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COLLABORATING ACROSS ORGANIZATIONAL LINES IN LANGUAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

ABSTRACT

Since its inception in the 1970s, the field of Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) in the United States has continually adapted to ever-changing real-world needs. Its evolution has contributed to its increasing relevance, though the field faces ongoing challenges presented by the gap between its interdisciplinary nature and a lack of instructor expertise in the LSP content area, and thus calls for collaborations among institutions and communities. Reviewing successful collaborations in LSP, this article proposes an interdisciplinary collaboration taxonomy that aims to describe, compare, and evaluate such collaborations. The taxonomy categorizes LSP interdisciplinary collaborations at resource, project, course, and program levels, through intra-institutional and extra-institutional partnership. Furthermore, this chapter showcases examples of such collaborations at two institutions in courses of business Chinese, business French, medical Spanish, and a minor in Latin American Studies for technical applications. These successful experiences demonstrate how LSP instructors can conduct intra- and extra-institutional collaboration with varying degrees of interactivity and on various scales to align the course with discipline standards. Each example also reflects on challenges and shares tips related to logistics for replication and future development.

KEYWORDS: interdisciplinary collaboration, Language for Specific Purposes, organization lines, real-world needs, taxonomy

INTRODUCTION

Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) in the United States emerged in the 1970s in response to a need for business foreign language skills. The curricular possibilities and flexibility of LSP courses allow the field to strengthen the relevance of academic programs, respond to the needs of globalization, and expose students to meaningful, real-world practices. The 2007 MLA report, *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World*, called upon the language disciplines to decenter away from literature and design programs that are more directly related to everyday life and applied contexts (MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages, 2007). Over the past four decades LSP has evolved from playing a minor role in foreign language curricula to playing a larger one with a wider base that also includes interdisciplinary studies (Grosse & Voght, 2012). The interdisciplinary nature of LSP courses, however, presents challenges. Despite the motivation to initiate and sustain LSP

curricula, lack of instructor expertise in LSP methods and in specific content areas (medicine, business, etc.) remains an impediment to program development; “few faculty trained in area” was the second highest ranked obstacle cited by department chairs in a recent survey (Long & Uscinski, 2012, p. 184). The same survey found that “81% of [surveyed] departments indicated that the primary academic specialization of their LSP faculty is other than LSP” (p. 183). It is therefore not surprising that the pedagogical approaches used by many LSP instructors do not simulate real-life task-based contexts (Adam & Artemeva, 2002; Auerbach, 2002). Similarly, content specialists in other disciplines are almost never trained as foreign language instructors. Neither foreign language instructors nor content specialists with traditional training are competent at serving as LSP instructors, which requires an interdisciplinary background.

A CALL FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS IN LSP

The field of LSP “calls on the expertise of many disciplines for its realization” (Lafford, 2012, p. 6). Rather than simply linking the language with a professional focus or specific purpose, Doyle (2012) clarified at the nomenclature level that Business Language Studies (BLS) serves a more rigorous toponymic identity to identify itself within LSP as a theory-based field of scholarship. However, it is not yet realistic to expect all LSP instructors to be trained in both language pedagogy and other content areas. Nor is it realistic to expect all language instructors to be trained with a focus of LSP. Analyzing the job market change between 2008–2009 and 2011–2012, Long (2013) concluded that it is not realistic to expect LSP fields to replace traditional literature, linguistic, and second language acquisition fields in the PhD and Master’s programs. She therefore recommended that “doctoral candidates . . . develop secondary expertise in LSP content areas and . . . develop frameworks of practice that allow them to move between the theories of scholarly analysis to the practicalities of application to real world scenarios (p. 28).” Rather than creating LSP Master’s and PhD programs or training LSP instructors to be both language instructors and content specialists, it is more feasible to provide LSP instructors, mostly with language teaching backgrounds, with a roadmap to systemically lead collaboration with relevant interdisciplinary partners.

A theoretically supported and guided collaboration can facilitate interactions between language instructors and content specialists. Such interdisciplinarity is indispensable to strengthen the authenticity, relevance, and practicality of LSP courses. First, it enables foreign language instructors to overcome the obstacle of unfamiliarity with the content area and enables the offering of an LSP course or curriculum. Second, as this article will demonstrate, foreign language instructors working with content specialists enhances an LSP course’s relevance, authenticity and effectiveness, and boosts student motivation. Third, collaboration brings benefits to LSP partners, including increased awareness of the role language and culture play in seemingly universal disciplines such as medicine, engineering, or international business.

A TAXONOMY OF LSP INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS

The road to continued evolution of LSP therefore lies in sustained collaboration and connections with broader communities (Lear, 2012). The LSP field has seen successful interdisciplinary collaborations at various levels and throughout the different phases of LSP course design, delivery, and administration. Rigorous cooperation among content specialists and language instructors has yielded fruitful results and encouraging prospects for LSP (Ramírez & Lafford, 2013; Tatzl, Hassler, Messnarz, & Flühr, 2012). To navigate, compare, and evaluate such collaborations among institutions and communities, this article

proposes a taxonomy categorizing LSP interdisciplinary collaborations at resource, project, course, and program levels, through intra-institutional and extra-institutional partnership, as illustrated in Table 1 below. The taxonomy aims to provide a roadmap for LSP instructors and guide their systematic collaborations with relevant interdisciplinary partners. The collaborations are categorized and sequenced by the extent to which students interact with and may be assessed by content specialists other than language instructors. Furthermore, this article showcases examples of such collaborations at two institutions, and across three languages (Chinese, French, and Spanish) and multiple disciplines.

Table 1. *A taxonomy of LSP interdisciplinary collaborations*

	Resource level	Project level	Course level	Program level
Intra-institutional collaboration	Internal website; networking resources; content specialist expertise, etc.	Project with international students speaking the target language; collaboration between students from different courses, etc.	Course co-taught by faculty of different disciplines; two courses of different subjects linked, etc.	Interdisciplinary major, minor, and certificate, etc.
Extra-institutional collaboration	External website; professional texts; content specialist expertise; guest speaker, etc.	Field trip; social gathering, etc.	Community service learning; internship, etc.	Intensive study abroad program; institutions abroad, etc.

RESOURCE-LEVEL COLLABORATION

At the most basic level, interdisciplinary collaborations consist of a variety of resources LSP instructors use to provide learning experiences for students. Within an institution, these resources can include faculty and staff expertise, networking connections, internal websites, and more. Beyond campus, resources could include texts in specific fields, professionals working in relevant fields, and communities of speakers of the target language. These resources are not necessarily intended for the use of an LSP course, but LSP instructors may selectively insource them to tailor to specific learning outcomes. One typical resource level collaboration takes the form of a needs analysis. LSP instructors survey, interview, and conduct focus group discussions with content specialists about their target language use in the specific field, collect and analyze field-specific texts, observe classes in the specific field, etc. For example, to address the needs of revising an engineering ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course, Nekrasova-Beker and Becker (2017) reported in a case study that the language instructors conducted classroom observations on engineering lectures and labs and interviewed deans in the College of Engineering. To develop a course in Basic Arabic for Healthcare Professionals, Hillman (2015) interviewed Arabic-speaking doctors, students in residency, and patients and designed a questionnaire for enrolled students about their experiences with Arabic-speaking patients in order to triangulate the expertise of content specialists in the local community.

The Chinese business course described below offers examples of integrating expertise and networking resources in specialized domains from partners on and off campus. The medical Spanish class described below insourced a simulated clinic room and Spanish-speaking standardized patients for students to perform a full medical interview in Spanish. Resource-level collaboration is indispensable

but it is also the least interactive category in the taxonomy, as students were not actively engaged at this level of collaboration.

PROJECT-LEVEL COLLABORATION

Project level collaboration involves students in synchronized and convergent collaborations. Students in different courses or fields team up to work toward convergent goals. Domestic students from an LSP course could partner with international students who speak the target language. Beyond campus, faculty could take students on field trips where they would interact with content specialists in the targeted discipline in an LSP course. Experts in the content matter may also be invited to give lectures and interact with students on selected topics. One example, illustrated in this article, is a marketing/startup project conducted jointly by students in a business French course and students from the Center for Entrepreneurship. In such cases, students are not passively receiving interdisciplinary knowledge but rather actively contributing in mutual knowledge production.

COURSE-LEVEL COLLABORATION

Course-level collaboration enables students to carry out extended and in-depth synchronized and convergent collaborations. A language instructor may collaborate with another instructor in a discipline-specific course, or with community organizations or with businesses, to co-teach an LSP course. One example is the engineering ESP course co-taught by an engineering instructor and a linguist (Nekrasova-Beker & Becker, 2017). Students in LSP courses may intern in a local foreign-owned company or offer community service at local clinics throughout the semester. Whereas project-level collaboration takes place during a specific period of the course and potentially addresses one of the course's student learning objectives (SLOs), course-level collaboration requires more extensive collaboration throughout the semester and likely targets all the course SLOs. The medical Spanish course described below offers an example of service learning.

PROGRAM-LEVEL COLLABORATION

At the program level, students are enrolled in an interdisciplinary curriculum rather than a stand-alone course. Undergraduate majors/minors in subjects such as law, economics, and commerce may be combined with a foreign language. Off-campus program collaboration might consist of multiple institutions partnering to create study abroad programs, faculty exchanges, or even joint degrees. One example is the Spanish for Specific Purposes Certificate (SSPC) program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). As Sánchez-López (2013) reported, the established collaborations between the Spanish program with Schools of Business, Dentistry, Health Professions, Nursing and Medicine brought this first undergraduate certificate at the university to fruition. With a collaborative effort at the administrative level, the advanced Spanish for health professionals course was cross-listed with the School of Nursing courses to increase its visibility and accessibility.

One example of program-level collaboration, described below, is the creation of an interdisciplinary minor in Latin American Studies for Technical Applications, which includes participation from faculty specialized in languages, history, engineering, and geology, and from partners across campus offices. Collaborations across different levels are not mutually exclusive but rather effective when approached in varied combinations, depending on the specific targeted SLOs and resources available for particular courses.

This article presents four examples that illustrate different types of interdisciplinary collaborations in LSP. Three of these collaborations took place at Wake Forest University (WFU), a private university of approximately 8,000 graduate and undergraduate students in suburban Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The fourth collaboration took place at Missouri University of Science & Technology (Missouri S&T), a state institution of approximately 8600 graduate and undergraduate students located in Rolla, Missouri.

INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS IN LSP ACROSS LANGUAGES AND DISCIPLINES

CONDUCTING A JOB SEARCH IN A BUSINESS CHINESE COURSE

COURSE DESIGN

A business Chinese course was offered to address students' needs to improve Mandarin communicative competence for business purposes and to enhance understanding about business culture and practices in China. In this course, students were expected to think as global citizens to conduct various real-life tasks using authentic materials with a cultural emphasis on Chinese as well as on cross-cultural social and business issues. To join the class, a student must have successfully completed third-year college-level Chinese language courses, obtained equivalent proficiency, or received permission of the instructor. Chinese major and minor students who have a strong interest in using Chinese in their professional development take this course due to the relatively high prerequisite of language proficiency.

The course consisted of several modules, one of which is introduced here: the job search. The module was a result of a collaboration between the LSP instructor and the Office of Personal and Career Development (OPCD) at WFU. Upon completion of this module, students were expected to be able to use Chinese to: 1) compile a basic job search profile; 2) conduct a job search online, and 3) appropriately participate in a one-on-one job interview.

INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

While access to community resources and target-language-speaking populations depends on institutional location and the popularity of the language, certain intra-institutional collaboration resources are commonly accessible regardless of these factors. Most universities host career services offices to assist students' professional development and help them navigate their path after college. At WFU, the OPCD strives to build a "college to career" community to foster collaboration between faculty and career coaches (OPCD, 2018). Business Chinese course instructors can use a variety of resources through the career services office to increase the course relevance to SLOs and authenticity of content instruction.

COLLABORATION

The instructor of the business Chinese course initiated a resource-level collaboration to utilize the educational, networking, and logistical resources provided by the career services office for the business Chinese course, all of which are explained below in detail.

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The OPCD offers students a highly-developed English language profile service. This service includes standardized training with text and video materials accessible online, individualized assistance in identifying their strengths and talents and channeling their experiences in a job search, and English mock job interview services. Following the template of the English profile service by OPCD, the LSP instructor identified analogous resources in Chinese and developed a customized bilingual profile service for business Chinese students.

Figure 1 below illustrates the progression of steps to create a bilingual profile and the way students developed the profile's English and Chinese components in tandem. Before each step of the Chinese job search process, students were instructed to review and develop relevant English documents and skills for the US job market context with the assistance from the OPCD. Students were then guided to compare and contrast similarities and differences in the job search process and etiquette in the two cultures in order to enhance career development in the two cultures.

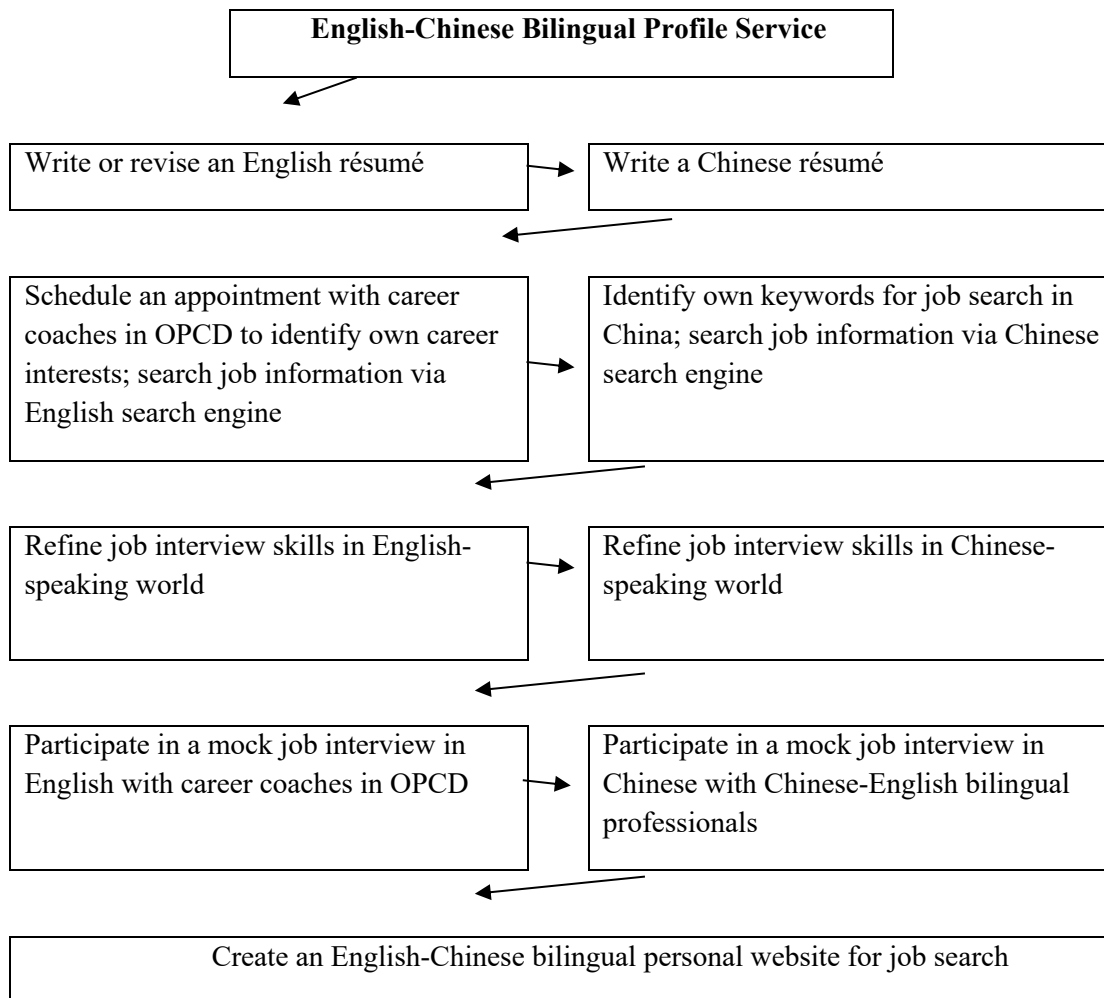


Figure 1. Illustration of an English-Chinese Bilingual Profile Service

NETWORKING RESOURCES

The OPCD assisted the LSP instructor in identifying and connecting with content specialists, that is, bilingual business professionals who had work experience in both China and the United States. Once the instructor provided descriptions of qualifications and expectations, the OPCD used its databases of recruiting firms and alumni network to identify the qualified local community members to join the business Chinese class instruction. Thanks to the OPCD's assistance, the LSP instructor invited a bilingual business professional to conduct simulated job interviews in Chinese for students.

Searching for the right content specialists could be an involved process. The first identified candidate was rarely the right match for the course. However, the selected content specialists were usually able to provide alternative contacts deemed a better fit. This iterative search process proved to be a demanding workload for the language instructor. However, it would not be possible without the established professional network and resources of the OPCD.

LOGISTICAL RESOURCES

At the end of the job search module, students completed a mock job interview with a bilingual business professional with work experience in China and the United States. The OPCD helped locate and reserve a formal conference room to provide students with a more authentic experience. In addition, the office also pointed the instructor to other available funding resources in the institution to sponsor activities such as taking students on a field trip and inviting content specialists in other disciplines as guest speakers.

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

Since LSP instructors are not typically experts in both linguistic and content instruction, it has been noted that “examples of mismatches between applied linguists’ intuitions about discourse and communication in unfamiliar areas have occasionally been reported explicitly” (Long, 2015, p. 131). The LSP instructor, a non-expert in a business job search, benefited from the expertise of the OPCD and from off-campus business professionals for the content instruction. Such collaboration guaranteed the relevance and accountability of course instruction on an effective, real job search in the Chinese-speaking market.

However, the collaboration in this case stayed mostly at resource-level and was one-directional from the OPCD to the LSP instructor. The next step could be exploring how the instruction and materials developed in the business Chinese course could contribute to the OPCD in return. The bilingual profile service could help the career services offices better adapt their services to students with a professional interest in China. Furthermore, the LSP instructor, the career services office, and bilingual business professionals could collaborate at the course level and co-teach a series of “College to Career” courses.

MARKETING COLLABORATION BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP STUDENTS AND BUSINESS FRENCH STUDENTS

This section describes a collaboration between business French students and students launching businesses in an on-campus startup accelerator. Through this collaboration, the instructor sought to align

the business French course with skills students desired for the job market and their career aspirations, challenge students to apply what they were learning in a higher-stakes context, and raise awareness of the business French program among business faculty and students.

COURSE DESIGN

The advanced business French course aims to prepare students for professional interactions in a French-speaking context. Students majoring or minoring in French, or completing the concentration in business French, take this course in their third or fourth year. Among the course's four modules, the collaborative marketing/startup module addressed the course goals of reading and analyzing a variety of texts dealing with the business world; developing writing skills in various genres; employing professional register in oral communication; and taking cultural differences into account in business situations. The course also prepared students for an optional certifying exam taken at the end of the semester, the *Diplôme du français professionnel Affaires* (DFP-Affaires) at the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages C1 level. This exam is developed and graded by the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie Paris-Île-de-France's Français des Affaires center. The nine students in advanced business French when the collaboration took place included majors in French, finance, management, politics and international relations, and sociology (several students had dual majors). Three students were minoring in French while an additional two were entrepreneurship and social enterprise minors.

INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

The Department of French Studies at WFU offers an intermediate business French course in addition to the one described. These courses, along with courses in writing, translation, and other electives, compose the fifteen-credit concentration in French for business. WFU's Center for Entrepreneurship oversees a minor in entrepreneurship (ENT). Its mission is to educate and support student startups that are capable of creating immense economic and social value. The center runs a variety of co-curricular programs including Startup Lab, a startup accelerator where the Center's most fervent students develop their concepts into ventures via access to mentoring by faculty and industry specific experts with domain, legal, and business know-how, robust seed capital, and access to investors.

COLLABORATION

The marketing/startup module represented an example of project-level collaboration, in which business French students in teams of two or three were partnered with a startup team to research and develop a marketing strategy for a product launch in France. The chosen startups included mobile applications for music news, parking, and restaurant reviews, and a mobile beauty salon service. Students interviewed their startup partners outside of class time about their product's features, branding, and marketing strategy.

The module's first two periods centered on using the key concepts of market research, positioning and branding, advertising, and sales along with mastering pertinent vocabulary and grammar structures, presented by the marketing chapter of the course textbook, *Affaires.com niveau avancé* (Penfornis, 2013). Next, the students developed presentations for their startup partners (in English, since the Startup Lab faculty and students did not speak French) about their product's market potential in France. The instructor provided market research materials found online for each startup's sector and excerpts from *Redefining Global Strategy* by Pankaj Ghemawat (2007) presenting the author's

framework for analyzing cultural, administrative, geographic, and economic differences (CAGE) that impact a firm's global expansion.

Following their presentations, students completed two more assignments based on the collaboration that also prepared them for the DFP-Affaires exam. First, they prepared a sales dialogue modeled on the exam's oral component. Successful interviews followed the typical steps of a sales negotiation using appropriate pragmatics for the situation such as greeting, ascertaining the customer's needs through pertinent questions, and responding to objections; and employing a sophisticated range of vocabulary and grammatical structures. Second, students wrote an advertorial for their startup's product, one of the written components of the exam. Thanks to students' familiarity with their startup partner, instruction and evaluation related to these two assignments focused on the rhetorical, grammatical, and lexical features of the tasks.

The instructor approached the Center for Entrepreneurship after defining the course objectives and student learning outcomes and organizing selected assignments, activities, and content into a draft syllabus. Backward design approaches curriculum development by setting goals before choosing instructional methods and forms of assessment (Richards, 2013). This backward approach to course design allowed for an efficient collaboration, one that would demand minimal commitment from the Entrepreneurship faculty and students while maximizing the benefit of the collaboration both to the Center for Entrepreneurship and the business French students. Through the process of building a relationship with entrepreneurship faculty and overcoming the inevitable logistical hurdles, this clarity regarding course objectives helped the instructor to communicate effectively with all of the collaboration's stakeholders. Fortunately, the business French students, entrepreneurship faculty, and Startup Lab students were all curious and open to the collaboration.

This initial experience was successful overall. One student commented that the startup students' dedication to their ventures challenged him to craft a polished presentation, a desired outcome. In this discussion and in end-of-semester evaluations, students expressed that they "enjoyed" the collaboration and felt it contributed to their preparation for the DFP-Affaires exam. That said, several changes will be made to future courses to create more opportunities for interaction and make the collaboration more mutually beneficial, including setting concurrent course times and incorporating the business French presentations into "Entrepalooza," the Center for Entrepreneurship's public end-of-semester event. Next, the module will be revised to elicit more depth in analyzing cultural differences and market research and include a self-evaluation or peer evaluation of the team presentation. In addition, the instructor will continue to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of including English language materials and assignments. In this case, the value added by a real-world situation for students to apply the concepts they learned in class outweighed the disadvantage of not practicing the target language. In future courses, the faculty involved will seek to identify more resources for the collaboration, including a French-speaking audience for the presentations and a French-language alternative to the English-language Ghemawat (2007) text. Finally, the students' startup ventures did not entirely align with existing business French instructional materials, which often presume a physical product to be manufactured, distributed, and sold. The course might encourage future students to partner with a variety of startup ventures; this experience also suggests that Business French curricula need updating.

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

Foreign language instructors need no persuasion of the value of linguistic and cultural competency for business and students' careers. The business world and business academics increasingly recognize the value of languages and intercultural skills as well. For example, the Association to Advance Collegiate

Schools of Business (AACSB), which accredits business schools in the United States and worldwide, recently called for more focus on new business creation and innovation in business curricula, stating, “business schools will need to place even greater emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration across university campuses” in order to achieve this goal (2016, p. 5). The AACSB also called for business schools to be “enablers of global prosperity,” defined not merely as wealth creation, but more broadly “access to basic needs, a healthy environment, strong communities, meaningful employment, and a fulfilling life,” noting that “they will need models and language that cultivate a humanistic perspective within graduates’ conceptual frameworks about business” to achieve this goal (p. 12–13). The AACSB’s stance should therefore propagate a fertile and welcoming environment for collaboration between LSP and entrepreneurship programs.

CREATING INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES FOR MEDICAL SPANISH STUDENTS

COURSE DESIGN

Medical Spanish is one of the core courses within the medical Spanish concentration offered at WFU. All courses in the concentration, with the exception of the first prerequisite, are at the 300 (low advanced) level. Most students take medical Spanish in their junior or senior year; a high percentage of them have already studied abroad and have both good language skills and a well-developed understanding of cultural aspects in Spanish-speaking countries. The following reflection will be based on the 2016–2018 academic years, as it represents the time the instructor has been involved with the program in this institution.

The medical Spanish class is divided in two main blocks. The first one follows the structure of the medical interview (history of present illness, past medical history, family history, social history, and physical exam), while the second part focuses on some of the most common and important health issues related to the Spanish-speaking population that students will face in their future as healthcare providers. Both vocabulary and grammar are always addressed from the perspective of being able to successfully communicate with the patient in a clear and culturally respectful manner. Throughout the semester, each unit in both blocks includes relevant cultural topics that add depth to the way in which students understand the particular needs of each patient. The primary objectives of this course are to help students:

1. Increase oral proficiency, through simulated doctor-patient encounters and other activities.
2. Acquire and use the specialized vocabulary associated with the health-care field.
3. Improve reading skills through authentic health-care related readings.
4. Increase understanding of and sensitivity to Hispanic cultures (particularly in the United States) with respect to health-care related beliefs, practices, and social interactions.
5. Improve grammatical and structural accuracy by reviewing the grammar topics most closely associated with doctor-patient encounters.

INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

The Department of Spanish and Italian at WFU offers different degree options for Spanish students: a major, a minor, and four different concentrations (translation/localization, interpreting, Spanish for business, and medical Spanish), out of which medical Spanish has the highest enrollment. The medical

Spanish concentration consists of nineteen credit hours of prerequisites and three core courses: medical Spanish, medical translation, and medical interpretation. Although most students in the medical Spanish class are majors who often have a pre-medicine concentration as well, a number of majors and minors often decide to take it, as it means a break from traditional literature courses. It is seen as a more useful and practical course with real-life applications. Students in this class are highly motivated, which results in high-quality assignments and insightful reflections.

COLLABORATION

Medical Spanish is an interdisciplinary course designed to provide a hands-on, interactive experience which combines basic medical knowledge, cultural content that is relevant when treating Spanish-speaking patients, and the acquisition of accurate linguistic abilities, all within the framework of improving communication skills in Spanish. The very nature of this course makes collaboration with other entities and professionals an inherent part of it. The instructor worked with people within and outside of the institution in various ways that enhanced the learning experience for the students and presented them with opportunities for direct involvement with the subject matter. This section focuses on the resource-level and course-level collaborations: at the resource level, there were several invited guest speakers; students also conducted simulated interviews with patients. At the course level, the class facilitated students' opportunities to volunteer in the local community.

As the main goal for these students is successful communication with Spanish-speaking patients, with both linguistic and cultural competency, students must volunteer as interpreters at least twice during the semester at a health clinic or institution that matches their interests and schedules. Students' feedback proves this is a valued component of the class which they feel prepares them for the future and exposes them to the cultural, linguistic, and medical issues discussed in class. However, the main challenge of this activity is logistical, since most clinics are walk-ins and it's hard to predict how many patients will be there at any given time, thus resulting in a variable need for student participation.

The skill set needed to teach a successful medical Spanish class that goes beyond vocabulary lessons is not something most language professors are trained for. Inviting guest speakers is a way to add depth and meaning to the covered material. In the 2017–2018 academic year, the medical Spanish class hosted two speakers: a professor of medicine and director of the medical Spanish program at the UNC School of Medicine, and a professor of Spanish at Virginia Tech. The former guest speaker taught a lesson for the medical Spanish students focused on the respiratory system, offering a sample of what a class would be like at a school of medicine. He also offered an extremely well-received talk on cultural aspects to be considered when dealing with Spanish-speaking patients. The session taught by the latter guest speaker focused on the depiction of eating disorders in the Mexican film *Malos hábitos*, giving students the opportunity to discuss the ways in which mental health issues are represented in cultural products. Her general talk also addressed mental health and trauma using the Salvadorian/Canadian film *Malacrianza*. This session offered students an opportunity to experience the interdisciplinary aspect of the class in a non-traditional way. The Department of Spanish and Italian provided the funding to invite both of these speakers.

The final collaboration that contributed to the success of this class was the partnership with the Center for Experiential and Applied Learning (CEAL) at the WFU School of Medicine. Like most medical schools, WFU has a simulation center used by students to perform interviews and physical exams on standardized patients (SPs). The center has a set of rooms just like the ones in a clinic to add realism to the activities performed there. Each room is equipped with two hidden cameras controlled from a monitor room. Thanks to CEAL's cooperation, the undergraduate medical Spanish students in the

course had access to these facilities and performed a full medical interview in Spanish on Spanish-speaking SPs recruited through community contacts. Each encounter was recorded and students reviewed their videos to write their reports. The limited scheduling availability of both these facilities and the students can be a challenge, but planning far enough ahead is an easy way to overcome potential difficulties.

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

Interest in offering medical Spanish courses has grown exponentially in the past few years. Language departments that struggle to keep their numbers up often see LSP courses as a tool to remedy this issue. The Modern Language Association (MLA) has encouraged them to embrace “a broader and more coherent curriculum” that includes “alliances with other departments” and “interdisciplinary courses” (MLA Ad Hoc Committee, 2007, p. 237). However, the same care that is taken in designing the curriculum and evaluation criteria for traditional majors/minors should be applied to courses for the professions to make sure they don’t become mere vocabulary lessons. Aware of this need, the National Hispanic Health Foundation (NHHF) and the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine (UIC-COM) convened a multidisciplinary expert panel of doctors, language instructors, and other professionals who are starting a nation-wide initiative to define standards and objectives for this course, as well as evaluation tools. In order to offer meaningful and valuable content, instructors should explore every available resource within their reach and collaborate with individuals and organizations within and outside their institution in order to provide the best possible training for future health professionals interested in serving the Spanish-speaking population.

CREATING AN INTERDISCIPLINARY MINOR IN LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES FOR TECHNICAL APPLICATIONS

COURSE DESIGN

With support from a US Department of Education Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) grant, Missouri S&T developed a new minor in Latin American Studies for Technical Applications (LASTA) to address a campus need for specialized Spanish-language courses and courses related to Latin America. In addition to supporting pre-existing study abroad and service programs, LASTA creates opportunities for students and faculty to develop or enhance linguistic, cultural, and technical skills; collaborate across disciplinary boundaries; and build relationships with Latin American partner institutions.

The LASTA minor requires Spanish-language proficiency, courses in Latin American studies and in technical communication related to Latin America, and at least 14 days of experience in a university-sponsored program in Latin America. The major project goals include:

1. Increasing students’ specialized Spanish-language proficiency and knowledge of Latin America.
2. Increasing students’ intercultural communication competency to prepare them for global careers.
3. Providing experiential learning opportunities for Missouri S & T students, including internships in Latin America.
4. Increasing the number of students studying abroad in Latin America.

5. Encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration on the Missouri S & T campus and with partner institutions.

Overall, LASTA allows students to develop deeper understanding of the cultures and languages of Latin American countries to which they travel while simultaneously honing and implementing the technical skills they are acquiring in their required major courses. This holistic approach fosters intercultural communication competencies necessary for students to be professionally prepared global citizens able to communicate effectively across languages and cultures. The minor also satisfies university humanities/social sciences requirements and provides opportunities for students of all majors to participate in study abroad.

INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

As its name suggests, Missouri S&T is known primarily for its STEM focus. It consists of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Business and the College of Engineering and Computing. Many of the students have never traveled abroad; some have never left the state. Although almost 50% of entering freshmen indicate that they plan to study abroad, only about 2% do so. The LASTA minor creates opportunities for students to take first steps traveling abroad while concurrently improving their intercultural communication skills. The minor also aligns with the university's goal of 100% undergraduate participation in experiential learning and in its agreement with Generation Study Abroad to double the number of students studying abroad by 2020.

Prior to LASTA's creation, the university's regularly scheduled programs to Latin America mostly related to engineering: one course focused on potable water technologies in rural Guatemala; another explored ancient and modern engineering and geology in Peru. Service programs Engineers Without Borders and Missouri S&T's Miner Challenge take students annually to Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. These programs provide hands-on technical experience and an outlet for the students' humanitarian interests. However, some opportunities are limited to engineering students, and in general, they have limited possibilities for incorporating linguistic and cultural components necessary to understand the local communities in which students carry out projects. Without adequate contextual background and clear communication, well-meaning technical projects can result in misunderstandings and a lack of interest from the local community. Finally, students studying Spanish (but not engineering) did not have opportunities to participate in faculty-led programs to Latin America.

COLLABORATION

Both intra- and extra-institutional collaboration were central in developing the LASTA minor. The interdisciplinary grant team consisted of faculty in languages, history, engineering, and geology. The team engaged senior administrators as well as partners from the university library and offices of career services, international affairs, educational technology, teacher education, and communications. This combined expertise has resulted in the addition of books about Latin America to the library, a website (<https://alp.mst.edu/lasta/>) and other promotional materials, and the development of resources for students considering internships in Latin America. The team has engaged faculty from other departments and consequently, there are new courses for the minor in Spanish, history, English and technical communication, speech and media studies, music, and chemical and biochemical engineering. These courses included new faculty-led study abroad programs to Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua,

and Peru. These courses incorporate intensive language study, meetings with partner institutions, technical course content, service projects, and a chance for students to explore the world.

The collaboration extends beyond campus to include colleagues at partner institutions in Bolivia (Universidad Mayor de San Andrés) and Nicaragua (Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería). Faculty from these institutions have visited Missouri S&T, where they have met with students and faculty; the team hopes these visits will result in ongoing collaboration between institutions and inspire students to pursue study abroad and lifelong learning.

Finally, the team aims to collaborate with the public; for example, they have hosted Hispanic Film Festivals on campus. In Missouri S&T's History of Science in Latin America course, created for the minor, students edited and added to Wikipedia entries (Sheppard, 2018). In these ways, the team hopes to generate interest in LASTA and engage the public.

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

Students are working towards completing the minor, faculty in both colleges are creating relevant courses and study abroad programs, relationships with partner institutions are blossoming, and faculty are increasing their expertise. The team attributes these successes and others in part to aligning the project with the university's values and strategic plan. Nevertheless, the LASTA minor, in its infancy, has room to grow. Ongoing challenges include changing campus culture (getting more students to study abroad), making travel affordable for students, and competing with students' summer internship plans.

The most recent challenges include events beyond individual or institutional control—civil unrest and violence in Nicaragua in April 2018 necessitated cancelling a planned summer program. Another team member's research-related travel to Guatemala was impacted by the eruption of the Fuego volcano, beginning on June 3, 2018, which resulted in great loss of life and the destruction of entire villages. These international crises serve as reminders of why we need LSP: we are all interconnected. The United States is already involved in both of these situations, as well as with many other Latin American countries, not to mention the ongoing debates about immigration policies concerning Latin Americans in the United States or language policies in local school districts. Involving students (and faculty) in collaborative efforts to increase skill sets can enrich everyone's understanding of other cultures, encourage lifelong learning, and contribute to creating global citizens ready to participate responsibly in ongoing international dialogues and relationships.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This article has presented four examples of successful collaborations that demonstrate how intra- and extra-institutional partners can contribute to more relevant and authentic LSP instruction at various scales and degrees of interactivity. Integration of resources provided by a campus career services office into a job search module in a business Chinese course resulted in the development of relevant skills and documents that could immediately provide value in students' job searches. Market research conducted by business French students in a project-level collaboration with peer startups demonstrated their linguistic and cultural expertise and allowed them to apply concepts learned in class. Medical Spanish collaboration with the university's medical school and local clinics placed students in contact with the target language community and introduced them to the norms of the educational and professional practice situations to which they aspired. A new interdisciplinary minor provides opportunities for students of various disciplines to strengthen and develop their linguistic, intercultural, and technical skills while engaging in humanitarian projects in Latin America. By situating these exemplary case

studies within a broader taxonomy of collaborations, we hope to demonstrate that collaborations are possible at every scale and degree of interactivity and that they encourage further development of collaboration models.

Initially conceived in terms of overcoming problems such as a lack of instructor expertise in the LSP content area, these collaborations depended upon instructor skills and abilities in numerous other domains, including language acquisition and intercultural skill building, the adaptation of realia and various resources into pedagogical supports; the development and sequencing of instructional activities; and networking and collaboration skills. They added value for students who were more motivated and engaged in foreign language study and better able to pursue individual goals. They increased the instructional relevance to the interdisciplinary SLOs and authenticity of the content instruction in LSP courses. They contributed to language departments by sustaining interest and enrollments. They also align with institutional values such as preparing students to be engaged members of the world community and strategic objectives such as expanding study abroad participation. Thanks to these benefits that accrue from the individual student to the institutional level, we argue that LSP courses should be developed with the same care and attention as other language and literature coursework.

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