The Role of Bilingualism in the Workplace

Nicole Maťová

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
Fakulta humanitních studií
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

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doc. Mgr. Roman Trušník, Ph.D.
ředitel ústavu

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá rolí bilingvismu v pracovním prostředí. Skládá se z teoretické a praktické části. Teoretická část nejprve slouží k vymezení základních pojmů týkajících se bilingvismu. Ve zbylých kapitolách se teoretická část zabývá výhodami a výzvami bilingvismu v pracovním prostředí. Praktická část je uskutečněna pomocí kvalitativních rozhovorů s čtyřmi bilingvními pracujícími, kteří svůj druhý jazyk využívají v zaměstnání každý den. Cílem praktické části je zjistit, jakou roli hraje bilingvismus v pracovním prostředí.

Klíčová slova: bilingvismus, pracovní prostředí, výhody, výzvy, kultura, komunikace

ABSTRACT

This bachelor's thesis concentrates on the role of bilingualism in the workplace. It consists of a theoretical part and a practical part. The theoretical part focuses mainly on defining the key terms concerning the topic of bilingualism. The remaining chapters of the theoretical part describe the advantages and challenges of bilingualism in the workplace. The practical part incorporates qualitative interviews with four bilinguals who employ their second language in the workplace daily. This bachelor's thesis aims to determine the role of bilingualism in the workplace.

Keywords: bilingualism, workplace, advantages, challenges, culture, communication

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

"Over half the world's population is bilingual" (Harding-Esch and Riley 2003, 28). Therefore, bilingualism is not rare (Grosjean 2010, 13). It is a result of increased opportunities for people to learn new languages. The new languages might be learned whether at school, via social interactions, or on the Internet. Regarding its role, bilingualism represents various advantages and challenges (Wei et al. 2002, 2). It can be seen in multiple settings, workplace included.

This thesis consists of a theoretical and a practical part. The aim of my bachelor's thesis is to discover the role of bilingualism in the workplace. Chapter 1 of the theoretical part deals with the definitions of bilingualism, its degree, and typology. Chapter 2 of the theoretical part provides an overview of the advantages of bilingualism in the workplace. Chapter 3 of the theoretical part describes the challenges associated with bilingualism in the workplace.

The practical part explores the role of bilingualism in the workplace. As research method, the qualitative interviews were chosen. To collect the necessary data, interviews with four participants who are bilingual workers and use their second language in the workplace daily were conducted. For the mentioned criteria, participants represent a valid source of information for this thesis. The participants were asked to mention the advantages and the challenges of the bilingualism in the workplace. Lastly, their responses are analysed and presented in the practical part of this thesis.

I. THEORY

1   BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism is regularly described by using various definitions, which might be confusing (Grosjean 2010, 3). In fact, each person perceives the meaning of bilingualism differently. (Ng and Wigglesworth 2007, 3). Mostly, people believe that bilingual people are those "who know and use two languages" (Grosjean 2010, 3). Nevertheless, to fully understand the definition of bilingualism several dimensions are required (Paradis 2004, 3).

1.1   Definitions of Bilingualism

According to Myers-Scotton, there is more bilingual people than monolingual. Nevertheless, Myers-Scotton does not define who can be considered as bilingual (2007, 2).

While trying to define whether a person is bilingual, various dimensions must be considered. For instance, bilinguals can differ in the degree of proficiency or in the context of use (i.e., purpose and relative frequency) (Paradis 2004, 3). Another example in which bilinguals can differ is fluency (Paradis 2004, 3). Furthermore, the last example to be mentioned is a development of the language skills. The mentioned skills are speaking, writing, listening, and reading (Baker and Wright 2017, 6–7). The dimensions that were mentioned above show the difficulty of uniformly defining bilingualism (Paradis 2004, 3).

There has been disagreement even among linguists in terms of the definition for decades. This resulted into many definitions being created by multiple linguists over the years (Ng and Wigglesworth 2007, 5). According to Collins dictionary, bilingualism "is the ability to speak two languages equally well" (2023). However, speaking two languages equally fluently is relatively rare (Harding-Esch and Riley 2003, 22). A different view is represented by Bloomfield. Bloomfield defines bilingualism as "native-like control of two languages" (Bloomfield 1984, 56). Nevertheless, if Bloomfield's definition of bilingualism was used, it would be difficult to find someone who can be considered as bilingual. People would have to be equally proficient in both languages in all domains, which is hardly possible (Baker and Wright 2017, 9). Therefore, Bloomfield´s definition of bilingualism as "native-like control of two languages" seems unrealistic.

Moreover, bilinguals might even be considered people "who possess at least one of the language skills even to a minimal degree in their second language" (Macnamara 1967, 59–60). According to this definition, almost everyone would be bilingual.

As the previous paragraphs state, many linguists (e.g., Macnamara and Bloomfield) tried to define what bilingualism means. These definitions are however often criticized for being unclear and for not taking dimensions of bilingualism into consideration. These dimensions

might include the age of acquisition, context, and the choice of language. The knowledge of linguistics is not sufficient. To better understand concept of bilingualism, certain knowledge of sociolinguistics, sociology or social psychology is needed (Baker and Wright 2017, 2–4). Therefore, ignoring these dimensions would be a mistake (Hamers and Blanc 2000,7). Multiple dimensions need to be considered, in order to get a precise definition of who might be considered bilingual (Baker and Jones 1998, 2–3).

The following subchapter is focusing on the degree of bilingualism.

1.2 Degree of Bilingualism

As stated in Chapter 1.1, it is rare to speak two languages equally proficient. Furthermore, bilinguals are bilingual only to some degree (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 5). Let me know explain what is meant by *the degree of bilingualism*.

According to Chin and Wigglesworth, "degree of bilingualism refers to the levels of linguistic proficiency a bilingual must achieve in both languages to be considered a bilingual" (2007, 5). Nevertheless, the authors fail to define the linguistic proficiency and the minimal level people must achieve to become bilingual (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 5). Linguistic proficiency represents "the overall level of achievement in a particular language and the level of achievement in discrete skills" (Pavlenko 2005, 6). Skills such as speaking, reading, listening, and writing are essential aspects while identifying the degree of bilingualism (See Table 1 below) (Baker and Wright 2017, 6–7). These skills can be described as interconnected. As a result, the development of one skill leads to the easier acquisition of the other one (Baker and Jones 1998, 90).

Moving to further division, the skills can be distinguished by two main dimensions, which means the skills are differentiated based on their productivity or receptivity, and literacy or oracy. Still, there is one last division to be mentioned. "There are skills within skills such as pronunciation, extent of vocabulary, correctness of grammar, the ability to convey exact meanings in different situations and variations in style" (Baker and Wright 2017, 7).

	Oracy	Literacy
Receptive skills	Listening	Reading
Productive skills	Speaking	Writing

Table 1 The Four Basic Language Skills

(Adapted from Baker and Wright 2017, 7)

In addition, Table 1 illustrates why it is so essential to avoid the simplification of who is bilingual (Baker and Wright 2017, 7). One definition of bilingualism cannot be applied to everyone because being bilingual is rather a term for individuality (Harding-Esch and Riley 2003, 22). The reason for that is that each skill a bilingual possesses can vary on its development level. To support this statement, the following examples show differences in the usage of individual skills. The skills of speaking and understanding of a given language might be easy for some bilinguals while writing can pose a bigger challenge. On the other hand, Baker and Wright claim that "some understand a spoken language but do not themselves speak that language" (2017, 7).

To conclude, the degree of bilingualism helps to define who can be considered to be bilingual (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 5). Nevertheless, the languages skills bilinguals' posses vary from an individual to individual (Baker and Wright 2017, 7). This means that the minimum level of proficiency cannot be precisely defined (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 6).

The following subchapter is focused on the types of bilingualism based on the degree of proficiency.

1.3   Types of Bilingualism

A classification based on the degree of language proficiency in both languages was chosen, for the purpose of this bachelor's thesis (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 6). Therefore, this chapter deals with these types of bilingualism: Balanced, Dominant, and Passive.

1.3.1   Balanced Bilingualism

The first type of bilingualism is an idealized concept rather than a reality. This idealized concept represents the idea of being equally proficient in two or more languages in all domains (Baker and Wright 2017, 9). To support the idea of balanced bilingualism as the

idealized concept, Baker and Wright claim that bilinguals usually use one language for different reasons and with different people than the other language; therefore, proficiency in their languages must differ and cannot be equal (2017, 9).

More examples need to be provided to support the premise that being a balanced bilingual is rare. According to Macnamara, some bilinguals are highly proficient in both languages, however they are not equally proficient in all domains of these languages (1967, 60). Thus, these bilinguals cannot be marked as balanced (Macnamara 1967, 60). Moreover, balanced bilinguals cannot be even speakers of the non-standard varieties. The non-standard varieties are less appraised by society and do not represent a standard variety of the language, thus the existence of the balance is often denied (Baker and Wright 2017, 9).

The previous paragraphs suggest it is not an easy task to define balanced bilingualism, and its existence is rare.

1.3.2   Dominant Bilingualism

The second type of bilingualism is the dominant one. As dominant bilinguals might be marked "those who exhibit higher proficiency in one of the languages" (Pavlenko 2005, 8). In other words, a bilingual is more proficient in one language that is marked as dominant. Thus, the other language is marked as subordinate (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 7).

Some dominant bilinguals even struggle to stay in a monolingual mode while speaking their weaker language (Grosjean 2008, 76). Nevertheless, the dominance in one language does not have to appear in every area and domain, see the example below. A French-German computer technician speaks most of the time French, with one exception. When the technician must discuss topics related to computers, he switches to German. It is the result of his practical training, which took place in Germany. The mentioned example represents the following fact. "In cases where specialist jargon (medicine, sports) is required, speakers may consciously choose to speak in the language they normally use when discussing these kinds of topics" (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 7).

1.3.3   Passive Bilingualism

Passive bilingualism represents another type to be discussed. Passive bilinguals gradually become less proficient in one of their two languages, typically as a result of disuse (Chin and Wigglesworth 2007, 7). Consequently, a person might understand the second language in written or spoken form but might not inevitably use it for speaking or writing (Baetens Beardsmore 1986, 16).

Let me mention four groups of individuals for whom passive bilingualism is typical. The first group represents children of immigrants or people from other minority backgrounds who can understand their home language but cannot produce utterances in that language. Deaf children born to parents without hearing issues represent the second group. During their education, these kids were not used to using sign language. As a result, they might miss the ability to produce manual movements in sign language effectively. The third group is populated by individuals who learned a language in a language program They "may understand, read, and interpret the language learned well, although they may be incapable of speaking, writing, or producing signs" (García 2009, 53). The last group contains learners of extinct languages, who do not have a chance to develop oracy skills because there are no living users of those languages. A typical example is Latin (García 2009, 53).

1.4 Summary

Chapter 1 deals with various definitions of bilingualism, its degree, and its typology. Chapter 1.1 explains how complex the notion of bilingualism is by stating several definitions and their criticisms. Furthermore, Chapter 1.2 deals with the degree of bilingualism and language skills. The final Chapter 1.3 deals with the types of bilingualism based on the degree of proficiency in each of a bilingual's two languages.

In Chapter 2, the advantages of bilingualism in the workplace are explained.

2   ADVANTAGES OF BILINGUALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

As was already stated, there is more bilingual people than monolingual (Myers-Scotton 2006, 2). This is the outcome of growing opportunities to acquire knowledge of new languages in school, at work, or via the Internet (Wei et al. 2002, 2). The advantages and challenges of bilingualism in the workplace are discussed in this bachelor's thesis. The following chapter deals with the challenges of bilingualism in the workplace.

2.1   Bilingualism and Communicative Advantages

Communication is a significant factor which helps humans distinguish from animals. As a result, people seek to be informed and fulfil their communication needs (Ellwood 1944, 7). These situations can occur in the workplace, which often has bilingual characteristics (Grosjean 2010, 13). Thus, it is essential to describe the major features of bilingual communication in business companies and organisations. This chapter deals with the advantages of bilingualism regarding communication.

2.1.1   Code-switching

The first communicative advantage of bilingual workers relates to code-switching. It represents "the alternative use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation" (Milroy and Muysken 1995,7). By stating this, Milroy and Muysken refer to the idea that bilingual workers might freely switch between languages (1995, 7).

The language of a conversation is selected by bilinguals whether intentionally or unintentionally. The language selected by the speakers is called the base language, whereas the second language is labelled as the donor language. The process of code-switching then appears when the elements of the donor language are brought into the base language (Baker and Jones 1998, 58). Therefore, bilinguals might switch words, sentences, clauses, or whole phrases (Grosjean 2010, 51–52).

In fact, the existence of code-switching is governed by the following factors: participants of the conversation, topic, situation, and the used code (Beardsmore 1986, 49). The used code refers to "different languages, but also to varieties of the same language as well as styles within a language" (Romaine 1995, 121). Language is a significant factor because bilinguals gravitate towards switching between languages mostly in debates with other bilinguals (Baker and Jones 1998, 58). Hence, if the conversation participants' languages differed, the use of code-switching would cause a collapse of the conversation. (Beardsmore 1986, 49).

Furthermore, it is essential to realize what beneficial functions code-switching has for bilingual workers. The first application can be found in a situation when a bilingual cannot remember a word in the target language during the conversation. In that case, the person decides to switch to the language in which he or she knows the required word (Grosjean 2010, 54).

Code-switching is also used when a request needs to be strengthened, for instance, in hospitals. The following example comes from the hospital in Mid-Wales. The nurse repeats the commands to her Welsch patient in English (Wyn Roberts 1944, 66). She used code-switching to strengthen her commands, and to increase the social distance between her and the patient. (Myers-Scotton 1993, 132). Moreover, this specific example illustrates that code-switching might be used along with emotions, in this case, it is an annoyance (Myers-Scotton 1993, 132–133). The patient keeps pushing the ringing button and the nurse cannot stand it anymore (Wyn Roberts 1944, 66).

> Nurse: Ganoch chi'r gloch DWY WA1TH! Peidiwch byth a V ganu e dwywaith — emergency ydy bynny. Dim ond UNWAITH sydd angen. Only ring it ONCE! (You rang the bell TWICE! Don't ever ring it twice — that's an emergency. ONCE is enough. Only ring it ONCE!) (Wyn Roberts 1994, 66).

The last function to be mentioned employs the other language while refining a point. This tactic is often used by teachers. They explain the problematics in one language and then do the same in another language to reinforce the students' understanding (Baker and Jones 1998, 60).

Furthermore, code-switching also allows bilinguals to purposefully keep monolinguals out of the debate. Therefore, bilingual workers might decide, which language should be used when speaking based on their intentions. The use of code-switching as a scheme to exclude people from the dialogue can be considered rather dangerous and rude. The reason is that the excluded people might know the language enough to understand the conveyed message (Grosjean 2010, 55).

As was already mentioned, bilinguals lean towards switching between languages predominantly in conversations with other bilinguals. Therefore, it can be concluded that code-switching represents one of the characteristic components of bilingualism (Baker and Jones 1998, 58). Furthermore, the interconnection between bilingualism and code-switching can be seen in the phenomenon called *diglossia*.

The term diglossia refers to the coexistence of two language varieties, which serve different functions for each language. Consequently, one variation is used in a less formal environment, for instance, at home. In contrast, the other variation is used in a more formal environment, such as work or school (Shin 2013, 214).

To better understand the concept of diglossia, Fishman provides an example of a conversation between the boss and his secretary (1971, 38). The boss used English to discuss business, whereas Spanish is used when referring to non-business activities such as the carnival. In this case, English represents the formal variety, whereas Spanish is the less formal one. This division provides bilinguals with an advantage. They might separate their privacy from work (Shin 2013, 122).

Secretary: Do you have the enclosures for the letter, Mr. Gonzalez?

Boss: Oh yes, here they are.

Secretary: Okay.

Boss: Ah, this man William Bolger got his organization to contribute a
lot of money to the Puerto Rican parade. He's very much for it.
¿Tú fuiste a la parada?
(Did you go to the parade?)

Secretary: Sí, yo fuí.
(Yes, I went)

Boss: ¿Sí?
(Yes?)

Secretary: Uh-huh.

Boss: ¿Y cómo te estuvo?
(And how did you like it?) (Fishman 1971, 38).

The previous paragraphs show that code-switching provides bilingual workers with many communicative advantages.

The following section further elaborates on the communicative advantages of bilingualism, language sensitivity in particular.

2.1.2 Sensitivity in Communication

According to Baker and Sienkewicz, bilinguals might be more sensitive to language use. So, bilingual workers can be more sensible of the possibilities of a language or the situations where language is used (2000, 28–29). This is a consequence of continually monitoring and

deciding which language should be used during the conversation (Baker and Jones 1998, 54). The increased sensitivity might be seen also during a telephone conversation. If the Spanish caller does not use his or her native langue during a conversation in English, a bilingual person can easily recognize it (e. g., by his accent). Therefore, the bilingual can switch to the caller's native language to sustain a friendly conversation (Baker and Jones 1998, 54). Furthermore, this example illustrates how well bilinguals are aware of the needs of their listeners (Baker and Sienkewicz 2000, 29).

2.2 Cognitive Advantages

This chapter deals with cognitive advantages that workers might have due to being bilingual. Cognitive advantages can be described as the advantages connected to "the use of conscious mental processes" (Cambridge dictionary 2023).

2.2.1 Creative Thinking

Creative thinking enables bilinguals to possess increased flexibility while solving various, often rapidly changing tasks (Baker and Jones 1998, 67). It is the result of the activation and alternation of conscious mental processes, which help to select the gathered responses from the cognitive system. The responses are "selected from the linguistic and nonlinguistic environment" (O. Deák 2003, 275). However, in order to better understand creative thinking other characteristic features must be provided. The features are known as increased fluency and imagination. Fluency is another term for proficiency, which was explained in Chapter 1.2. Moreover, imagination helps with the production of valid answers while solving tasks (Baker and Wright 2017, 142). One of the areas which require the use of creative thinking is bilingual advertising. The term bilingual advertising can be understood as advertising in which two or more languages are used (Bhatia and Ritchie 2008, 8). Furthermore, Bhatia and Ritchie also claim that this method of advertising holds new semantic and affective features which are lacking in monolingual advertising (2008, 10).

Semantic features represent new meanings, while affective features stand for a system of visual and verbal aspects. These aspects help attract consumers' attention; thus, mixing languages better serves this purpose (Bhatia and Ritchie 2008, 10–20). Regarding gaining attention, bilingual advertisements are useful mediators. According to Shin, bilingual advertisements can be effective mainly because the number of people becoming bilingual is increasing (2013, 37).

To conclude, creative thinking represents a cognitive advantage, which provides a way for bilingual workers to stand out from the crowd or to attract customers. Moreover, bilingual workers also have advantages related to culture. The following section deals with these advantages.

2.3   Cultural Advantages

Culture is a significant factor in helping us with understanding human society. Moreover, culture is transmitted through the mutual interchange of experiences, symbols, or languages. These symbols are then used to communicate meanings. Individuals must therefore learn these symbols to understand other individuals and to communicate. A typical example of culture is language. It is the primary factor when defining culture (Ellwood 1944, 6–7).

As Barbour claims, language represents forms of communication between people (i.e., vocal, written; signed) and can be seen as the distinct marker of various cultures (2000, 9). In the case of bilingualism, there is the usage of two languages. Therefore, bilingual workers can experience two or more cultures. Monolingual workers could be capable of experiencing different cultures, but successful integration into these cultures demands people to use the language of that culture (Baker and Jones 1998, 7).

In a society where the international market and economic competition on a global scale have a growing trend, bilingualism is slowly becoming necessary. Bilingual workers are required not only for their language skills but also for handling multicultural meetings and conversations (Baker and Wright 2017, 414). This concept is called *intercultural competence*. It alludes to encounters among individuals of different cultural backgrounds, which results in fertile communication and intercultural cooperation (Yun Kim 2009, 54). Understanding that culture is transmitted through language, bilingual workers have a beneficial position due to their knowledge of two languages. Therefore, their adaptation to different cultures is better. Their ability to cope with cultural shocks is also superior to monolinguals (Chibaka 2018, 24). Let me now mention one example, where increased cultural competence plays a beneficial role.

Southern Florida represents the main centre of South American businesses. It is a place where Spanish language skills interconnect the business cultures of Latin America and the USA. Moreover, Latin America required not only English but also Spanish to be a language of trade. This way Southern Florida became the main business centre (Baker and Wright 2014, 414). Thus, without bilingualism and its intercultural competence, trade would not be possible.

The last cultural advantage to be mentioned is a reduction of racism (Chibaka 2018, 24). Concerning this subchapter, the implication of bilingual workers in the workplace might be a strategy worth its study since the languages enable communicative barriers to be broken (see Chapter 2. 1. 1).

To sum up, bilingual workers possess significant cultural advantages. The advantages are beneficial for them as individuals, but also for the whole workplace.

Furthermore, being a bilingual worker also connects with certain economic advantages, which are discussed in the following section.

2.4 Economic Advantages

This chapter is focused on the economic advantages of bilingualism in the workplace. As was already stated in Chapter 2.1, most workplaces tend to have bilingual characteristics. Therefore, the demand for bilingual workers is growing (Baker and Wright 2017, 414). Moreover, this chapter describes bilingualism and job opportunities with bilingualism as a tool for economic growth in the workplace.

2.4.1 Bilingualism and Job Opportunities

Bilinguals might often be at an advantage when applying for work. Especially if those positions require a customer interface and communication in the client's language (Baker and Wright 2017, 404). A typical example is nursing care. Since nurses entail a therapeutic relationship between them and patients, the knowledge of the patient's native language makes the care more efficient. Potential language barriers might increase the client's levels of anxiety, therefore effective communication is a key to success in this area (Wyn Roberts 1994, 60). However, being bilingual does not definitely come with being hired and having a higher salary than monolinguals Two aspects need to be evaluated. Firstly, gaining advantages depends on the languages that enable a person to be bilingual (see Chapter 3.2). Secondly, the prestige of certain job positions is also a factor (Baker and Wright 2017, 405). Let me now explain the prestige of job positions and list some of them.

Prestigious jobs are jobs with high prestige and prosperity, which vary according to sectors in the market. For instance, in tourism, flight attendants, tour guides, and hotel staff are regarded to be prestigious job positions. All these jobs require a customer interface, therefore the usage of two languages is only enhanced. What is more, bilinguals occupy job positions such as translators and interpreters (Baker and Wright 2017, 405).

Translators and interpreters have always represented a principal part of bilingualism since their professions allow society to communicate effectively between languages. The translator's job is to create a translation from one language to another. As a result, people worldwide can read various books, share their ideas, or even religion (Baker and Jones 1998, 234).

Interpreters have a job akin to translators. The difference is in the form of translation. Interpreters work with the verbal form, while translators usually work with written texts. (Baker and Jones 1998, 242). For instance, interpreters find their use during many political meetings. They serve as a communication bridge between political parties to sustain smooth communication (Baker and Wright 2017, 405).

Next, the less prestigious job positions must be discussed as well. These positions might be occupied by immigrants or other minorities. Their level of majority language skills may not be sufficient to be employed in more prestigious jobs (Baker and Wright 2017, 406–7).

The link between bilingualism and employment can be understood thanks to the previous paragraphs. Some workers use their bilingualism to achieve an advancement, in the form of the provision of a better service. Other bilinguals need to improve their majority language skills to get a better-paid job (Baker and Wright 2017, 407).

The following chapter discusses bilingualism as a tool of economic growth in the workplace.

2.4.2   Bilingualism as a Tool of Economic Growth in the Workplace

Based on the previous chapters, bilingualism is connected to many advantages. Considering the economic ones, bilingualism benefits both sides, employers, and bilinguals as individuals (Hardach 2018). To support this statement, the following studies are provided. The first study was executed by Ingela Bel Habib, who analysed small and medium-sized companies in Sweden, Germany, Denmark, and France. She determined that compared to companies in Germany, Denmark, and France, Swedish small and medium-sized companies used fewer languages during their market trades. Therefore, the export was focused mainly on neighbouring countries. On the other hand, Germany, Denmark, and France used 8 to 12 market languages, leaving them with an opportunity to export to more countries (2011, 2–6).

As can be understood, bilingualism serves as a market strategy to achieve a successful trade negotiation. However, it is gradually becoming a must. The study by Ingela Bel Habib shows that the more languages companies use during a trade negotiation, the more customers

they might attract. The use of more than two languages refers to multilingualism (Pavlenko 2005, 6). Since multilingualism enables people to use two or more languages, it helps to sustain economic growth (Bel Habib 2011, 7). Multilingualism would not exist without bilingualism. Considering the other advantages of bilingualism, let me mention the main economic one for individuals. To support this advantage, the following study is provided.

According to Christofides and Swidinsky, bilingual workers earn higher annual earnings than monolingual ones. The object of their study was data from Statistics Canada's 2001 census of Canadians' annual earnings for bilingual and monolingual employees. When the result is taken into consideration, it claims that monolinguals earn less money than bilinguals. More precisely, men who are bilingual make 14.7%, and women who are bilingual about 18.5 % more than monolinguals (140–143, 2010). However, it does not always be the same scenario. The economic profitability of languages differs; therefore, it depends on which languages bilingual workers use (see Chapter 3).

To conclude, bilingualism represents an immense economic advantage for bilingual employees and their bosses. Even though it seems that bilingualism is not associated with the challenges, the truth is that there are some,

Several potential challenges are explained in Chapter 3.

2.5 Summary

The second chapter explained the positive role of bilingualism in the workplace. Chapter 2.1 dealt with the advantages of bilingualism in the workplace regarding communication. Chapter 2.2 explained cognitive advantages. Interestingly, creative thinking is the only cognitive advantage of bilingualism in the workplace. It was discovered that there are more cognitive advantages, but it was not relevant to this thesis. The cultural advantages were summarized in Chapter 2.3. This chapter was previously divided into 2 parts; however, the same information was repeated. The last set of advantages is explained in Chapter 2.4. The economic advantages, which were mentioned in this chapter, are some of the most essential since they help employees in their careers, and society with its improvement. However, several challenges also exist. These challenges are discussed in Chapter 3.

3 CHALLENGES OF BILINGUALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

This chapter deals with the challenges that bilingualism brings. Contrary to previous chapters, the number of challenges is not as numerous as in the case of advantages.

3.1 Degree of Language Proficiency

As was already stated, even bilingualism has its challenges, which need to be explained (Baker and Jones 1998,8). The first challenge represents the degree of language proficiency. Bilingual workers must often face difficult situations when one language is less developed than the other one. An example of a difficult situation might be seen in business when the use of less developed language is required. As a result, bilinguals might get quickly tired, and frustrated and tend to make mistakes both when speaking or writing (Grosjean 2010, 102–3).

Another consequence may be described as the influence of the more developed language on the weaker one. In situations when bilinguals are pushed to speak strictly monolingually, they often have difficulty not using code-switching. Moreover, they must deal with many interferences which appear as they get fatigued, worried, furious, or nervous. Some bilinguals tend to be so cautious while speaking that it sounds unnatural. The last instance to be mentioned represents a situation when bilinguals struggle to adjust to new circumstances, which often require the use of one language exclusively. As a result, bilinguals might feel under pressure and stressed (Grosjean 2010, 103–4).

To sum up, different degrees of language proficiency might get bilinguals under challenging situations.

The next chapter focuses on the economic profitability of languages.

3.2 Economic Profitability of Languages

Not all bilinguals have equal job opportunities. Their knowledge of multiple languages is not a warranty of financial stability, as was already explained in Chapter 2.4.1. This is the consequence of economic profitability, which is different from language to language (Baker and Wright 2017, 415). The economic profitability of languages is also an important factor for individuals who aspire to be bilinguals. Consequently, they choose languages that are perceived to be profitable for international trade (Wei et al. 2002, 4). These languages are, for instance, English, Spanish, Japanese, or German (Baker and Wright 2017, 415).

On the contrary, languages with minimal economic value represent languages used by minorities. It is often the case of immigrants who are pressured not to use their main

languages but rather the majority ones because they are associated with certain economic value and trade. Even if a little economic value is connected to the minority language, it is often associated with factories, fast food, rural areas, and sweatshops. Such bilinguals are not associated with wealth and money because the industries they work in are not very profitable. Considering Europe, many minority languages can be found in economically underdeveloped and low-populated regions. Therefore, there is the upcoming jeopardy of inequality between the urban core and rural periphery. The jeopardy is represented in the following possible situations (Baker and Wright 2017, 417).

The jeopardy might be found in cases where minorities live in rural areas that are distant and the economic growth is found in the urban core. The other scenario of jeopardy is when the factories are situated in more distant areas. In that case, local minorities are being used as cheap workforce, whereas the managers are connected to the city areas (Baker and Wright 2017, 417).

To conclude, bilingual workers might find themselves in challenging situations that are the result of the economic profitability of languages.

They must also deal with social prejudices of monolinguals, some of which are explained in the following chapter.

3.3 Social Prejudices

Although the benefits of bilingualism in the workplace were proven, some people remain critical of it. These people are usually monolinguals, who judge bilinguals based on various aspects. Some criticism is aimed at the bilinguals' age while others criticize their socioeconomic status. Consequently, both adults and children come under scrutiny. People with both high and low socioeconomic status also face prejudice (Grosjean 2010, 105).

Furthermore, Pavlenko claims that bilinguals are often viewed by monolinguals as linguistic or cultural hybrids (2005, 24). So as can be understood, instead of admiring bilinguals for mastering the languages, they might be seen negatively. Considering the linguistic part, for which bilinguals are being marked as linguistic hybrids, it might be the consequence of code-switching (see Chapter 2.1.1) (Grosjean 2010, 105). In the previous chapter, code-switching was marked as the advantage, Nevertheless, it is rather a subjective aspect of bilingualism (see Chapter 5). Some bilingual workers perceive code-switching as an advantage, whereas others not (see Chapter 5).

Code-switching is perceived negatively mainly by monolinguals, who claim that bilinguals are not able to master two languages properly (Baker and Jones 1998, 58). Some

linguists compare the criticism of bilingualism by monolinguals to the story of Babel, for instance, Baker and Wright.

Baker and Wright claim that bilingualism represents certain linguistic diversity, which is perceived by monolinguals as chaos. The chaos then has a negative impact on laws or the economy (2017, 73). This is a hypothesis, which means, that it does not have to represent reality. The occurrence of social prejudices against bilinguals in the workplace can be found in the practical part. Therefore, prejudices still exist.

To sum up, despite the numerous advantages, the phenomenon of bilingualism is still being criticized.

3.4 Summary

To conclude, the last chapter of the theoretical part explained the negative role of bilingualism in the workplace in terms of challenges. Chapter 3.1 dealt with the degree of language proficiency, explaining the possible situations bilingual workers must face when having different degrees of language proficiency. Chapter 3.2 explained the challenging situations of bilingualism in terms of the economic profitability of languages. Chapter 3.3 demonstrated the possible social prejudices towards bilinguals. To conclude, the challenges of bilingualism in the workplace were less numerous than the advantages.

The following chapter presents the research in the form of interviews with participants who are bilinguals and are already employed.

II. ANALYSIS

4 RESEARCH PRESENTATION

The purpose of this research is to discover the role of bilingualism in the workplace. The research is carried out in a qualitative form of interviews to discover and describe the advantages and challenges that bilingualism brings in the workplace.

4.1 Method

As the research method of this thesis, four qualitative interviews were conducted. The participants of the interviews are called interviewees, whereas the person leading the interviewing is known as the interviewer. The interviewer tends to reduce any possible imbalance between his or her side and the side of the interviewed participants (King et al. 2019, 3). The interviews were carried out in the English language, which reflects the participants' preferences (see Chapter 2.1.1.). What is essential to highlight is that both anonymity and confidentiality are characteristic features of this method (King et al. 2019, 3). Even though all participants agreed to participate in the research, the following steps needed to be use in order to protect their privacy. Firstly, the participants names were changed. Secondly, records of the interviews were deleted. Moreover, it is crucial to mention that qualitative interviews provide the interviewer with various advantages. (Brinkmann 2013, 4).

The possibility to use open-ended questions is considered to be one of them. As a result, the interviewer might gain participants' personal experience (King et al. 2019, 3). Furthermore, this method is claimed to be an objective toll when qualitative data of the human experience need to be collected (Brinkmann 2013, 4).

The method that was chosen for the research is the most suitable for the bachelor's thesis based on the reasons that are described in the next few sentences. The topic of this bachelor's thesis requires as much personal experience as possible. Therefore, a use of open-ended questions needed was needed. I also chose four participants only to get the most accurate data.

4.2   Participants

The selected participants had to meet the following criteria. The essential criteria were bilingualism and age. All the interviewed participants were 24 to 35 years old to provide comparable responses. The participants also completed their studies in college, gaining bachelor's or master's degrees. It is important to state that all the participants studied English

at a university. As a result, they all ended up working for companies that require the usage of both their languages, mainly their second language.

All the participants are bilingual in the Czech and English languages. However, what might differ is proficiency in those languages. It is because the participants did not grow up in bilingual families, which resulted in the later education of the English language. This might differ for every participant. Therefore, the participants differ in the types of bilingualism. The types were examined based on the language proficiency of each language. To discover the participants' proficiency, the questions based on the standardized method called (-LEAP-Q-) were used.

5 RESEARCH ANALYSIS

The interviews contain twelve questions, which are based on the standardized (-LEAP-Q-) method. The questionnaire examines self-reported proficiency in both languages and, thus helps to recognize what type of bilingualism participants of the research have. Many disciplines (e.g., linguistics or education) use the mentioned questionnaire. Therefore, it represents a flexible and comprehensive tool to collect valid data (Kaushanskaya et al. 2019, 945).

The questionnaire is flexible since the requirements for the participants of the research are set in a broad range. They might be bilinguals or multilinguals aged from 14 to 80, who allows for a great amount of data. The questionnaire is possible to be used in a digital, oral, or paper form (Kaushanskaya et al. 2019, 945).

Here is a list of the twelve questions to which participants responded (Marian at. Al 2007, 966–7):

1. *What is your native language?*
2. *What is your second language?*
3. *Why have you started learning the second language?*
4. *What is your job?*
5. *Do you think that your second language helped you be employed in your current workplace?*
6. *What advantages does bilingualism represent for you in the workplace?*
7. *What challenges does bilingualism represent for you in the workplace?*
8. *In which situations in the workplace do you use your native language?*
9. *In which situations in the workplace do you use your second language?*
10. *Which language do you use more frequently during a workday?*
11. *Imagine a situation when you would like to read a book. Which language would you choose?*
12. *When choosing a language to speak with a person who is equally fluent in all your languages, which one would you prefer?*

5.1 Results of the Research and Discussion

5.1.1 Tamara

The first interviewed person was Tamara. She is 26 years old. Moreover, the participant mentioned Czech to be her native language and English to be her second language. Tamara

became bilingual during her studies. She started learning English when she attended primary school. Later, she was accepted to study at the university where she studied the English language. Tamara mentioned that it was an important milestone for her since she gained her bachelor's degree there.

Tamara can be regarded as bilingual due to the following criteria. Even though the participant did not grow up in a bilingual family, all the mentioned education enabled her to be bilingual. More precisely, Tamara is considered to be a dominant bilingual (see Chapter 1.3.2). Dominant bilinguals might be recognized by being more proficient in one of their languages. This is also Tamara's case. As was already stated, Tamaras' native language is Czech. So, she started to acquire it much earlier than English, which is her secondary language. Therefore, the Czech language can be marked as the more proficient language. Even the participant claims to be more proficient in Czech than in English.

When it comes to the use of English, Tamara mentioned that she uses English mainly at work. She even switches to Czech when she does not have to use English at her workplace, where English is typically required. The same case applies to her weekends, which are marked as a certain form of relief from the constant use of English. The only free time activities when Tamara chooses English are when she wants to read a book or listen to music. On the other hand, when the participant is hanging out with friends, she uses mainly Czech.

The respondent is currently teaching English in a language school. As a result, Tamara uses primally English during her workday. There are still, however, some occurrences when she uses the Czech language. For instance, when she is communicating with some colleagues. Moreover, it is important to stress that being bilingual enabled Tamara to be employed in her current workplace. She confirmed it by saying: "*It is essential for me because if I did not know the second language, I would not have this job*," and after a while, she added: "*Now when everything is connected, I think it is important to speak other languages.*"

So as can be understood, being bilingual might even be a criterium for people being employed in certain job positions (see Chapter 2.4.1). Therefore, bilingualism represents a considerable advantage. Furthermore, as the respondent previously mentioned, knowing at least two languages is the basis. According to her, the more languages people learn, the more money might people earn. This fact is reflected in Chapter 2.4.2, where bilingualism stands as the primary trading strategy.

Moreover, the use of multilingualism enables greater achievements in business. In Tamara's view, there are other advantages of bilingualism in the workplace to be mentioned. She mainly highlighted cultural advantages (see Chapter 2.3).

Being bilingual enables Tamara to communicate with plenty of people and discover new cultures. Tamara's relationship with her Asian colleague might be used as an example. The Asian colleague does not speak Czech, so other colleagues only communicate with her in English. According to this respondent, knowledge of co-workers' language helps people eliminate a particular cultural barrier; therefore, a person does not have to feel isolated from others or even insulted. After finishing the talk about the Asian colleague, Tamara recalled one more example.

Last month the respondent and her colleagues attended a conference where one of the present participants was a teacher from the USA. The teacher of American origin has lived in the Czech Republic only for two years. As a result, Tamara's boss asked her and her colleagues only to use English when communicating with that teacher. The expected result was that she would feel much more comfortable using English than Czech.

When considering other advantages, Tamara mentioned code-switching in particular (see Chapter 2.1.1). In her view, code-switching is a great tool to explain grammar. At first, she attempts to explain the grammar in English. However, not all Czech students can understand it. Therefore, Tamara intentionally switches to Czech. Moreover, Tamara also added that she intentionally switches to Czech when she wants to emphasize something. As Tamara claimed before, not all students understand her explanations in English. Therefore, she wants to be sure that her students understand what is going on.

The only challenge Tamara mentioned is social prejudices (see Chapter 3. 3). Interestingly, her students are the only ones who judge her. Tamara believes that it is mainly because her English is better than theirs. Therefore, they sometimes make fun of her.

To conclude, the respondent considered the role of bilingualism in the workplace to be mainly positive, which results from a great range of advantages contrary to challenges. The participant recalled only one challenge. Table 2 summarizes various advantages and introduces two challenges mentioned by the interviewee.

Participant 1	Tamara
Age	24
Job	English language teacher
Workplace	School
Type of bilingualism	Dominant
Advantages	
Economic	Job opportunities
Cultural	Discovering new cultures
Communicative	Code-switching
Challenges	
	Social prejudices
Conclusion	
The role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.	

Table 2 Tamara

5.1.2 Oliver

The participant in the second interview was Oliver. He is 35 years old and lives in the Czech Republic. Moreover, the participant mentioned Czech to be his native language and English to be his second language. Oliver mentioned that he started learning the English language in primary school. From then onwards, he learned English in grammar school since it was also compulsory there. However, a considerable change happened during his studies at secondary school. When Oliver Turned 17, he moved to Canada to study high school there. Since then, Oliver studied at universities that used English as the language of communication. English has always been his passion. Therefore, he wanted to improve his proficiency in it. As a result, Oliver ended up gaining a master's degree and obtaining a C2 proficiency certificate, proving that he can master the language as a highly competent English speaker (Cambridge University Press and Assessment English 2022).

Based on the previous facts, the participant can be characterized as bilingual. To be more precise, a balanced bilingual (see Chapter 1.3.1). Even though it was mentioned that the occurrence of being a balanced bilingual is rare, in this case, it can be applied. In Olivers'

words, he has the same proficiency in both languages due to his education and stay in foreign countries. When it comes to the usage of English, Oliver does not only use it in the workplace but also with his friends. In his view, using English during his free time became natural because many of his friends mainly use English to communicate. Therefore, he prefers English movies, books, or music.

Indeed, the participant did not grow up in a bilingual family; nevertheless, a C2 proficiency certificate only represents a possible balance between Czech and English. Moreover, without achieving C2 proficiency in English, Oliver wouldn't be working in his current workplace, which is an embassy. Oliver's occupation is that of a diplomat. Therefore, he cooperates with the Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs in Prague. However, he spent the past four years in Australia as a deputy missionary.

The following examples demonstrate that Oliver perceives bilingualism to be highly beneficial. He stressed that his working environment is mainly English which is used everywhere, e.g., in official documents and during meetings with partners and foreign diplomats. However, some exceptions exist. For instance, when Oliver communicates with his Czech colleagues, he uses Czech. Moreover, it is communication that is, according to him, perceived to be a great advantage of being a bilingual employee (see Chapter 2.1).

The beneficial role of communication with foreign diplomats is illustrated in the following example. Oliver mentioned that English is typically used during communication with diplomats from Latin American countries. In other cases, the nationality of the present participants of the meeting plays an essential role. It serves as a decision-making tool, which helps to decide the language used during the meeting. Therefore, the participants switch to a language everybody understands. Code-switching is the ability to switch between languages freely (see Chapter 2.1.1).

What I find interesting is the interviewee's perception of the communicative advantages of bilingualism in the past and nowadays. Earlier, he believed that code-switching represented a great advantage in his workplace, but nowadays, code-switching has become natural to him. However, he still perceives it as an advantage. Regarding Oliver and other communicative advantages, the participant expressed that he has increased language sensitivity (see Chapter 2.1.2). The increased language sensitivity enables Oliver to detect whether the person he is talking to is using his or her native language. When the speaker is using a second language and does not feel confident, Oliver tries to switch to the person's native language if it is possible. As a result, the person might feel less tense or understand their conversation better.

The other set of advantages, which Oliver commented on, were cultural ones (see Chapter 2.3). Firstly, he introduced the cultural advantages: "*There are about 115 embassies in Prague, so that is how many nationalities you get to deal with*." As can be understood, the participant believes that the knowledge of languages enabled him to encounter various nationalities and cultures. Moreover, he provided some other specific examples to emphasize the cultural advantages. Interestingly, Oliver confirmed that bilingualism might also reduce racism in the workplace. In his opinion, it is the result of speaking more languages.

Furthermore, Oliver expressed his attitude toward economic advantages (see Chapter 2.4). He mentioned that speaking at least two languages in the workplace is a must. He added: "*Speaking at least two languages is the baseline for good employment*." After a while, Oliver even came up with the expression that being at least bilingual is *a new standard*. So as can be understood, what being bilingual means to Oliver, is an opportunity to be employed (see Chapter 2.4.1).

The participant also explained the challenges of bilingualism in the workplace. He believes that code-switching might be considered the only challenge. Despite of his mentioning that code-switching was an advantage and came naturally to him, it might be challenging on some occasions. Oliver noted that during most of his workday, he uses English. Therefore, he sometimes struggles to use Czech. Even though the participant knows the terms in English, he encounters difficulties recalling the words in Czech.

To conclude, the participant perceives the role of bilingualism in the workplace to be mostly positive. Although Oliver mentioned one challenge, he still believes in the positive role of bilingualism in the workplace. Table 3 summarizes various advantages and introduces the only challenge mentioned by the interviewee.

Participant 2	Oliver
Age	35
Job	Diplomat
Workplace	Embassy
Type of bilingualism	Balanced
Advantages	
Economic	Job opportunities
Cultural	Discovering new cultures
Communicative	Code-switching
	Increased language sensitivity
Challenges	
Communicative	Code-switching
Conclusion	
The role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.	

Table 3 Oliver

5.1.3   Miroslav

The third participant was Miroslav. Moreover, he is 28 years old and lives in the Czech Republic. The participant mentioned Czech to be his native language and English to be his second language. During the interview, Miroslav mentioned that his parents pushed him to learn English. So, as a result, he could not stand learning that language. However, he attended all the English classes, and it became his passion. Miroslav stated that his story about the English language began when he was at the age of 5. Oliver attended extra classes at that time, because his parents pushed him to do that.

Moreover, Miroslav attended these classes until English was a compulsory subject at school. However, he did not enjoy them. The change in the participant's attitude occurred when he was 11 years old. It was at that time when Miroslav attended primary school and later secondary school. Moreover, the participant had studied for his bachelor's and master's degrees in English.

Miroslav can be regarded as bilingual based on the following criteria. Even though the participant did not grow up in a bilingual family, all the mentioned education enabled him to be bilingual, more precisely, to be a dominant bilingual (see Chapter 1.3.2). It represents that a bilingual is considered to be more proficient in one of his languages. This is also Miroslav's case. Even though the participant started learning English as a child, he is more proficient in Czech. Concerning English, Miroslav uses it mainly in the workplace or while watching films and reading books.

Interestingly, the interviewee reads books only in English. To Miroslav, reading books represents a way not to forget some vocabulary. Regarding the participant's free time with friends and family, he prefers Czech because it is more natural.

The participant first commented on the economic advantages (see Chapter 2.4). In his view, proficiency in the second language helped Miroslav to be employed in his current workplace (see Chapter 2.4.1). He teaches the English language. Therefore, bilingualism enabled Miroslav to be employed in his current workplace. Overall, the participant claimed to believe in the economic profitability of languages. However, economic advantages are not the only ones Miroslav mentioned.

The participant also described some communicative advantages (see Chapter 2.1). In Miroslav's point of view, code-switching is an essential advantage (see Chapter 2.1.1). When it comes to the workplace, the participant mainly uses the English language. However, even during the lessons, he must switch to the Czech language. If students need help understanding the subject matter, switching between Czech and English is a useful strategy. After a while, Miroslav mentioned another communicative advantage.

He mentioned that he had studied English for translators and interpreters, which benefited him during his lessons. It is a consequence of constantly analysing Czech and English's linguistic properties. This is an ability that he still uses nowadays. The mentioned ability is used for predicting the possible mistakes students might make. Furthermore, Miroslav added: "*So what I do is that I like to focus on, let's say, phrases and structures that I know my students understand, but they have trouble coming up with them. Because we express the same ideas in a completely different way.*" So as can be understood, the participant tends to have increased sensitivity to second language (see Chapter 2.1.2).

As a result, this increased sensitivity helps him in teaching. Therefore, he can easily recognize whether a person he is speaking to uses his or her native language. Miroslav believes this is possible because bilinguals are more cautious about grammar and language structure.

Miroslav also described cultural advantages (see Chapter 2.3). In his view, people learn languages to encounter different cultures. That is why the participant mentioned that having bilingual employees in your workplace can reduce racism. After a while, the participant recalled one practical example. Miroslav is currently sharing his office with a new colleague from America with whom he must communicate only in English. Therefore, knowledge of the second language enables them to cooperate. However, there are not only advantages; even some challenges exist.

Considering the challenges, Miroslav mentioned that communication with monolinguals is more challenging than people think. There are situations in which Miroslav experiences some challenges. It is mainly when the thoughts in his native language should be expressed. Furthermore, it happens mainly when speaking to monolinguals. This is a consequence of the common usage of English in his workplace, which makes him struggle when discussing some topics in Czech because he talks about these issues mainly in English. The mentioned schema refers to code-switching. Therefore, code-switching represents both an advantage and a challenge. However, that was the only challenge Miroslav mentioned.

To conclude, Miroslav perceived the role of bilingualism in the workplace to be mostly positive. Table 4 summarizes various advantages and introduces the only challenge mentioned by the interviewee.

Participant 3	Miroslav
Age	28
Job	English language teacher
Workplace	School
Type of bilingualism	Balanced
Advantages	
Economic	Job opportunities
Cultural	Discovering new cultures
	Reduction of racism
Communicative	Code-switching
	Increased language sensitivity
Challenges	
Communicative	Code-switching
Conclusion	
The role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.	

Table 4 Miroslav

5.1.4 Mariana

32-year-old Mariana was the last participant who agreed to participate in this research. She lives in the Czech Republic. Mariana started learning English in primary school. However, she later studied in various countries. Mostly, Mariana was studying at a primary school in

the Czech Republic. Regarding her subsequent education, Mariana stated that she attended a grammar school focused on teaching foreign languages. The university was an important milestone for her. She studied both at a university in the Czech Republic and in England, where Mariana gained her bachelor's and master's degrees. According to Mariana, she decided to study English mainly due to its future profitability.

Mariana can be regarded as bilingual based on the following aspects. Even though the participant did not grow up in a bilingual family, all the mentioned education enabled her to be bilingual. To be more precise, Mariana is a dominant bilingual (see Chapter 1.3.2). A typical feature of language dominance is language proficiency. That means that a dominant bilingual would be more proficient in one of her or his languages. This is also Mariana's case. As was already mentioned, the participants' native language is Czech, which she started to acquire much earlier than in the case of English. Therefore, the Czech language can be considered to be more proficient. Even the participant herself claims to be more proficient in Czech than in English. Concerning English, Mariana uses it mainly in the workplace.

The participant works as a business project manager for two companies. She works partly at a bank but also at an investment company. Mariana started working in the bank where the English language was not considered to be a requirement. However, the investment company required knowledge of the English language.

Mariana mentioned several advantages of bilingualism in the workplace. At first, Mariana described her job to be mainly of an administrative character. Thus, the biggest advantage for her is to understand contracts in the English language. Second, in her opinion, communicative advantages are also essential (see Chapter 2.2). The knowledge of the English language enables Mariana to communicate with her foreign clients. Third, Mariana is aware of another communicative advantage: increased language sensitivity (see Chapter 2.1.2). In her view, she can quickly realize if the person to whom she is speaking uses his or her native language or not. She used her French clients as an example. According to her: "*You can hear that from the accent.*"

Besides the advantages, Mariana commented on challenges as well. In her opinion, code-switching is the main challenge (see Chapter 2.1.1). She mentioned that it happens mainly during acquisitions. The agreements are written in the Czech legal language. However, communication with foreign clients is in English. Therefore, it is sometimes challenging for Mariana to understand the legal terms correctly and then interpret them.

To conclude, Mariana considered the role of bilingualism in the workplace to be mostly positive. Table 5 summarizes various advantages and introduces the only challenge mentioned by the interviewee.

Participant 4	Mariana
Age	32
Job	Business project manager
Workplace	Bank, Investment company
Type of bilingualism	Balanced
Advantages	
Communicative	Communication with clients
	Increased language sensitivity
Challenges	
Communicative	Code-switching
Conclusion	
The role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.	

Table 5 Mariana

5.2 Summary

To conclude, the practical part of the bachelor's thesis was conducted in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Chapter 4 served as the introduction to the research, providing information about the chosen methodology of the research and participants. In Chapter 5, the research analysis was carried out. Each participant answered the questions concerning the role of bilingualism in the workplace. Their answers were analysed and, to provide a clear overview, furthermore, summarized in the charts. To conclude the practical part, the role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.

CONCLUSION

The bachelor's thesis was aimed to discover the role of bilingualism in the workplace. It was divided into a theoretical and a practical part.

Chapter 1 of the theoretical part was aimed at the definitions, degree, and types of bilingualism. Chapter 2 described the advantages of bilingualism in the workplace, whereas Chapter 3 dealt with the challenges. Based on the used literature, the theoretical part showed that the role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.

The purpose of the practical part was to discover the role of bilingualism in the workplace. Therefore, the qualitative method in the form of interviews was chosen. To collect valid data, four bilingual participants who use their second language in the workplace daily were interviewed.

To conclude, many advantages connected with the role of bilingualism in the workplace were mentioned in the responses of the participants. Communicative advantages frequently appeared, mainly code-switching. For many participants, bilingualism became a communicative tool, which connects the worlds of two languages. Moreover, participants also mentioned cultural advantages. Thanks to their knowledge of two languages, they could discover new cultures. Regarding the challenges, there were not many described. Most of the participants commented on the impact of their second language on their native one. Interestingly, some participants also described code-switching as a challenge even though for many of them it represents rather an advantage.

As can be understood, the practical part of this bachelor's thesis has confirmed that the role of bilingualism in the workplace is mostly positive.

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