

Why Florida Business Needs Employees with Bilingual and Intercultural Skills

International Advantages of Florida Enterprise

Florida is a key global trade hub because of its location at the geographic and commercial crossroads of the Americas and its well-developed international trade infrastructure, multilingual workforce, and bottom-line business advantages.

Global Center for Trade: Over the last decade, the total value of Florida’s merchandise trade has grown by 135%, reaching \$162 billion in value. Florida companies act as key suppliers to buyers in dozens of countries worldwide, shipping goods made locally in Florida (“Florida-origin exports”), elsewhere in the United States, or in another country. Florida is also an excellent gateway for non-U.S. companies selling their goods to the vast United States market.

Exporting Power: Florida is an exporting powerhouse, with an annual volume of some \$90 billion in merchandise exports. Florida ranked 6th in the U.S. in 2012 in exporting goods produced or with significant value added in the state.

Florida-based companies looking to expand internationally can take advantage of the comprehensive exporting assistance service provided by Enterprise Florida and its economic development partners.

Strong Services Exports: Florida has a natural advantage in the exporting of knowledge-intensive services, with its extensive global ties, linguistically diverse population, and a more service-intensive economy. Florida is also a major global exporter of high value-added services, including accounting, communications, consulting, engineering, financial, legal, medical, transportation, and many other services.

Robust Trade Infrastructure: Florida’s extensive international commerce infrastructure includes the ready availability of trade financing, international legal and insurance services, freight forwarding and logistics, distribution & warehousing, and related services. High value-added manufacturing for re-export is done inside Florida’s foreign trade zones. And, with numerous foreign and domestic banks, the International Banking Community in Florida provides tremendous value to companies doing international business, particularly with Latin America.

For more detailed info, please visit www.eflorida.com.

PLAY &
LEARN



ARE WE PREPARED
FOR THE JOBS OF THE
FUTURE
?

Watch this animated video and learn more about global fluency, intercultural competence, and the jobs of the future.

<http://youtu.be/lwCEkleilNQ>

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Data to Support Need for Language Education in Florida

Total U.S. Exports (Origin of Movement) via FLORIDA					
Rank	Country	2009 Value	2010 Value	2011 Value	2012 Value
---	Total FLORIDA Exports	46888	55365	64904	66398
---	Total, Top 25 Countries	35550	42653	50667	51999
1	Switzerland	3244	5012	7291	8216
2	Venezuela	3415	3464	4493	5118
3	Brazil	4287	4749	5277	4870
4	Canada	2970	3862	4068	3819
5	Colombia	2096	2522	2847	3102
6	Chile	1404	1728	2233	2647
7	Mexico	2011	2183	2185	2240
8	Argentina	1158	1340	1738	1748
9	United Arab Emirates	433	502	1176	1694
10	Peru	1156	1371	1449	1637
11	Dominican Republic	1405	1706	1642	1634
12	Germany	985	1155	1537	1440
13	Panama	960	1249	1360	1385
14	Paraguay	1150	1441	1599	1371
15	Ecuador	1090	1262	1265	1279
16	China	1029	1135	1339	1266
17	United Kingdom	1000	1019	1112	1154
18	Costa Rica	775	899	1058	1081
19	Japan	782	858	1009	1059
20	Bahamas	764	804	910	981
21	Hong Kong	586	715	887	924
22	Guatemala	696	842	946	901
23	Netherlands	679	953	1167	897
24	Australia	435	612	743	768
25	India	1042	1271	1338	766

Top 25 Countries Based on 2012 Dollar Value. Values in millions of dollars.

Taking Teaching to Task

Juan José Vázquez-Caballero on how to create curricula to allow language students to be more engaged, motivated, and prepared for the real world.

The world of education is like the flu virus; every year it mutates and becomes stronger. We discuss differentiation, accountability, 21st century skills, culture. . . Our attempts at improving education are often successful, and we work hard to prepare students who will be happy, productive members of a global society. We help them make connections through the Internet to the outside world, even connections to other countries, and all of this is important, but is this enough?

I've been teaching for just a few years; I'm not a guru in education or a doctor, but I'm in the trenches. I work diligently to teach language, culture, and grammar through inquiry-based methods. I provide opportunities for the students to make connections to their families, to their peers, and to the other teachers and departments with interdisciplinary learning experiences. I believe these connections are the bridges that will help them branch out into the world, but is this enough?

How is it possible that the last wagon in the educational train is always world languages? If the budget is low, the first subject to be cut is world languages. For example, as the article "School Board Axes Spanish Language Program in Budget Savings Move" stated, "In a unanimous vote, the Union County School Board eliminated 26 teacher positions by dissolving the elementary school level Spanish language program. A budget savings of approximately \$1.3 million is expected" (DiBiasio 1). This is just one example, but there are numerous others online. Will it be my job next? It's hard to see colleagues with "Spanish on a cart" traveling around like some gypsies in Europe without a house or a clear future. We are in the minor leagues and yet we play just as hard as the others.

Students are looking for role models against whom they will judge themselves and, unfortunately, many end up looking into distorted mirrors of a circus fun house. We need to provide them with the opportunities and connections that will allow them to look into a clear mirror and figure out who they are and who they want to be, but is this enough?

In August, the New York Times published an interesting article about math, "How to Fix Our Math Education," by Sol Garfunkel and David Mumford, in which they explained how we need to rethink the way we teach math and how math should focus on real world problems. The article also discussed how we should replace the sequence of algebra, geometry, and calculus with a sequence of finance, data, and basic engineering. It seems that there is more focus on preparing students for the skills that they will need when they finish school. Garfunkel and Mumford stated, "A math curriculum that focused on real-life problems would still expose students to the tools of mathematics, especially the manipulation of unknown quantities. But there is a world of difference between teaching -pure- math, with no context, and teaching relevant problems that will lead students to appreciate how a mathematical formula models and clarifies real world situations." (1) Is this something that is going to happen? It's hard to say. What I do know is that it is time to start having similar conversations about teaching Spanish.

In November, my wife attended the National Science Teachers Association conference in Hartford, Connecticut, and after three workshops on the new national framework for science that is in development, she was amazed at how much emphasis will be on engineering. All of this push toward curriculum that connects to life outside of the classroom left me wondering... are we going to be the last ones to make this shift?

My school district recently welcomed a presentation by Dr. MaryBeth Webeler on Understanding the Common Core State Standards. We saw the standards for English language arts, math and literacy in his-

Research to Support the Need for Language Education

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tory/social studies, science, and technical subjects and, and... nope, sorry — not for Spanish, or any world languages for that matter. We inquired about the inclusion of world languages, but we were offered the use of those from English or social studies. Once again, we do not appear on the radar of the GPS of important courses in education. If districts are going to increase the reading time, what subjects will that come out of? I can only guess.

It's time for a change. I'm not talking about a revolution, but instead, an evolution.

We can still teach culture and language, but we must refocus the objectives of our teaching so that we prepare our students for the future. What if instead of teaching Spanish I, II, III, and IV, etc, we teach Spanish for business, Spanish for public services, Spanish for traveling, Spanish for medical professionals, etc. For example, in Spanish for business, students could study the culture of Puerto Rico or Mexico (products, practices, and perspectives), and then they could design proposals for creating companies and selling products, work with other departments and local companies. They could try to be another resource for the community. Or if students were studying Spanish for medical professionals, the curriculum could be divided into units related to real world situations in hospitals or clinics.

I'm not going to talk about specific skills. Let's talk about a few important ideas from the Common Core State Standards presented by Dr. Webeler. She talked about the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards and she defined "what students need to know and to be able to be successful in entry level college courses and workforce." She also said that it provides broad expectations consistently across grades and content areas. In addition, she spoke about Types of Readiness; for instance, she mentions work-ready, career-ready, college-ready, as well as job-trained readiness. In other words, she focused on whether or not the students possess specific knowledge necessary to begin an entry-level position. Bingo! This is exactly the type of thinking we need to do about world language instruction.

While reading for my Master's degree, I learned a lot of about motivation, and something that is clear is that students would rather do activities related to real life, or "real experience in how to use their minds" (McCombs 16). This implies that students will be motivated by opportunities to work on real-world problems (the same problems that adults face). Allen et al. stated, "Our students will come alive if we can reintroduce elements of real adulthood into their teenage years" (23). It is no secret: each opportunity that students have that allows them to face the real world and feel adult is going to engage them, and as a consequence, motivate them.

Other methods of motivation are discussed by Allen et. al. in "The Big Wait," when they described the four "Rs" of adulthood and how they might be applied to teaching and motivating adolescents. These four Rs are relevance, real-world feedback, responsibility, and respect. They discussed the success of the program "Teen Outreach" in which students were involved in meaningful volunteer work that is connected to what they study in the classroom. He stated "Teen Outreach works because it gives teens a vision of themselves successfully taking responsibility in the adult world" (25). This has implications for the types of educational experiences that will be motivating for students in the classroom. Students will generally be more motivated by projects in which they are required to make decisions and take responsibility for those decisions. Again, a curriculum that has the components related to real life, that has the practices for the real life and eventually will help in real life, should be more motivating.

Another argument in favor of this new approach on teaching world languages, especially Spanish, stems from immigration. The U.S. continues to grow as a multicultural country. In 2006, there were 44.3 million Hispanic people in the U.S., and people predict that by 2050 there will be 102.6 million (U.S. Census Bureau 1). This not only demonstrates a clear need to study the Spanish language and develop a basic understanding of the Spanish-speaking cultures in our country, but also to realize that our children are going to work for them, with them, or about them. In addition, Latino and Hispanic people made up 12.3 percent

Research to Support the Need for Language Education

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of the population in Connecticut in 2009 (U.S. Census Bureau 1), and one would think that this would motivate students to learn the language and culture (although it isn't always that simple for adolescents).

The new markets and the new opportunities are forcing us to prepare the future doctors, psychologists, nurses, police officers, politicians, business people, etc. As the Careers in Foreign Languages Guide states, "Businesses need people who can assist them with their international business ventures. They also need people who can communicate with non-English speaking customers, clients, and employees" (1). It names sixteen different types of jobs, including those related to travel, government, education, communications, engineering, and the medical field. Given this need, let's focus in the kind of curricula that will be enough for our students.

Another motivating factor might be that given today's economy, obtaining jobs is becoming increasingly more difficult. Knowing the language and culture would open doors in terms of job opportunities. According to the article "Boost Professional Worth by Becoming Bilingual," "U.S. companies are looking to be global leaders, and in order to succeed in the global marketplace, they are looking for bilingual employees who can communicate across countries and cultures." According to U.S. Job Forecast in CareerBuilder and USA Today Q2 2010 U.S., "fifty percent of recruiters say that, all else being equal, they prefer hiring bilingual employees" (K1). Perhaps even the best high school education won't produce bilingual people, but by providing the right vocabulary, practices, and culture confrontations, we can start them on the right path for becoming marketable and competitive.

Why do our students have to wait until college to prepare for real life? Why don't we start the preparation in high school? What would you rather have for your child... Spanish I, Spanish II... always writing the same compositions and learning about the same holidays, facts, the 4 F's... or the Spanish that will provide the cultural knowledge and the language practice that will allow them to compete with other students from the world? We can plant the seeds for the next entrepreneurs. Understanding the Hispanic and the Latino culture embedded in the Spanish for business curriculum will inspire students to study in college with a clear focus.

Perhaps language instruction would be more valued by the community (teachers, parents, and the board of education) if it were more connected to life outside of the classroom.

This is a great opportunity, especially for Spanish and world language in general, to clean our instruction of drill and kill activities and surface cultural celebrations of food, festivals, and folklore and to become front-runners in our schools, in our districts, communities and in our states.

Maybe it is time for the six Cs to have Career as the core instead of Culture. What do you think?

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Languages for Specific Purposes in the 21st Century

by Douglass Crouse

It was a problem any language educator would envy: After studying Spanish for the equivalent of five years, many of Cristin Bless's high school juniors hungered for more. But after Advanced Placement (AP), the menu of challenges ran out.

Bless considered creating a business course in Spanish. Her school, Castle View High School in Castle Rock, CO, puts a priority on developing students' 21st century skills set, so it seemed a natural fit. But once she spoke with educators and advocates in the Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) field, Bless conceived a broader vision: Why not offer a Spanish language class on leadership?

With her administrators' blessing, Bless began crafting a proposal in April 2011 and sent out Google Docs surveys to gauge the interest of students—as well as their parents—who might enroll in the class. The idea was warmly received and in January, after a year of detailed planning, the course kicked off.

“In the 21st century, the world has shrunk. These students may well be working with and for people who speak other languages and who come from other cultures,” says Bless, who is also President-Elect of the Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers (CCFLT.) “Students are more willing to work hard at something when they see those connections outside the four walls of the classroom. They want to be able to take what they learn in school and apply it to real life.”

The ultimate expression of the Connections goal area of the National Standards for Learning Languages (i.e., “Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information”), LSP courses have long been learner-centered, with a focus on helping students discover and practice the types of language they need to meet their specific professional goals. Traditionally, most LSP learners have been college students and adults. But Bless and a small number of other teachers around the country are finding ways to also connect younger students with the work worlds they might one day inhabit.

Among those who have encouraged K–12 teachers to pursue such projects is Mary Risner, an LSP pioneer who serves as Associate Director of Outreach and Business Programs at the University of Florida's Center for Latin American Studies.

“I loved Cristin's idea of calling the course ‘Spanish for Leadership’ because that can bring in students interested in developing these skills for any profession,” Risner says. “Teachers who are doing similarly innovative things need to have a voice so these ideas get out there.”

Creatively designed LSP courses offer students real-world opportunities to practice language and navigate culture in the context of a specific field. While many to date have focused on the use of Spanish in fields such as business, health, and social work, Risner and other proponents are working to help expand both the number of languages and professions. In the critically important field of STEM [science, technology, engineering, mathematics], for example, more and more people are discovering ways to connect related professions with language learning. LSP courses in Arabic, Chinese, German, and other languages are continually being added at all levels.

“I'm always looking to post more things about what people are doing,” says Risner, who keeps in touch with the LSP community through Twitter and other social media. “Some of the journals on business languages have articles with examples of what's being done in class. The model is there; you just adapt it to your language. Sometimes teachers are already doing career-related things and just need to frame it differently.”

In the eyes of business and government, the need for such initiatives is great, says Jim Vanides, Global Education Program Manager for Sustainability and Social Innovation at Hewlett Packard Company. He is also the author of a post on the Digital Learning Environments blog that is widely cited in LSP circles: “4 Reasons Why ‘Global Fluency’ Matters: An Open Letter to 6th Graders Everywhere.”

“Global fluency is the new résumé differentiator,” says Vanides. “Yes,” he writes to the 12-year-olds who make up his intended audience, “the ‘standard language of business’ within the company I work for is English. However, many of my colleagues are fluent in at least three languages, and they can be ‘friendly’ in one or two more. But it’s more than just ‘learning a foreign language.’ Global fluency, by my definition, is the ability to understand and collaborate across the complexities of language, culture, and multiple time zones.”

He urges students to view all subjects “in a global context” and cautions them that using Internet-rendered translations isn’t enough. “If you rely on Google Translate, you may be surprised, confused, or embarrassed,” he says. “So go ahead and explore your ‘talking dictionary’ and online translation tools—but know that what you will need is ‘meaning,’ and this requires vocabulary and experience combined.”

President Obama has consistently spoken of the need for prioritizing STEM education—a concern shared by many other national, state, and local government and business leaders. “Our nation’s success depends on strengthening America’s role as the world’s engine of discovery and innovation,” he told a gathering of CEOs, scientists, teachers, and others in 2010. “And that leadership tomorrow depends on how we educate our students today—especially, in science, technology, engineering, and math.”

You can never start too young in helping students make connections between language and those highly valued STEM subjects. At Amana Academy in Georgia, students in grades K–8 combine Arabic with a special emphasis on scientific discovery. Topics are linked from year to year at the eight-year-old charter school. For example, kindergarten students examine the life cycle of frogs and ants through exposure to songs and key words, with a focus that shifts to life in rainforests the following year and the components of plant and animal cells by fifth grade.

Language teachers combine the school’s Expeditionary Learning model—a collaborative approach that puts an emphasis on hands-on activities and educational outings—with the National Standards and Georgia state performance standards.

Eman Maamoun, an Arabic teacher who translated the state language standards into that language, says students get added exposure in Arabic to concepts first presented in their other classes.

“Our work in Amana is teamwork,” she says. “Since we all share the grades, we need to communicate, agree, and collaborate before anything is introduced to the students. So we plan everything together and everyone adds to the big picture.” The ultimate goal, says Maamoun, who chairs the newly formed Georgia Association for Teachers of Arabic, is to give students an early start developing and honing the skills they will need as adults.

“Amana is trying to create a global student,” she says. “This is why we focus on the environment, the Expeditionary Learning, and the Arabic—to push for a student who will have all this in-depth knowledge and go places. I want my students to be fluent in Arabic, but also more confident to work in any job in the future.”

Similar language and professional goals are in place at Bleess’s school, which is composed of four academies. There, some sophomores reach Spanish 5 by starting their study in middle school and taking two course levels each year as freshmen and sophomores. “But in their junior year,” Bleess recalls, “many of them would ask, ‘Where do we go from here?’”

In searching for a supplement to AP courses, she attended a Centers for International Business Education & Research (CIBER) conference at Florida International University specially designed for K–12 teachers. There, she met Ann Abbott, a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign whose Spanish language courses on entrepreneurship and community-based learning give students opportunities for local and international outreach.

Abbott has an average of two educators contact her each week seeking information about service learning and languages for specific purposes—evidence, she says, “that there’s interest out there . . . but also a need for more outreach and education.”

One deterrent to starting new programs is the natural tendency to question whether one's level of content knowledge is up to the task, Abbott says. "When people think of Languages for Specific Purposes, they think they really have to know a lot about the particular field. They'll say: 'But I've never worked in the business world!'" she says. "Our best approach is to say, 'Yes, it's about the specific content area and the vocabulary that goes with it. But in every professional context there are certain activities you'll always have to do. It could be an intake form for a doctor's office or a business form asking about marketing material.'"

That's what makes the title of Bleess's course so appropriate. "If we're preparing our students for professions in the 21st century, they need to have some basic leadership skills, to be able to work with people who have different skills, and to learn and be able to teach themselves technological skills—even if students don't know what they want to be when they get older," Abbott says. "We know in this world that people often change jobs and career paths."

Margaret Gonglewski, Associate Professor of German and International Affairs at George Washington University, began teaching her "German Business" more than 12 years ago at the suggestion of a colleague. Given Germany's status as the largest economy in the Euro zone, it makes particular sense, she says.

Since then, interest has grown steadily in the course, which has an enrollment cap of 15 and requires that students enter with a minimum proficiency rating of Intermediate. "Students have gotten more pragmatic and ask, 'What will get me a job when I get out?'" Gonglewski says. "I didn't want to make this a correspondence, how-to course. You have to get to know Germany as a strategic location and know where the industries are. There's still a lot of emphasis on literature in some upper-level language courses, so there's often a neglected aspect of the culture that students don't know they're missing."

Students kick off their year with a unit on applying for a job, with discussion topics including how to identify and capitalize on one's strengths. Gonglewski touches often upon cultural contrasts—job candidates in Germany including photographs with their résumés, for example. This year, students ended the unit by visiting a German cultural center and interviewing live with native speakers.

Teresa Kennedy, Professor of Bilingual, ELL, and STEM Education at the University of Texas at Tyler, has incorporated science materials into her language classroom since 1985. In addition, she served for more than 11 years as Director of the International Division of the Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program, which gives students and teachers opportunities to participate in international hands-on, earth sciencelated investigations.

Kennedy believes strongly in the marriage of language learning and content area study and offers simple advice to language teachers interested in adopting content-based instruction: "Walk down the hall, introduce yourself to the science teacher, find out what they're teaching and weave some components of what they're covering into your own classroom curriculum." She suggests similar steps to incorporate other subject areas.

"To me, it makes sense that whatever is happening in the language classroom is piggy-backing off what's being taught in students' other classes," she says. Integrating elements of earth science—such as weather and climate—are a good place to start, Kennedy says. But whatever the topic, she cautions instructors to go through a careful fact-checking process to ensure they are presenting sound information and concepts.

"The most important thing is to connect to the science that is already being taught," she says. "Teachers shouldn't go beyond their own knowledge and capabilities. There's a lot of potential—if they are not working together with the science teacher in their school—that they could encourage misconceptions about science that could interfere with future learning of concepts."

Science teachers also may have contacts in professional fields who speak other languages and would be willing to come talk with students about how they use languages in their work. Linking up with ESL teachers—who teach diverse subject areas as routine practice—offers an additional advantage. "Foreign language teachers tend to focus on social language skills while ESL and bilingual teachers are covering academic content,"

Kennedy says. “I think that’s why you see a lot of teachers who bridge both—to get the best of both worlds.”

For teachers eager to experiment or even start their own courses, connecting with experienced peers is key. Social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn offer LSP-minded teachers ideal ways to exchange ideas. Bless, who had little background in business, found the process of educating herself exhilarating. With support from Abbott, Risner, and others in the LSP field, she tailored her course to rely primarily on Internet resources, resulting in no additional costs for her district.

With each new resource on a given topic—how to write a résumé, proper business etiquette, how to look for a job—she created digital files for later use. One prized discovery was a video that a professor at Stanford Graduate School of Business uses to teach leadership qualities through an analysis of Don Quixote.

Recently Bless started a new unit in which students analyzed episodes of the TV show, “The Apprentice,” as a basis for articulating the makeup of an effective project leader. “Each week we’ll have a different project with a different project leader who can put the skills we talk about into practice,” Bless says. “For example, ‘Are we following through on each step of our project? Are we listening to team members’ feedback?’”

Bless plans to use Skype to allow students to talk with professionals from other countries, many of them people she met during overseas experiences. They include a lawyer from Argentina and an employee at the U.S. Embassy in Uruguay. Also on the list of invitees is a member of her host family from her time as an exchange student in Mexico: the former mayor of Guadalajara who recently became governor of the Mexican state of Jalisco.

While specialized language courses were part of the vision at her high school when it started seven years ago, it doesn’t necessarily have to be built in for teachers to discover how to do this. Bless sees ways for educators anywhere to apply LSP thinking to their classes. Instead of students brainstorming the traits of an ideal boyfriend or girlfriend, they could discuss the qualities of a team leader or salesperson, for example. A unit on business could also include identifying differences between phone numbers and street addresses in the United States and Spanish-speaking countries, or how to correctly arrange Hispanic last names in office files.

“I’ve learned so much as a teacher this semester,” Bless says. “Students will ask advice or what a particular résumé should look like. . . I say, ‘Let’s go online and see what’s there.’” She is already seeing students imagine their place in the professional world. One student interested in medical science has begun researching Doctors Without Borders. Another, an aspiring engineer, told Bless he wants to be able to work with people who might think differently than he does. A classmate has already contacted a theatre school in Spain in the hope of securing an internship, using the résumé she developed in class as part of her intended application packet.

In June, Bless and her students will head to Costa Rica, but they will go beyond more typical travel abroad activities in order to put their skills into practice. Their schedule will include a service project in which the Colorado teens will partner with Costa Rican peers to bring enrichment classes to younger children; opportunities for each Castle View student to interview with someone in their field of interest; and a visit to an organic chocolate farm to see up-close how the business works.

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