

**Cross-Border Connecting: "Preparing Students
for a Career in the Global Economy"**

Bilingualism: A need in the global economy

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A new language is a new life.

Persian Proverb

A man who knows two languages is worth two men.

French Proverb

You live a new life for every new language you speak. If you know only speak one language, you live only once.

Czec Proverb

You can never understand one language until you understand at least two.

Geoffrey Willians



Globalization



Globalization is a term used to describe the increasing **connectedness** and **interdependence** of *world cultures* and *economies*.

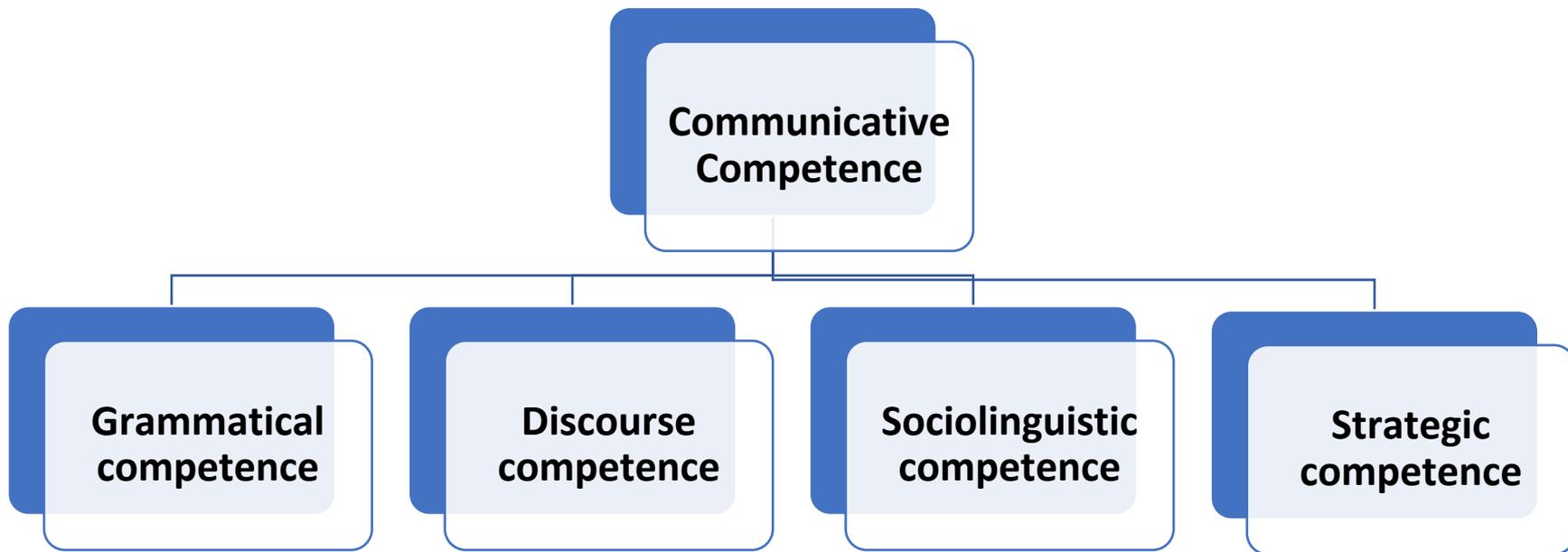
Why learn a foreign and/or second language?



What is language?



- Language is **not only** a system of sounds, words and sentences.
- Language also has a **social function**, both as a **means of communication** and as a **way of identifying social groups**.



As proposed by Canale (1983) In: Douglas Brown, 2007

Why do languages come in contact?



Changes in attitudes towards bilingualism

► Beliefs about bilingualism in early nineteenth century:

*“Bilingualism has a detrimental effect on a human being’s **intellectual and spiritual growth**”.* (Wei, 2007)

► Now,

“... experience with two language systems favors mental flexibility, superiority in concept formation, and more diversified set of mental abilities”

► Bilingualism

- ❖ **Further**s the ability to empathise and see a situation from another's perspective
- ❖ **Enhances** cognitive skills (high level thought, memory attention and multitasking)
- ❖ **Delays** onset of dementia and Alzheimer

Bilingualism in the world



	Definition	% of world population
Monolingual	A person knowing only one language	40%
Bilingual	A person using or being able to use two languages especially with equal fluency	43%
Trilingual	A person speaking three languages fluently	13%
Multilingual	A person who speaks more than two languages (usually four or more)	3%
Polyglot	Someone with a high degree of proficiency in several languages (usually 5 or more)	1%

❖ *Some other data: 60-75% of world population speak at least two languages*

Are monolinguals missing out?

Economic benefits of bilingualism

- Demand for multilingual workers more than doubled from 2010 to 2015
 - Specifically, demand for bilingual employees who **speak Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic**.
 - Increased demand particularly in the **finance, healthcare, legal services, and customer service sectors**.
- A. Fluent bilinguals earned more than \$5,400 annually than their monolingual peers.
- B. Bilingual employees usually receive 5-20% more per hour compared to monolinguals.

(Colón, 2019)

- Those who are **fluent bilinguals** were **more likely to complete their high school education** than those who grew up speaking only English.
- **Fluent bilinguals hold higher occupational prestige in their jobs** and confirmed that bilingualism has direct and **positive impact on earnings**.

(Rumbaut, 2014)



Why is it that bilingual employees get paid more?



1. **High demand:** The new interconnectedness makes language knowledge high in demand.
2. **More job opportunities.**
3. **Improved competitiveness in the job market:** Employees who can serve their globalizing clients. Bilingualism makes your resume stand out and boosts you to the top of the interview list for possible employers
4. **More educational opportunities.**
5. **Improved problem-solving, multitasking, and decision-making skills.**
6. **Cultural gap:** Bilinguals can use their cultural knowledge and language skills to help their company instantly connect with diverse groups.
7. **Increased communication:** A bilingual person can help a company reach more people and tap into previously untouched markets.
8. **Better chances of getting hired:** CNN named [bilingualism the hottest skill](#) for job seekers in 2013!

Some facts



Bilingual remote job opportunities has increased **30%** in the United States since the start of COVID-19 job fairs .

Renolon



Bilingual employees typically earn **\$1.22 TO \$2.33** more per hour than monolingual employees

Renolon



(Yagub, 2023)

Maybe the question should no be:

Why learn a second language?



The question should be:

Why not learn a second language?



Higher education

- Language requirement
- Internationalization
- Academic mobility
- Student exchange programs

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