



Analysis Of Bilingual Job Vacancies Advertised In Ghanaian Labour Market: Key Employability Requirements And Curriculum/Policy Implications

Fiawomorm Kofi Fiagbe¹, Gabriel Kwasi Aboagye², Jonas Kwabla Fiadzawoo³

¹Department of Arts Education University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana fiagbek@ucc.edu.gh

²Department of Business and Social Sciences Education University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana Gabriel.aboagye@ucc.edu.gh

³Department of Languages University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana fiadzawoo@uds.edu.gh

APA Citation:

Fiagbe, F.K., Aboagye, G.K., Fiadzawoo, J.K., (2025). Analysis Of Bilingual Job Vacancies Advertised In Ghanaian Labour Market: Key Employability Requirements And Curriculum/Policy Implications. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 21(2), 33-47; 2025.

Submission Date: 20/06/2025

Acceptance Date: 25/08/2025

Abstract

Proficiency in the French language in Ghana is becoming the more crucial as a result of the country's proximity to Francophone neighbours and expanding socio-economic relations with francophone countries. The role of the French language in the Ghanaian economy is echoed in educational reforms and views expressed by prominent personalities, highlighting the need to train bilingual professionals across all sectors of the economy to prepare citizens for bilingual jobs in Ghana, and around the globe. Based on the Sustainable Employability (SE) Framework, this paper explored the employability requirements for bilingual jobs advertised in the Ghanaian labour market with the aim of providing relevant data for decision-making by learners, graduate training institutions, curriculum planners and government. The study was based on an in-depth analysis of job advertisements in two national dailies, namely, the Daily Graphic Newspaper and the Graphic Business using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics. The results showed that the most demanded academic qualification was the Master's Degree representing 41.3%. contrary to earlier studies suggesting the Bachelor's Degree. Essential skills required of bilingual job seekers included profession-specific skills (16.4%), Computer and IT skills and Communication and media skills (10.8%). The study concluded that to occupy bilingual job positions, one must acquire 21st Century Skills and profession-specific competences in addition to internal languages, particularly French and English. The study recommended the introduction of bilingual professional programmes into graduate training institutions, and the provision of targeted government scholarships for bilingual professionals to attend immersion and internship programmes in French-speaking countries to improve their proficiency.

Key Words: *Bilingual, Curriculum, Employability, Jobs, Policy.*

Introduction

Proficiency in foreign languages such as English, French, Spanish, Mandarin, and Arabic has become a significant asset in the global labor market. Thus, communicative competence in such languages is becoming increasingly crucial as a skill for employability, cross border communication and expanding international business relations in today's globalised world (Piekkari, Welch, & Welch, 2014). The term employability refers to a person's capacity to secure and retain a job (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). Employability could also denote a set of achievements, skills, understandings and attributes which places an individual at an advantage of gaining employment and remaining relevant in his or her chosen job (York, 2008). All other things held constant, to be successful in one's job search, two types of skills are required of jobseekers: hard skills (profession-specific skills) and soft skills (Asomaning

et al., 2021). Soft skills are personal attributes that enhance an individual's interactions, job performance and career prospects. In other words, they are the subtle behaviours and communication styles that help make a work environment or interaction with another person easier to manage (Vasanthakumari, 2019).

Most employers however do not go for only academic excellence and hard skills which are viewed as job-specific skills trainable on the job (Shury et al., 2010) but also soft skills. Soft skills have become more and more sought after ahead of hard skills and academic excellence. Due to the crucial role of soft skills in achieving academic excellence and job success, many employers look out for such skills during job interviews and screening processes through an applicant's communication, aptitude, confidence, positive gestures, dress code, mannerisms etc. (Bunt, McAndrew, & Kuechel, 2005; Devins & Hogarth, 2013). The Learning and Skills Council of the United Kingdom reports in 2003, that over one-fifth of all advertised vacancies could not be filled owing to applicants' lack of the required soft skills. In Malaysia for instance, over 70% of graduates do not get a job in their first 6 months after completion of school for the same lack of the required soft skills (Singh & Singh, 2008). It has been established by many researchers that only few graduates complete university studies with sufficient soft skills and the basic appreciation of the required character to enable them to succeed in the world of work (Singh & Singh, 2008; Suresh, 2006).

In Ghana, job vacancies requiring bilingual skills in international languages often specify fluency in English and French, reflecting the need for cross-border collaboration in organizations operating regionally (Asomaning et al., 2021). The ability to communicate in both languages is particularly emphasized for cross border communication (Boateng & Thomson, 2013). The French language, thus, becomes an indispensable tool to unlocking economic growth due to the country's geographical position and economic relationships with French speaking West African and African countries, where trade, diplomacy, health delivery, security and regional integration require bilingual capabilities (Afful & Mwinlaaru, 2012).

This critical role of the French language in the Ghanaian economy is echoed and repeated in several education reforms and curricula (CRDD, 2004; NaCCA, 2019, 2020) of the country due to the importance of the language. According to the 2004 Education Reform of Ghana (CRDD, 2004), there is the urgent need for Ghanaians to learn how to speak French because the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is fast becoming a reality and bilingualism (English and French) is a prerequisite for appointments to various positions. Clearly, this reform highlights the rationale for the introduction of French in the educational system, that is Ghanaians occupying positions in the ECOWAS and by extension, other international bodies such as the United Nations (UN), and the African Union (AU).

Apart from the educational reforms, prominent citizens of the land also articulated the potential and critical role the French language should play in the Ghanaian economy. In a speech addressed to the Parliament of Ghana, the former president, His Excellency John Agyekum Kufour (Kufour, 2003) noted that mastering the French language is of such practical necessity and should be put on the priority list. He noted the constant embarrassment he came to face with while moving around the sub-region and the many times that he wished he could do without translators. He added that in this era of ECOWAS, he did not wish this linguistic handicap on any Ghanaian child. On his part, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo indicated that Ghana would be in a strong position to reap maximum benefits from the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement if Ghanaians make conscious efforts to learn the French language (Kyei, 2021). He described Ghana as an English-speaking island in a French sea, with its western, eastern and northern borders being French speaking countries. The former president stressed the need for Ghanaians to learn the language to be able to communicate and trade effectively with French speaking countries (Kyei, 2021). These anecdotal evidences of the importance of the French language as strongly articulated by the two former Ghanaian presidents speak to the indispensable role of the French language in the area of international politics and trade, where political figures like presidents, ministers, public figures and ordinary citizens of the land necessarily have to engage with their francophone counterparts in the discharge of their daily duties.

To be successful in preparing Ghanaians for bilingual jobs in West Africa, Africa and beyond, several policies, including the introduction of French into the curricula as well as Ghana Government scholarships for immersion in francophone countries have been implemented over the years to improve

proficiency in French among students since 1879 (Bangnia, 2020). Despite these interventions, the objectives for the introduction of French in the educational system have not been met as many Ghanaians continue to struggle to attain the proficiency in the language as required by industry (De-Souza, 2015). Stemming from this background, the following questions among others arise: Why have Ghanaians not been able to secure bilingual jobs around the globe as intended in the various curricula? How can the teaching/learning of French in Ghana be directly and intentionally targeted at enhancing the chances of employability among the citizenry? Which competences do French teachers require to strategically tailor the teaching/learning of French towards the enhancement of the chances of learners' employability?

There seem then to be a disconnect between the training of graduates in Ghanaian universities and the requirements for bilingual jobs offered by industry. This paper, therefore, seeks to explore the employability requirements for bilingual jobs advertised in the Ghanaian labour market with the aim of providing relevant data for decision-making by learners, graduate training institutions, curriculum planners and decision-makers. Without this investigation, Ghana risks continuing to produce graduates who are professionally and linguistically underprepared for key positions and bilingual jobs requiring competency in French and English. This situation ultimately hinders the country's competitive edge in Francophone markets and not improving the unemployment situation of the country especially in an era where the need to trade internationally as an economic union is unavoidable.

Review of Literature

Employability and bilingualism in international languages

Bilingualism in international languages such as English, French, Spanish, Mandarin, and Arabic is considered a soft skill in the labour market. Bilingualism is the state of anyone who has minimal competence in one of the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) in a language that is not the first language, or anyone who controls two or more languages (Dewaele, 2015). This definition implies that bilingualism encompasses individuals with minimal proficiency in two or more languages be they local or international languages. Bilingualism as a soft skill is seen by employers as a critical employability skill, with language proficiency tied to improved communication, cultural competency, and competitive advantage (Boateng & Ofori-Sarpong, 2002). Bilingualism does not only enhance communication abilities but also opens doors to diverse employment opportunities across various sectors. Current literature indicates that bilingual individuals often have a competitive edge in the job market. Employers value bilingualism for facilitating direct communication with a broader client base and for bridging cultural gaps within diverse teams. For example, a study by Alarcón and Heyman (2014) highlights that bilingual employees can navigate multicultural environments effectively, making them ideal candidates for roles in international business, healthcare, education, and customer service.

Moreover, bilingualism has also been linked to higher earning potential. According to a report commissioned by the Centre for European Policy Studies (Gazzola & Mazzacani, 2019), employees who can speak a foreign language are generally paid better than their monolingual counterparts, with salary premiums varying by industry and language. It was again observed in the report that bilingualism also correlates with improved employment outcomes in Europe. Data from three European countries, namely, Germany, Italy and Spain show that knowledge of foreign languages reduces unemployment probability, with English and French proficiency being particularly beneficial (Gazzola & Mazzacani, 2019).

Beyond economic advantages, bilingualism is known to enhance cognitive functions essential for professional success. Researchers (Boliqulova, 2025; Nuri, 2024; Vaghela, 2024) have argued that bilingual individuals often demonstrate better problem-solving abilities, multitasking, and decision-making skills. These cognitive benefits stem from the mental agility required to switch between languages and inhibit one language while using another (Bialystok, 2009). Such skills are transferable to workplace tasks that demand flexibility and adaptability. In addition, bilingualism fosters greater cultural awareness and empathy. Exposure to multiple languages and cultures enables individuals to navigate multicultural environments effectively, a crucial skill in today's diverse workplaces. This cultural competence enhances teamwork, customer relations, and global business negotiations (Callahan & Gándara, 2014).

Employability and bilingualism in French and English

Research has consistently shown that bilingual individuals, especially those proficient in both English and French often enjoy increased employability, access to a wider range of job opportunities, and enhanced career progression (Solati, Chowdhury, & Jackson, 2022). In the Canadian context for example, it was found that French-English bilinguals earn more on average and have greater mobility in public service jobs (Solati et al., 2022). Similarly, it was reported that bilingual individuals in Quebec receive wage premiums, especially when both languages are utilized at work (Pelletier, 2016). In the same way, in African countries like Cameroon and parts of West Africa like Ghana where both languages are prominent, French-English bilingualism is sometimes a prerequisite for careers in government, diplomacy, education, and international trade (Echu, 2004). Employers increasingly value linguistic versatility, particularly in regions where bilingual policy frameworks exist. These skills are particularly useful in customer-facing roles, education, translation, and healthcare, where communication across language boundaries is critical. It is clear from the literature that bilingual professionals stand a better chance in seeking employment when compared to monolinguals. What the literature has not revealed is the employability requirements expected of bilingual individuals to be successful in their job search. In order to understand how bilingual job seekers could gain and maintain their future jobs, it is important to look at the tenets of sustainable employability.

Sustainable Employability Framework

The present study hinges on the Sustainable Employability (SE) Framework which is a conceptual model that emphasizes the importance of enabling workers to maintain their employability throughout their working lives. The SE Framework was developed by Van der Klink, Bültmann, and Burdorf (2016) as a response to the limitations of traditional employability models, which often neglect the values and aspirations of workers. The choice of this theory is in the fact that it focuses wholistically on the individual's capabilities and the work environment as requirements for a sustainable employment.

The framework identifies seven key capabilities essential for sustainable employability. The first, use of knowledge and skills pertains to the application of one's existing competencies in the workplace as utilizing one's skills enhances job satisfaction and performance (Gürbüz et al., 2024). The second, development of knowledge and skills emphasizes the importance of continuous learning and skill enhancement to adapt to evolving job demands so as to ensure professional development and long-term employability and job satisfaction (Van der Klink et al., 2016). The third principle has to do with involvement in important decisions and highlights the extent to which employees can participate in decision-making processes that affect their work as involvement fosters a sense of autonomy and ownership, contributing to job satisfaction (Gürbüz, Bakker, Demerouti, & Brouwers, 2023). The fourth tenet concerns building and maintaining meaningful contacts at work (Van Gorp et al., 2018). The fifth tenet relates to setting personal goals, that is the ability of employees to define and pursue personal objectives within their roles enhancing motivation, engagement, and a sense of purpose at work (Gürbüz et al., 2024). The sixth is about having a good income, that is receiving fair and adequate compensation for one's work, which is fundamental for job satisfaction, financial security, and overall well-being (Abma et al., 2016). The seventh is about contributing to something valuable in the context of the work environment (Abma et al., 2016).

The SE framework, thus offers a valuable lens to analyze employability requirements, taking into consideration factors that are internal and external to the individual (Fleuren, de Grip, Jansen, Kant, & Zijlstra, 2020). In other words, the framework enables us to analyse the employability requirements of bilingual jobseekers in terms of what industry wants by adopting the appropriate methodological procedures.

Methodology

The embedded mixed-methods design was adopted, combining the qualitative and quantitative analysis of bilingual job advertisements in two newspapers. The choice of the design was to obtain an in-depth, comprehensive and well-informed insights into bilingualism and the curricula to enhance employability of

graduates. The newspapers considered as data source for this study were Daily Graphic and Graphic Business. While the Daily Graphic was chosen because of its nationwide coverage, the Graphic Business was selected because of its specialization in the area of economic and business-related issues. A key advantage of document analysis is the complete absence of obstruction in data gathering as well as the possibility of the counting all reference range of the materials (Bowen, 2009). This study benefited from the full coverage of all newspaper items published in the two dailies onto the Ghanaian market from January to December from 2016 to 2023. We took notice of the fact that not all jobs are advertised in the Ghanaian labour market while recognizing the fact that jobs advertised in one newspaper could also have been published in other sources such as the Ghanaian Times and in online portals. As such, in compiling the data, extreme care was taken not to double count the adverts that appeared in the subsequent editions of the same newspaper or other newspapers. An advert by an employer which could be made up of one or more job vacancies was considered to be a unit of analysis. It is instructive to note that teaching vacancies were not included in the data because the focus was on bilingual jobs other than teaching. This inclusion/exclusion criteria was arrived at in line with the aims of the 2004 Education Reform of Ghana (CRDD, 2004) seeking to position Ghanaians to play active roles in the affairs of the sub region and beyond where international languages are most needed in several sectors but not necessarily teaching. The newspapers were purposively sampled while the census method was used to include the data sets from the newspapers for our analysis.

In order to group the job vacancies advertised in the newspapers, the present study adopted the disaggregated 4-digit International Standards Classification of Occupations – ISCO (Hunter, 2009) system to categorize the various job opportunities announced in the newspapers. ISCO is a hierarchical system categorizing occupational units into 9 major groups at 4-digit skill levels, ranging from 1 = Unskilled (ISCO group 9), to 2 = Semi-skilled (ISCO group 4-8), 3 = Skilled (ISCO group 1 and 3), and 4 = Highly skilled (ISCO group 2) based on the similarities in the tasks and duties performed. These levels relate to the International Standard Classification of Education ISCED-1997 (UNESCO, 2006). It is necessary to note that legislators, senior - officials and managers and Armed Forces have not been assigned any skills levels because their duties could relate or be similar to any of the four skills levels. A questionnaire was designed to capture information such as job title, sector declaring the vacancy, type of skills and competencies required, educational qualifications required. Thematic analysis and simple descriptive statistics and cross tabulations were used in presenting the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Yearly Distribution of Advertised Jobs Requiring English and French

Year	Daily Graphic		Graphic Business		Total	%
	Fre	%	Fre	%		
2016	44	80	11	20	55	25
2017	25	89	3	11	28	10
2018	31	97	1	3	32	16
2019	46	98	1	2	47	19
2020	26	100	-	0	26	12
2021	30	97	1	3	31	13
2022	13	93	1	7	14	4
2023	3	100	-	0	3	1
Total	218	92	18	8	236	100

Source: Field work (2025)

Table 1 presents the yearly distribution of job advertisements requiring French and English from 2016 to 2023 in both the Daily Graphic and Graphic Business. From the yearly distribution data in table 1, 2016

editions stood out as the year when most job advertisements were published within the seven year-period under view. Of the two-hundred and thirty-six (236) jobs advertised over the period, fifty-five (55) representing 25% featured in the 2016 editions. The 2019 editions came next in succession in respect of the year when most bilingual job advertisements were published in the Daily Graphic and Graphic Business with 47 job postings representing 19%. The year 2023 recorded the least number of job postings, which was 3 job advertisements representing 1%. It is important to note that the Daily Graphic recorded 218 job postings representing 92% while the Graphic Business recorded 18 job postings representing 8% during the seven-year period.

Table 2 presents the categories of agencies where the jobs were published.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of 2016-2023 Advertised Jobs by Type of Employment Agency

Agency type	Frequency	Percentage
Public Sector	29	12.3
Private Sector	41	17.4
International Organizations	75	31.8
Multinational Organizations	22	9.3
Non-Governmental Organizations	35	14.8
Others	34	14.4
Total	236	100

Source: Field work (2025)

Table 2 shows that international organizations representing 31.8 % job postings dominated the labour market from 2016 to 2023 as far as job vacancies requiring competency in French and English are concerned. This was followed by the private sector and NGOs with 17% and 13.4% respectively. Other institutions came next followed by the public sector and multinational organizations representing 14.4%, 12.3% and 9.3% respectfully. This implies that the employing institutions cut across several categories which are not limited to the Ghanaian Economy.

The public sector institutions included Ministry of Local Government and Ministry of Education and the Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast, Ghana while the private sector included Quick Angel Ghana, Flour Mills of Ghana LTD and AHK GHANA. Notable among the Multinational Organizations were West African Power Pool (WAPP), WFP, UNDP, UNESCO, ECOWAS, EU, African Development Bank and AfCFTA. For the international institutions, they included TETRA TECH ARD, Sandvik, GIZ, Manu River Union (MRU), McKinsey & Company, US Mission, Rwanda High Commission, Marie Stopes International, Australian High Commission -Ghana, Natural Resource Governance Institute, the University of Rhode Island, AGETUR-TOGO while the NGOs included WA BiCC and FHI 360 among others. These employment agencies advertised jobs in different categories.

Table 3 presents data on the advertised bilingual job vacancies by the type of occupational groups.

Table 3: Distribution of Employment Vacancies Requiring French and English by Occupational Groups

S/ N	Occupational group	Jobs advertised	Skill level	Frequency	Overall per cent
1	Managers and Professionals	Heads of Human Resources	4 th	3	
		Directors		11	

		Consultant/Advisor (Tax)/environmental/AfCFTA		23	70.3				
		Managers (Project; Exploration; Finance; Medical Supply Services; Business Development; Oil/Gas; Investment; Construction; Package; Site; HSE Manager; Logistics / infrastructure; Quality Assurance; Quality Control)		47					
		Procurement Specialists		4					
		Trade/Business Analysts		5					
		Technical Training, Resources, Developers and Trainers		3					
		Automotive Mechanical Trainer		1					
		Engineers (Civil; Mining; Electrical/Mechanical; Digital/Software)		19					
		Quantity Surveyors		8					
		Communication/PR Specialists		11					
		Governance Experts		2					
		Legal Manager/Officers		4					
		Gender Specialists		2					
		Document Controller & Injury Management Coordinator		1					
		Research Officer (Political and Economic)		1					
		Architect		1					
		Chief Executive Officers		3					
		Monitoring & Evaluating Specialist		8					
		Medical Representative		1					
		Public Health Specialist		1					
		Coordinators (Francophone Affairs and ...)		2					
		Social/ Env't. Development Specialists/Scientists		3					
		Local Economic development Specialists		2					
		Total							
		166							
		2		Technicians and associate professionals		IT Support Technician	3 rd	4	12.3
						Digital/Press and Information Officers		10	
Safety Officers	2								
Accountants	8								
Technical Coordinator	1								
Interpreters/Translation services	2								
Foreman	1								
Audit Assistant	1								
Total									
29									
3	Clerks	Secretary related works	2 nd	9	8.0				
		Administrative Officers		10					
				19					

4	Service workers and shop and market sales workers	Receptionists	2 nd	4	7.6
		Marketing/Sales and Business development Representative		10	
		Store supervisor		1	
		M&E Management Assistants		2	
		Cabin Crew		1	
Total			18		
5	Skill agricultural and fishery workers	Veterinary Sales Officer	2 nd	1	0.4
6	Plant and machine operators and assemblers	Radio Operator	2 nd	1	0.4
7	Elementary occupations	Drivers	1st	2	0.8
Grand Total				236	100

Source: Field work (2025)

It was realized from Table 3 that out of the total of two-hundred and thirty-six (236) job postings requiring communicative competence in both French and English, more than half (166) representing 70.3% was for managers, senior officials and professionals. The next category of workers in demand was technicians and associate professionals. In respect of this category, a total of twenty-nine (29) job positions representing 12.3% were offered in the 7-year period. The next group in demand was clerks of whom a total of nineteen (19) job positions were offered, representing 8.0% of the total jobs advertised in both the Daily Graphic and the Graphic Business from 2016 to 2023. Elementary occupations category came forth on the list with 2 job openings representing 0.8 % of the total jobs advertised over the period. Skill agricultural and fishery workers and plant and machine operators and assemblers both of whom 0.4% job openings were available remained the least sought after over the period under review.

Key managerial senior and professional positions in demand included chief executive officers, heads of human resources, directors, consultants/advisors, managers (project, exploration, finance, medical supply services business development, oil/gas, investment, construction, package, site, logistics /infrastructure, quality assurance, quality control); procurement specialists; trade/business analysts; technical trainers; resources developers and trainers; automotive mechanical trainers; engineers (civil, mining, electrical/mechanical, digital/software); quantity surveyors; communication specialists; governance experts; legal managers/officers; gender specialists; research officers; monitoring & evaluating specialists; public health specialists and development specialists. It is instructive to note also that among these works, the most sought after were the following with the respective job counts: managers (47), consultants/advisors (23), engineers (19), directors (11) and communication specialists (11) respectively. In the technicians and associate professionals' category, the positions mostly demanded were digital/press and information officers (10), accountants (8) and IT support technicians (4) respectively. The job openings in the clerk's category were secretary related and administrative assistant positions. Skill agricultural and fishery workers and plant and machine operators and assemblers both remained the least sought after over the period under review.

The job vacancies discussed in the ensuing paragraphs were found in the three main sectors of the Ghanaian Economy as presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Distribution of Job Vacancies Requiring French and English Based on Sectors of Ghanaian Economy

Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Industry	62	26.3
Services	160	67.8
Agriculture	14	5.9
Total	236	100

Source: Field work (2025)

Table 5 presents the job vacancies requiring French and English based on the three main sectors of the Ghanaian Economy, namely industry, services and agriculture in line with the Ghana Statistical Service-GSS (GSS, 2021) . It was realized from Table 5 that the services sector recorded the highest number (160) of job vacancies for bilingual (French-English) employees representing 67.8 % over the seven-year period. This was followed by the industrial sector of which 62 job vacancies were recorded representing 26.3 %. Agricultural sector came third recording the least (14) job postings representing 5.9% over the seven-year period under review. Though there is the need to train bilingual employees in the three sectors of the economy, the services sector requires the highest attention.

Table 6 presents job vacancies requiring French and English based on subject discipline.

Table 6: Bilingual Job Vacancies Advertised Based on Subject Disciplines

S/N	Discipline	Frequency	Percentage
1	Accounting	23	4.6
2	Administration (Business/Public, Commerce)	50	10.1
3	Agricultural Science (veterinary, animal Science, Agribusiness, Forestry Agronomy)	15	3.0
4	Communication/PR and Media	30	6.1
5	Development Studies (Local/International)	32	6.5
6	Economics	34	6.9
7	Education (French, Adult Learning)	11	2.2
8	Engineering (Mechanic, Automobile, Electrical, Civil) I, software, Computer)	47	9.5
9	Environmental Science,	13	2.6
10	Finance	18	3.6
11	Geography (Land use and Planning)	13	2.6
12	Human resource	5	1.0
13	Information Technology	13	2.6
14	International relations	9	1.8
15	Journalism	12	2.4
16	Law (Peace and Conflict Studies)	23	4.6
17	Management (Sec., strategic planning, Programme, Project, Finance)	35	7.1
18	Marketing	14	2.9
19	Mathematics and Statistics	6	1.2
20	Modern Languages and related disciplines (French/English, Translations)	3	0.6
21	Monitoring and Evaluation /Research	11	2.2
22	Natural Resource Management	10	2.0
23	Natural Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, ...)	9	1.8
24	Pharmacy	1	0.2
25	Political Science	15	3.0
26	Procurement and Supply Chain	3	0.6
27	Public Health, Medicine, Occupational Health	11	2.2
28	Social science And Gender Studies	25	5.1

29	Trade	4	0.8
Total		495	100

Source: Field work (2025)

It was realized from Table 6 that the job vacancies requiring both French and English cut across 29 broad subject areas. It important to note that though bilingual competence is needed in all these subject areas, the top 10 disciplines that were most demanded by employers included Administration (10.1%), Engineering (9.5%), Management (7.1%), Economics (6.9%), Development studies (6.5), Communication and Media (6.1%), Social Sciences (5.1%), Accounting (4.6%), Law (4.6%) and Finance (3.6%) respectively. Pharmacy however immersed the least demanded but not the least important discipline (0.2) of which employers required communicative competence in both French and English.

Table 7 presents the distribution of employment vacancies from 2016 to 2023 by educational attainment as follows.

Table 7: Distribution of Employment Vacancies from 2016 to 2023 by Educational Attainment

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
PhD	23	7.7
Masters	123	41.3
Degree	96	32.1
HND	10	3.4
Diploma	6	2.0
SSCE	3	1.0
Certificate	6	2.0
Others	31	10.4
Total	298	100

Source: Field work (2025)

Focusing on the dominant qualification required by employers, we observed from Table 7 that jobs (requiring both French and English) advertised from 2016 to 2023 were two-hundred and ninety-eight (298) with different job qualifications ranging from PhD to Certificate. This figure is slightly higher than the total number of vacancies (236) announced due to the fact that some jobs postings allowed for multiple qualifications. As such, Master's Degree remained the degree most sought after representing 41.3% followed by Bachelor Degree representing 32.1%. Thirty-one (31) jobs required certificates not captured or not at all indicated as qualifications required of applicants. This represents 10.4%. The next qualification required was PhD representing 7.7% followed by HND, Diploma and Certificate representing 3.4%, 2.0% and 2.0% respectively. The qualification least sought after was SSCE representing 1.0 %.

Table 8 displays key competencies required on the Ghanaian labour market within the period under study.

Table 8: Key Competencies Required on the Labour Market

Key Competences	Frequency	Percentage
Ability to adapt and act in new situations	15	2.1
Analytic, innovative and Problem-solving skills	39	5.4
Communication and Media skills	78	10.8
Computer, IT skills	116	16.1
Driving skills	6	0.8
Good Human Relation Skills	36	5.0
Leadership skills	34	4.7
Management skills	60	8.3
Multi-tasking	15	2.1

Negotiation skills	8	1.1
Planning and Organization	36	5.0
Profession-specific skills	118	16.4
Research and report writing skills	40	5.5
Result-oriented	5	0.7
Teamwork	34	4.7
Time management skills	19	2.6
Training skills	13	1.8
Working in multicultural environment	13	1.8
Others	36	5.0
Total	721	100

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

Apart from academic attainments, the study identified key competencies and skills that employers look for from bilingual job seekers in the Ghanaian labour market. The top five skills required by the Ghanaian labour market included profession-specific skills (16.4 %), computer and IT skills (16.1%), communication skills (10.8%), management skills (8.4%) and research and report writing skills (5.5%). The next set of skills included analytic, innovative and problem-solving skills (5.4%), good human relation skills (5.0%), planning and organizational skills (5.0%), leadership skills (4.7%), teamwork skills (4.7%), time management skills (2.6%), ability to adapt and act in new situations (2.1%), multi-tasking (2.1%), training skills (1.8%), working in multicultural environment (1.8%), negotiation skills (1.1%), driving skills (0.8%) and result-oriented skills (0.7%). Other categories of skills put together were 5.0%.

Discussion

Bilingual job requirements on the Ghanaian labour market

This study has demonstrated that employers are out there seeking to employ potential employees with communicative competence in both French and English. Many researchers (Allen, Quinn, Hollingworth, & Rose, 2013; Fejes, 2010; Garsten & Jacobsson, 2013) consider the employability of an individual to be one's ability to exhibit sufficient human capital relevant for a potential employer. Despite the existence of online portals that also publish job vacancies (Tijdens, Beblavý, & Thum-Thysen, 2018), potential employees could access such important information from Ghanaian national newspapers, mainly the Daily Graphic as a major source of information on employment opportunities for all categories of jobs including bilingual jobs as confirmed in an earlier study by Asomaning et al. (2021).

To increase one's chances of securing bilingual jobs, higher learning must be a priority since that enhances one's chances of getting a job (Asomaning et al., 2021; Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018). The three main academic qualifications for bilingual jobs are Masters (41.3%), Bachelor's (32.1%) and Doctoral (7.7%) degrees respectively. It is interesting to note that contrary to existing literature (Asomaning et al., 2021; Eggenhofer-Rehart et al., 2018) on academic qualifications for jobs in general according to which Bachelor's Degree is the most demanded by employers, we observed in this study that Master's Degree is the most sought after by employers when it comes to bilingual jobs. That notwithstanding, prospective bilingual job seekers must obtain at least a Bachelor's degree or higher in their fields of endeavours to gain such opportunities. In our opinion as researchers, the changing nature of the job market coupled with the dynamics of the demands of the 21st century society could have propelled the demand for at least, master degree as a minimum requirement contrary to the bachelor's degree demanded in the past.

It is also worth mentioning that in order to be a successful bilingual job seeker, one must have been trained in profession-oriented disciplines, that is holding a professional qualification rather than academic. The top-ten of such disciplines most demanded by employers according to this study included administration (10.1%), engineering (9.5%), management (7.1%), economics (6.9%), development (6.5), communication and media (6.1%), social sciences (5.1%), accounting (4.6%), law (4.6%) and finance (3.6%) respectively. The present study therefore corroborates an earlier study by Couillerot and Fariol

(1990) identifying sectors such as business and public administration, hotel and tourism, science and technology, law, international relations and diplomacy, medicine, translations, secretaryship and social sciences and humanities as critical areas where the French language is most needed as a tool for work though the categorizations slightly differ. This revelation renews the debate on whether or not universities are academic institutions meant to train students with universal knowledge or professional skills (Muller & Young, 2014).

Suffice it to say, that to qualify for a job in this era, job seekers are required to have different skills and competences. Perhaps, this is because problem-solving requires skills which are not unilateral but multidimensional in nature (Sparreboom & Tarvid, 2014). Key among the competences and skills identified in the present study as requirements for bilingual job seekers are the ability to adapt to and act in new situations; analytic, innovative and problem-solving skills; communication and media skills; computer and IT skills; good human relations and interpersonal skills; leadership skills; management skills; multi-tasking skills; negotiation skills; planning and organizational skills; profession-specific skills; research and report writing skills, result-oriented skills, ability to work in team, time management skills, training skills and ability to working in multicultural environment as well as proficiency in both French and English. These competences and skill sets termed global competences and/or 21st Century Skills (NaCCA, 2018, 2019, 2020) refer to a connected body of core skills that are needed across all sectors no matter one's geographical location. They are acquired throughout the processes of teaching and learning and remain life-long skills that bilingual job seekers must acquire.

Bilingual job seekers are also expected to develop communicative competences or proficiency in international languages such as French and English. Communicative competences, according to Conseil de l'Europe (CECR, 2003) should be understood to include eight sub-skills, namely, listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, oral interaction skills (as in face-to-face, on phone, virtual platforms); written interaction skills (as in WhatsApp messages, Emails, etc.), oral mediation skills (as in interpretation services) and written mediation skills (as in translation services). It is instructive to note that communicative competences cut across all sectors of the economy and form part of the 21st Century Skills which must be enhanced by bilingual job seekers to be successful.

To qualify for bilingual jobs, one is expected to be a multiculturally effective professional and leader by exposure to the cultures of the foreign language(s) studied. International experience is noted to contribute to a greater ethnic sensitivity and awareness in multicultural practice for social work and interaction (Gammonley, Rotabi, & Rotabi, 2007; Lindsey, 2005) in a world connected by cultures, values, beliefs, religions, and socioeconomic (Boateng & Thomson, 2013).

Curriculum And Policy Implications

The requirements for bilingual jobs as established in this study implies that curriculum and for that matter the education system for training professionals should be internationalised (Harari, 1992) by curriculum planers, Ghanaian universities and professional bodies. This could be done, first, by integrating contents that meet international standards in the various disciplines (De Wit & Leask, 2015). The curricula should integrate soft skills and profession specific skills that also meet international integrating contents that meet international standards in the various disciplines standards as required by industry. In addition, the curriculum should be diversified by introducing bilingual curricula that integrate international languages (Harari, 1992) such as French, Spanish among others. For example, the curricula for training lawyers could be in two folds: law with French and law without French. Same applies to business administration, engineering, accountancy, pharmacy, medicine, nursing, management, public administration, marketing alongside the existing traditional programmes so as to attract nationals of our neighbouring francophone countries as well as equip Ghanaian professionals for the job market.

Such bilingual curricula could be split programmes where the trainees undertake immersion and/or internship programmes in institutions and companies in francophone countries to ensure the language and culture are acquired in context. In our view, this is the way forward if Ghanaian trained professionals are to qualify for bilingual jobs issued by multinational organizations such as West African Power Pool (WAPP), WFP, UNDP, UNESCO, ECOWAS, EU, African Development Banck, AfCFTA and international

companies including TETRA TECH ARD, Sandvik, GIZ, Manu River Union (MRU), McKinsey & Company, US Mission, Rwanda High Commission among others.

Policy wise, currently, the Scholarship Secretariat of Ghana has a policy in place that favours the sponsorship of students generally studying foreign languages such as French, Arabic, Russian, Spanish among others in Ghanaian public universities. It is instructive to note that students normally sponsored on such programmes train to become foreign language teachers, interpreters or language specialists who do not possess many of the employable skills required by industry (De-Souza, 2015). The country, therefore, spends huge sums of money training students studying foreign languages abroad, yet, the contributions of such students to the Ghanaian economy upon completion seem minimal since they are often limited to teaching and interpretation services. To improve upon the role of the study of foreign languages like French in Ghana, it is our considered view that the Scholarship Secretariat of Ghana in consultation with the public universities and other graduate training institutions of the country should put a policy in place to target and sponsor Ghanaian bilingual professionals like accountants, administrators, engineers, doctors and among others to study those languages in francophone countries. When such bilingual professionals are trained, they could take up bilingual jobs advertised in the country, West Africa, Africa and around the globe thereby reducing the unemployment situation in the country which stood at 12% by 2021 (GSS, 2021).

Conclusion

Evidence generated in the present study points to the fact that bilingual job vacancies exist in Ghana and beyond and Ghanaians can occupy such positions in the country, West Africa, Africa and around the globe. Such jobs exist in the three sectors of the Ghanaian economy, namely, the services sector, the industrial sector and the agriculture sector. To occupy such positions however, one must acquire 21st Century Skills and profession-specific competences in addition to international languages, particularly French and English. Even though bilingual jobs exist in the three sectors of the Ghanaian economy, the services sector offers the largest number of bilingual jobs. Most of such jobs fall under the managers and professional category, thereby requiring higher degrees, mostly masters. The present study thus provides some data to help shape policy and curriculum while helping higher education students make the right decisions regarding their subject combinations in order to secure bilingual jobs in Ghana and beyond as envisaged by the various Ghanaian education reforms and prominent citizens of the land.

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