rate at which people drop out of school and may promote better social integration and increased participation in the job market for communities that would otherwise be marginalized, and thus may increase their contribution and productivity by optimizing use of their human capital. Knowledge of the language of the "other" makes a bilingual individual more sensitive to the culture and tastes of clients and partners; it may also encourage a decompartmentalizing of regional economies and ensure freer circulation of goods, persons, services and ideas; it may help create a better climate of social peace and conditions conducive to a healthy economy by promoting better communication and harmonious relations between all Canadians, in all regions of the country. Canada's bilingual image may make Canada more attractive for tourism and for certain types of investments, and so on. The importance of these indirect benefits of bilingualism is often evident only in the absence of bilingualism, and therefore eludes empirical measurement. However, that which is easy to measure is not necessarily more important. Looking only at the directly and easily quantifiable aspects is unacceptable reductionism, since the reality is much more rich and complex.

Empirical demonstration therefore does not always suffice for measuring the economic benefits of bilingualism. One must use the art of words and the force of logic and common sense to illustrate some indirect benefits. To attempt to convince the reader of the validity of our demonstrations, we will therefore use empirical data, where this is possible and desirable, but, in other cases, we will have to rely on good old common sense, on Cartesian logic, and on the analyses and informed opinions of practitioners, academics and researchers. Bilingual individuals are themselves often in a better position to say whether their bilingualism has produced economic benefits (access to jobs, promotions, larger clientele and so on).

In order to structure the analysis of the data collected in a logical and coherent fashion, I have chosen two main subjects and have centred working hypotheses useful for argumentation around those subjects.

Bilingualism and employment

a) Working hypothesis on access to employment

- Bilingual candidates can enter the job market more easily and can change jobs more easily than can unilingual persons.

This hypothesis presumes that bilingual persons seeking employment have an advantage on the job market. At worst, as Professor Grenier wrote, bilingualism has a neutral impact (in all logic, the only situation in which bilingualism might be a handicap is when an employer is a Francophobe or Anglophobe.) In principle, all positions are open to bilingual candidates: they have access to positions requiring French, English or both, and they therefore have an advantage over persons who know only one of the two languages.

One might take the hypothesis even further and presume that the candidate's bilingualism may give him an advantage for positions that have no language requirements. One might presume that, if two candidates are equally qualified, but one is bilingual, an employer may prefer the bilingual candidate, even if the position does not require bilingualism. In effect, an employer may believe that a candidate who has learned other languages has shown discipline, a spirit of initiative and a predisposition to learn new things. Persons who have gone through immersion say quite frequently in surveys that the learning of French has made it easier for them to learn other languages or skills. Two articles in *CPF National News* (Issue 66, Fall 1994) that support this have revealing titles:

"Learning a Third Language is Surprisingly Easy" and

"French Immersion Helped Me Learn Indonesian"

In a more complex study of Anglophone students who had taken French as their major in university, D.G. John describes as follows the multiple impact that these former students whom he interviewed attributed to learning French and which they said helped them in their career:

"The French Majors were overwhelmingly satisfied with their choice of discipline [86%]. They felt that their major had contributed valuable knowledge areas and skills to their development: communication skills in French and knowledge of French culture; analytical and critical skills, creative and research skills [...] Leading the way were the computer skills [...] and flexibility, adaptability or willingness to learn; also mentioned repeatedly were general communications skills, good organization and time management, research skills as well as management and business skills."

In this context, Professor Chorney quotes an employer who says that "having

bilingual skills in a rapidly changing world made the employee much more flexible and more valuable to the company in their capacity to adapt."

We found that, except for surveys of former immersion students, very few studies have been done that have tried to establish a relationship between bilingualism and access to employment. Most of the studies that look at the benefits of bilingualism on the job market examine the income gaps between bilingual and non-bilingual persons, meaning that the subjects have already reached the job market. Interesting surveys could certainly be done on the matter of access to employment, and various approaches can be envisaged.

Vaillancourt (1988) devotes a concise but eloquent chapter to the matter of participation in the Quebec job market on the basis of language attributes in 1985. He shows clearly that all bilingual Francophones, Anglophones and allophones have a distinctly higher level of participation in the job market than do unilingual persons, all categories combined. The gaps are even greater for women:

Table 1-Participation in Job Market by Language Group in Quebec. Men and Women, 1985

Language group	Men		Women	
	RCR	%	RCR	%
Unilingual Anglophones	62.4	0.91	38.5	0.88
Bilingual Anglophones	78.7	1.15	64.2	1.47
Unilingual Francophones	68.3	1.00	43.7	1.00
Bilingual Francophones	80.6	1.18	63.2	1.45
Anglophone allophones	64.1	0.94	40.7	0.93
Francophone allophones	65.2	0.95	46.2	1.06
Bilingual allophones	76.2	1.12	62.5	1.43
Other allophones	42.2	0.62	25.7	0.59
Anglophones-Francophones	76.3	0.99	46.2	1.06
All	72.9	-	50.0	-

Source: Calculations made by F. Vaillancourt on the basis of microdata from the 1986 census.

RCR: Reference Category Ratio (unilingual Francophones).

Here also, one would have to refine the analysis to determine the importance of bilingualism relative to other explanatory factors, such as education.

Besides this type of study or the surveys of former immersion students, whose samples sometimes leave something to be desired, one can imagine other types of research that would shed more light in this area. Instead of interviewing immersion graduates, who are hard to reach, it would be easier to survey heads of companies by establishing a representative sample of the various types of establishments in various areas of the country, to determine the importance of bilingualism in their employment criteria. The data banks of the employment centres could eventually be a source that could be used in this regard. Professor Chorney conducted his little survey of Canadian companies in this connection, and although he acknowledges that his sample is not completely scientific, the results he obtained are very interesting. The large companies he contacted employ some 120,000 persons in the manufacturing, business, construction, pharmaceutical and other sectors. Among other things, he concludes that the survey's results indicate that from the employee's point of view, bilingualism is of clear benefit for finding a job and keeping it. This observation applies to both Quebec and the rest of Canada. It would be appropriate to conduct a survey on a wider scale in this regard.

While the results obtained in Quebec are quite revealing (see Vaillancourt above), it is also interesting to look at the situation elsewhere in Canada. The surveys of former immersion students in English Canada may differ in the questions asked, but they largely converge with respect to the affirmative answers from respondents who feel that their learning of the second language was an asset for getting the job they were in (see Footnote 41 for references to such studies). For the purposes of this demonstration, we will give only a few examples here.

A survey of 414 graduates of French immersion programs and enriched core programs in Toronto in 1988 reveals that 29% of the subjects had originally chosen these programs with a view to their future career, but that this reason is given by 40% of them today. When asked whether knowledge of French helped them find a full-time job, 36% said yes. In addition, when asked whether they use French in their work, 58% said yes. The predominant responses were to the effect that "being bilingual was an edge in getting a job or getting promoted" (59%). The Annual Report of the Commissioner of Official Languages for 1994 (page 100) refers to a similar survey (*FSL: Learning French Matters in Toronto Schools*) that draws much the same conclusions. When asked whether they would choose the same type of studies if they had it to do again, the Report notes that 98% of the graduates of immersion programs and 86% of the graduates of enriched core programs said yes.

In their study on various aspects of immersion conducted with a group of 21 subjects in the Ottawa area, MacFarlane and Wesche examined the impact that immersion has had on the subjects' adult life. The most frequent response was "better job opportunities." Similarly, in their study of 78 immersion graduates in Saskatchewan,

Hussum and Bryce ("A Survey of Graduates from a Saskatchewan French Immersion High School," *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 1991) found that 35% of the respondents indicated that they enrolled in immersion to increase their choice of jobs or to find better jobs.

Question: Main Reason for Entering French Immersion?

Reason	Number	Percentage
Become bilingual/Learn second language	24	40.0
For more/better job opportunities	21	35.0
Mother tongue of parent	8	13.0
Learn about another culture	4	6.7
Educational value	1	1.7
Like French teacher	1	1.7
Best friend went into it first	1	1.7

However, we estimate that this response should be something like 56%, rather than 35%, owing to the poor wording of the question "Main Reason for Entering French Immersion?" To this question, 40% of the subjects replied "To become bilingual/learn second language." Thus worded, the question called for this tautological answer because, in reality, it can logically be presumed that 100% of subjects who enrol in immersion courses do so to become bilingual. The question that should have been asked, to move beyond this primary reply stage was "Why do you want to become bilingual/learn another language?" I arrived at 56% by dividing the 40% on a pro rata basis, using the responses to the other responses given. Another methodological error I encountered a few times in these questionnaires was that of asking the candidates "Why did you choose immersion?" This is an error because, very often, the choice is made by the parents, not by the respondent, who was very young at the time. It would be better to ask a question such as "What advantage do you see in immersion?" or "What impact has immersion had on your life?"

On the basis of the studies presented here and others I have consulted, one may conclude that knowledge of the other official language is indeed an advantage for access to the job market, and this statement seems to have been valid for all of Canada in the early 1990s.

However, these results do not tell us to what extent bilingualism was a decisive factor in the obtaining of a position, or whether it was only one among other factors. More in-depth research is needed.

It would be appropriate to refine the studies further to research the matter in greater depth and determine the importance of other competing factors to explain the results. One might ask to what extent other variables, such as the age of the bilingual candidates, their general level of education, their sex, their occupation, the geographic location or their employment sector, may have played a part in their getting a job. For example, one might think that, in some employment sectors, a candidate's bilingualism would be a negligible factor (extraction of raw materials, agriculture, manufacturing and so on), while, in others, bilingualism might be very advantageous (business, administrative services, communications and so on).

Similarly, the benefit is probably not the same for men as for women. Women often work in jobs involving front-line contact with clients (e.g. secretarial, receptionist, sales, and waitressing positions), positions in which bilingualism is frequently sought. It would therefore not be surprising if more women than men in a given region, with a given level of training and so on, were to say that bilingualism helped them find a job. Along the same lines, it would be interesting to further the research and better assess the importance of bilingualism for access to positions in the sectors of the future that are now emerging (communications, services and other knowledge-intensive fields).

The studies on access to employment that I have examined do not go very far in breaking down the results on the basis of the various dimensions of which I just spoke. However, researchers who have studied the relationships between language and income have gone much further in this direction. I will give a brief overview of this research field.

b) Working hypothesis regarding employment income:

- Bilingual employees earn more than unilingual employees.

Conceptual and methodological problems

Several approaches have been taken to establish a link between the bilingualism of individuals and their employment income. The major challenge in this review is not so much to describe each of these approaches and their nuances as to take stock of the results obtained and draw general conclusions. In effect, it is very difficult to compile or add up the results obtained in different studies and arrive at a grand total. The research done in this field is far from cumulative. Often, researchers do not seem inclined to further existing studies, and approach the question from different angles. They do not always adopt the same concepts, indicators or control variables, and do not all agree on the phenomenon to be explained (the dependent variable of employment income). For example, some use the definition of bilingualism used in the censuses (which is not without slippage or subjectivity, since the respondent is called upon to evaluate himself or herself), while others use more rigid or more flexible definitions, something which, of course produces different results. In his 1983 survey of the literature with Robert Lacroix, Professor Vaillancourt has succeeded, if

not in compiling the various studies he surveyed, at least in reconciling them, in explaining why they did not all arrive at the same result, even though they related to the same populations.

In addition, the results vary as a result of so many different factors that one must constantly make nuances and be very careful not to draw premature conclusions. Thus, the studies often show substantial variations in the income of bilingual persons, depending on mother tongue, age, level of education, sex, ethnic origin, sector of the economy, type of employment and so on, and, at the same time, depending on when the survey was done and on the geographic area considered. Obviously, I cannot provide a detailed breakdown of these data in this short working paper. I will limit myself here to the major trends that seem to have been emerging over the last twenty years, omitting the details and all their nuances.

In his previously mentioned analysis of job market participation in Quebec in 1985, Vaillancourt hypothesizes that:

"the relationship between linguistic characteristics and job market participation is similar to that which exists between linguistic characteristics and employment income. Thus, bilingual individuals are more likely not only to work, but also to work for a greater number of weeks than [unilingual persons], since they have much more human capital than do the latter."

Even if, theoretically, this hypothesis were valid, I would be more inclined to suppose that the relationship between bilingualism and job market participation is closer than the relationship between bilingualism and income. Take the hypothetical example of a waiter or waitress in a restaurant. A bilingual waitress may be able to get a job more easily than a unilingual waitress, but it does not necessarily follow that she will automatically be paid more than her unilingual colleague. The direct economic benefit of her bilingualism might relate only to access to employment, not to wages. (Of course, the bilingual waitress may eventually earn more money because of the higher tips given to her by a larger clientele or by customers happy to be served in their own language.) In other words, not all employers pay a bilingualism bonus, and, if the bilingual candidate gets a higher salary than the unilingual one, I think this might most often be due to the fact that his or her bilingualism opens more doors, increases the choice of higher-paying jobs, provides greater mobility by enabling him or her to change jobs more often and get more promotions. In short, I expect to find that the relationship between bilingualism and employment is more constant than the relationship between bilingualism and income.

Boulet (1980), who has studied the situation from 1961 to 1978 in Montreal, has found that bilingual Anglophones had the highest employment income in 1961, followed, in order, by unilingual Anglophones, bilingual Francophones, bilingual allophones and unilingual Francophones. However, in 1978, all the bilingual groups were earning more than the unilingual Anglophones, and the gap between unilingual

Francophones and Anglophones had closed considerably.

One can say that the bilingualism of individuals continues to be profitable on the job market, in particular for more educated persons, managers and persons in the service sector and other knowledge-intensive sectors. In Quebec, however, authors (Vaillancourt, Lachapelle, Grenier, Levine, Anglejan) agree that English is no longer as essential as it was up until the 1970s. The importance of French in the economy has grown in Quebec (according to a Secor study done in 1980, the proportion of Francophones in managerial positions rose from 69% in 1964 to 75% in 1979), to such an extent that the bilingualization rate of Anglophones has made a tremendous leap, rising from 37% in 1971 to 59% today, compared with 26% to 32% for the same period among Francophones (Commissioner of Official Languages reports).

Obviously, this reversal of the situation cannot be attributed to market forces only. Language laws, including those pertaining to the francization of businesses, have also accelerated the trend, but other factors are considered even more important by experts (including Vaillancourt, 1989): growth of the public sector, growth in Francophone-controlled employment, growth in the purchasing power of Francophones and the departure of companies' headquarters, which have moved west, in the direction of other development forces. No doubt, one might also point to the exodus of unilingual Anglophones, which has helped increase the proportion of bilingual Anglophones.

Some paradoxes or singularities that used to be revealed by studies seem to have disappeared today, or at least to have been diminished. An example of such a paradox is the fact that, in some Anglophone-controlled industrial sectors, unilingual Anglophones earned more in 1970 than bilingual Anglophones.

To summarize the situation in Quebec, one can say that, although English was not as essential in Quebec in the 1980s as it had been before, the data indicate that bilingualism continues to provide a valuable comparative advantage on the job market for managerial positions. What is the situation elsewhere in Canada?

It is more difficult to assess the situation in the rest of Canada. The studies are less clear in this regard. Shapiro and Stelcner (1981), basing themselves on studies by Robb and Gunderson, conclude that bilingualism for wage-earners was not a significant advantage on the job market.

However, using a broader definition of the concept of "bilingualism," the authors qualify this conclusion somewhat:

"For francophone and allophone males, being bilingual entailed an earning advantage over speaking only English or French. Anglophones, bilingual or not, earned more than any other group. Relative to unilingual anglophones (the standard) bilingual anglophones did not have a statistically significant earnings advantage.

Francophones earned less than all anglophones (17.2% less if unilingual and 9.6% less if bilingual). Bilingual allophones earned a premium over other allophones and earned 5.6% more than unilingual francophones."

Other studies of this kind arrive at more or less the same conclusion (Report of the Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Carliner [1981] and others). However, the important thing for Canada as a whole is to determine in what direction the situation is moving. This issue has generated debate in the public forum and in the media last year, when Toronto's *Globe and Mail* ran an article (Alanna Mitchell, March 23, 1994) with the following headline: "Hopes for bilingualism unrealized. Statistics show gap in French-English incomes has grown." Using more solid census data, William Johnson of *The Gazette* responded to this article on April 20, 1994, and there has as yet been no response to his article. The comparative data of Statistics Canada that Johnson used indicate that the income gaps between Anglophones and Francophones shrank everywhere in Canada between 1970 and 1990, except in Newfoundland and the Yukon. Moreover, Johnson points out that, in 1990, Francophones were better paid than or as well paid as Anglophones in all the provinces and territories except Quebec and New Brunswick.

Obviously, the figures used by Johnson relate to Anglophones and Francophones, and not to bilingual persons as such. However, even if an increasing number of Anglophones are studying French, the data show that it is primarily Francophones who are bilingual outside Quebec to such an extent that Johnson's figures give a good idea of the situation for bilingual Francophones. Johnson himself acknowledges that more in-depth studies are required to support his conclusion, that regional, rather than provincial, comparisons must be made, and that other factors, such as age and level of education, must be controlled. I know that such a study is now being conducted. I will therefore now refrain from anticipating the conclusions of that study.

Conclusion

Through this brief survey, I have attempted to determine the extent to which the studies examined supported the hypothesis that being bilingual is an advantage for access to the job market and for obtaining a higher income. Although this survey has not provided an unequivocal answer to this question, a number of these studies lead me to believe that knowing both official languages is a comparative advantage on the job market, in some regions more than others, in some activity sectors more than in others and so on.

This subject remains an open field for analysis and study that needs to be approached using a more rigorous methodology. For example, we have spoken freely of bilingualism, without specifying the level of mastery and use of the other language or even of the first language. Analysis has also been limited to a static representation of reality, with reality described as it appears, not as it could be.

There are lessons to be learned from this survey. As with any investment, an investment in human capital (here, the learning of the other official language) has an objective value in itself. However, it may be that on the one hand the possessor of this capital uses it poorly, invests it poorly, and that on the other hand the person hiring a bilingual person uses this human capital poorly, is not aware of its full value and does not take the best advantage of it. In short, it is not enough to examine the extent to which an individual's bilingualism produces concrete benefits for that individual. An examination should also be done of how this human capital can be maximized, how it can be fully used - for example, by making business people more "aware" of the business opportunities and advantages that this human capital could provide if they make more effective use of it.

I believe that in many cases the problem is one of a lack of awareness. A recent survey of Canadian exporters (discussed in a conversation with Mr. Jean Fahmy of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages) revealed that few of them used a language other than English in their international dealings and that they did not believe the situation would be otherwise in the future. Is this because knowledge of another language is not objectively useful and profitable, or is it because these business people are not fully aware of the possible advantages? I believe that in many cases, the problem is one of a lack of awareness of changing realities. It is true, of course, that the issue is not the same for all exporters. For a company exporting oil by tanker or making bulk shipments of wheat, wood or ore, language may indeed not be very important. However, knowledge of the client's language might be very much in the interests of a company exporting consulting engineer services or products intended for retail sale. In a television program on the international activities of the Lavalin company, whose services had been retained by Morocco for improving its telephone system, a Moroccan minister said that, all else being equal, Lavalin had been awarded the contract because of the engineers' ability to communicate in French.

In support of this point of view, I would like to quote British trade minister Richard Needham:

"British firms are losing hundreds of export markets because of their reluctance to speak the language of the target country and to understand its way of life [...] Between 30% and 40% of small and medium-size businesses in the United Kingdom realize that they are losing markets for linguistic or cultural reasons [...] A business that works is one that understands, in each market the consumer's tastes, his culture and his language."

It would no doubt be appropriate to copy the British trade minister's example and make Canadian business people more aware of the opportunities for stimulating their interregional and international exchanges and thus improve their performance by making better use of language, especially since Canada has an historical advantage over its main economic partners with respect to operating in more than

one language.

I cannot conclude this document without saying something about a most unfortunate paradox that characterizes Canadian bilingualism today and that is closely related to the issues examined in this document: I am speaking of the fact that a number of Francophone minorities in Canada are prey to heavy assimilation, while Anglophones are registering in large numbers in French immersion courses in the hope of becoming bilingual.

This is a big waste of human capital that will be twice as costly when those Francophones who have been assimilated decide to register in immersion to re-learn the language of their ancestors!

Although the total number of bilingual persons is increasing despite assimilation, the situation involves a significant loss for Canada. Some people maintain that bilingualism of Francophones outside Quebec is often the first step toward assimilation. That may very well be true. However, without bilingualism, a number of these communities would be ghettoized or marginalized in relation to the economic and social life of their region, and I think that that would be just as tragic.

In addition to endeavouring to convince governments that are insisting on delaying the implementation of the provisions in the Charter of Rights regarding school governance by language minorities, it seems to me that it would be appropriate to make them and Canadians in general more aware of the importance of bilingualism everywhere in Canada, in these times of major economic changes. Following the example of Moncton or Winnipeg, these communities could try to make better use of the advantages that bilingualism could create for them, for example by stimulating tourism.

This document is intended as a modest contribution toward that promotion of bilingualism's importance from an economic point of view.

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Fluency in a foreign language can translate into a world of professional possibilities

Black Enterprise; New York; May 2000; Sonja Brown Stokely;

THREE YEARS AGO, EDWARD HARLEY WAS AN ENGLISH TEACHER at the Nova Language School in Tokyo. His class schedule found him beginning his day at 9 am. and wrapping up some 12 hours later. Of course long hours aren't an unusual component of most teachers' routines. In fact the only odd thing about his experience was the very subject he was teaching. Harley was instructing a class of adult Japanese students.

Speaking English is very trendy in Japan. But it's still rather uncommon for a 23-year-old African American to be teaching it to natives in Japan—a position that would, of course, require him to be fluent in Japanese. Whether you're living in a big city or a rural village, Japanese is not a language most African Americans are exposed to on a frequent basis. Harley admits he had a bit of a head start, because his paternal grandmother is Japanese. "I've been hearing bits and pieces of the language all my life. But I didn't get serious about speaking Japanese until college," he says. So while he began studying a second language out of curiosity, it has since developed into a career opportunity that has taken him half way across the globe.

With the focus now on e-commerce and the integration of technology into the workplace, the old-fashioned skill of verbal communication threatens to get lost in the shuffle. But according to many career analysts, the demand for workers with bilingual abilities is actually on the rise as more Third World countries are becoming legitimate players in the business arena.

In some careers in the U.S. the ability to speak and write languages such as Spanish, French or German is looked upon as having a specialized skill. And employers are willing to pay for that skill. For example, in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, California, police officers and firefighters can make an extra 5% to 10% on their salaries if they are fluent in Spanish.

So not everyone is giving the spoken word short shrift. Harley is just one of many African Americans to have taken his bilingual skills and turned them into moneymaking careers.

ORIENTING HIMSELF

Harley never thought of using his language skill as a career booster. During his senior year as an English major at Tulane University in New Orleans, he took a beginners level Japanese course on a whim and liked it. But after graduating in 1995, Harley decided he wanted to learn more by taking the international route. "I got on the Internet and

found an ad from Nova, an educational company that trains and sends Americans to Japan to teach English."

Harley was chosen by Nova to go overseas to teach English for 14 months. But he soon decided his time in Japan wasn't enough. "I wanted to go back, this time to actually study Japanese," he says. "Teaching English in Japan only requires you to know rudimentary Japanese. I wanted to be fluent." So he returned to Japan on his own with a tourist visa and spent three intense months studying Japanese at the Kai Conversational School. Now fluent in the language, he returned home and currently works as a copy editor for S Plus Inc., a small graphic design and advertising company in New York City. Harley, who earns approximately \$30,000 a year, ensures that any text translated to English from Japanese is grammatically and syntactically correct, and often acts as an English/Japanese liaison officer between the company and its clients, such as Canon, the maker of cameras and other electronic office equipment. "I enjoy what I'm doing and I'm happy I found a job that allows me to use my bilingual ability," he says.

Harley found just one niche where knowing a second language reaps rewards. But the demand for bilingual skills varies depending on the career you're exploring, says Donna Sabatino, operations manager at Career Blazers employment agency in New York City. "For instance, in the engineering/technical field, employees who speak Asian languages are in demand, while French and Spanish are the dominant languages in the social services and medical fields."

Alex Rodriguez, president and CEO of Diversity Consulting Group, a Santa Barbara, California-based executive search firm, says sales is also an area where second language skills are in high demand. "It can break the ice, set the tone and establish a quick rapport." Rodriguez should know. Prior to working for the Group, he worked as a car salesman. "I was the only one of a group of salesmen who spoke Spanish and we worked on commission. I wound up handling all our Spanish-speaking clients. Needless to say, I was very successful."

GLOBAL PHILANTHROPY

As a program assistant for the World Bank, Josephine Armar works for the Washington, D.C.-based development assistance organization that lends money to impoverished countries across the globe. Working for a special program for the African Agricultural Division, Armar uses French to communicate with most of her clients in Africa. "At the World Bank, employees are given a premium for being fluent in another language," says Armar, who earns approximately \$44,000 a year. "Applicants have to be screened very carefully just to make sure they aren't boasting about language skills to obtain the premium," she says.

So how did she get there? The London native earned a bachelor's degree in languages at the Polytechnic of Central London University in London and a diploma in translation before completing her master's degree at George Mason University in Virginia. While pursuing her bachelor's degree, Armar spent a year abroad- dividing her time among

Spain, Paris and the Ivory Coast. Before moving to the U.S. in 1986, she worked as a freelance French and Spanish translator in London.

Armar was still living in London when she first applied for a Spanish(English translator position at the World Bank. She was told there were no openings. Later, while vacationing in the U.S., she applied-in person-for a bilingual Spanish/ English secretarial position. This time she got the job. That was 13 years and a few promotions ago.

Armar's climb up the ladder isn't that unusual for someone with her linguistic background, says Yvette Madison, International Bilingual Recruiter for the Kent Agency in New York City. "All finance and finance-related occupations require some knowledge of other languages>" she says. But Madison cautions bilingual job seekers to take a good look at the geographical area in which they want to work. "Because Spanish is the most common foreign language in most major metropolitan areas, you may make more money speaking fluent German, for example."

At the World Bank, Armar says her ability to speak multiple languages was the key to getting in the door. "There are more bilingual positions here than [not]-economists, workers in the human development sector and engineers-because you're dealing with the whole world," she says. Armar actually speaks four languages fluently-English, French, Spanish and her native Ghanian tongue, Twi (pronounced 'chee'). She is also studying a fifth, Ga, spoken by the tribe of the same name in Ghana.

A LINE ON COMMUNICATION

Language Line Inc. is an interpretation services company based in Monterey, California, that uses interpreters to translate the spoken and written word. For the past six years, Haitian-born Alex Fabien has worked out of his home in Miramar, Florida, interpreting French and Haitian Creole to English and vice versa. He got the job while attending Florida International University as a mathematics major. "A Language Line representative contacted someone from FIU's Career Office about available job opportunities,' he says. "The Career Office called and asked me if I was interested." Fabien's interest earned him an enviable career. Working the night shift translating calls eight hours a day, Fabien is able to spend quality time with his wife and young daughters.

Using Language Line's services for phone calls is simple. If a caller needs to reach a business or household where English is not spoken, he or she calls Language Line and asks for an interpreter who speaks a particular dialect or language. "After the caller explains the nature of the call [e.g., business or personal], the conversation is then conducted with the help of the interpreter," he says.

Fabien, who earns approximately \$40,000 a year, never thought his multilingual skills would present him with a job opportunity. "I get paid specifically because I speak more than one language. I know people who earn a living with other skills and abilities who have to use their linguistic skills, but they don't get paid for it" he says.

He's not done yet. Fabien also plans on adding Spanish to his repertoire. A Spanish interpreter can earn more than I can because there's a larger cross section of the population that speaks Spanish,' he says. In recent years, Florida has become a blossoming business center for South America and the Caribbean and the home of a vast Spanish-speaking immigrant population-largely from Cuba. But until Fabien masters that language, his current job is pretty secure. French is an important language in South Florida because a lot of Canadians vacation and retire here," he says. "Many of [these Canadians] bring their businesses with them, or start anew once they get down here, so there's definitely [some opportunity for French speakers] in Florida."

PLAYING MATCHMAKER - THE LANGUAGE AND THE JOB

One of the best ways to find a bilingual job is to use an agency, says Sabatino. She also recommends contacting international divisions of major corporations like IBM. And of course, there's the Internet. "Monster Board and Career Mosaic are two excellent Websites to use if you're searching for any type of job," says Rodriguez. He also recommends browsing www.hoovers.com for information on publicly traded and privately held companies. When sending your resume to prospective employers, sell the fact that you're bilingual, says Rodriguez. It can only help your chances of landing the job. "Put the fact that you're bilingual at the top of your resume. Include your job objective statement," he says. 'We have a global economy now. As more countries become contenders in the business world, there'll definitely be a need for people with bilingual ability."

References for bilingual youth looking for employment

Summer Opportunities

Canadian Heritage Young Canada Works (YCW) in Both Official Languages:

Allows hundreds of young Canadians to take their language and academic skills out of the classroom and into the workplace. Jobs are located across the country.

www.pch.gc.ca/special/ycw-jct/english/download.htm

Student Federal Work Exchange Program: The Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) is the primary vehicle through which federal departments and agencies recruit students for some 8,000 temporary student jobs each year.

www.jobs.gc.ca/fswep-pfete/

Summer Bursary Language Program: 5 week immersion program during which students can learn their second language while at the same time learning the culture of the area.

www.cmec.ca/olp/

Summer Work Student Exchange: Provides participants with an exceptional life experience by giving them an opportunity to improve their second language skills through immersion in a family and work setting, and job training.

www.summer-work.com

References for bilingual youth looking for employment

Full Time Opportunities and Internships

Bilingual Link: Provides a comprehensive guide of companies hiring bilingual people.

www.bilinguallink.com

Canadian Heritage Young Canada Works (YCW) Internationally Program: Allows hundreds of young Canadians to take their language and academic skills out of the classroom and into the workplace. Jobs are located around the world.

www.pch.gc.ca/special/ycw-jct/english/download.htm

Katimavik: Participants travel to various communities across Canada for 7 months and are encouraged to use both official languages.

www.katimavik.org

Official Language Monitor: Helps students learn English as a second language. Students travel to another province to work as a language monitor.

www.cmec.ca/olp

References for bilingual youth looking for employment

Career Resources

Canadian Career Consortium Work Handbook: The Handbook contains general information about resources — people, organizations, schools, the Internet — that can help you plan or make career changes.

www.careerccc.org/products/workhandbook/index.html

Job Futures: Helps Canadians with their career, education and training decisions.

www.jobfutures.ca

Youth Employment Information: Helps Canadian youth plan their career.

www.youth.gc.ca/index_e.shtml