Introduction to the special issue
LSP vectors: Strengthening interdisciplinary connections

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE
LSP VECTORS: STRENGTHENING INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

The first International Symposium of Languages for Specific Purposes (ISLSP) was held in 2012 at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Since then, this biennial symposium has rotated from the University of Colorado Boulder (2014), Arizona State University, Downtown Phoenix Campus (2016), to the fourth iteration held at the University of Florida in 2018 (NOBLE). Plans are well underway for the fifth ISLSP to be held at The University of North Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) in March 2020. In the absence of several key past LSP conferences—the annual Eastern Michigan, and later CIBER Business Language Conferences—that were held from the 1980s until 2014, ISLSP has filled the void of targeted professional development by offering opportunities for LSP scholars to come together in person. Beginning in 2016, ISLSP officially partnered with a consortium of Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBER). These centers are funded in four-year cycles through the United States Department of Education Title VI to increase US business capacity for international understanding and competitiveness. Through collaboration with CIBER and the increased momentum of the LSP community of educators, the ISLSP event will likely continue in the future with distinct themes and at different locations across the United States. Indeed, the ongoing emphasis on career preparation across the educational sector will be another factor to foster the growth of ISLSP gatherings.

ISLSP events have been organized by conference chairs or co-chairs into published volumes in order to document the valuable research and curriculum development of ISLSP presenters. Previous published collections have focused on the following conference themes: 1) ISLSP Scholarship and Teaching on Languages for Specific Purposes (2012); 2) ISLSP Theory, Methodology, and Content Development (2014); and 3) ISLSP Developing Skills to Serve Domestic and International Communities (YEAR?). Continuing this tradition, it is with pleasure that we present the 2018 ISLSP conference publication titled, "LSP Vectors: Strengthening Interdisciplinary Connections." This publication forms part of the relaunch of *Global Business Languages* at the journal's new home at the George Washington University under the careful guidance of Margaret Gonglewski and Mohssen Esseesy. Connecting the ISLSP biennial publications to an established journal is a positive step in providing peer-reviewed scholarly work in the field of LSP in a consistent, affordable, and an accessible format.

The articles in this collection are research-based and offer practical advice on LSP curriculum and program development for use by educators across disciplines. As such, the volume serves as an informative guide on LSP advances for all K–12 and post-secondary world language faculty who teach LSP courses or incorporate LSP into their courses. The collection also targets educators beyond the language teaching community. The compendium should be of particular interest to those who plan to begin integrating LSP into international studies, business, and/or Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs that might involve pre-service teachers, faculty members, administrators working in K–12 career academies, and/or faculty in post-secondary professional schools. The models shared in this collection will help educators and administrators implement LSP across diverse institutional contexts. The bibliographical references will be useful to learn from and will assist researchers in tracking the growing corpus of knowledge that is published about LSP.

It is well known that bilingualism and multilingualism enhance employability (see Commission on Language Learning 2017; Damari et al. 2017; among others). The purpose of the

2018 iteration of the IV ISLSP at the University of Florida (UF) was to share innovation in LSP research, practice, and program development across all languages and grade levels as LSP has become a "mainstay" in the curriculum (Doyle 2013). LSP educators in the United States have evolved from a small group of instructors engaged in the development of alternate courses into a bona fide curricular foundation. ISLSP at UF sought to identify and document vectors, such as increasing interdisciplinarity, and to examine these trends more closely. As the field of LSP matures as an academic sub-discipline, continued development and connection of theory and practice are essential.

As many language departments now implement LSP, the field has evolved from a novelty into an intentional and regular enterprise for many instructors. The importance of volumes like the present one is that they provide a forum for language professionals to make connections and share resources. As the word *vectors* suggests, this volume is evidence of clear directions in the language learning community as scholars reconceptualize language learning. In this volume, learning is authentic and real from the Ivory Coast in Sub-Saharan Africa to Whitewater, Wisconsin.

The articles included from the IV ISLSP represent a broad range of languages including Chinese, English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian. They highlight business, law, and healthcare industries connecting real-world contexts with the classroom. All articles underwent a double-anonymous review process by prominent LSP scholars from across languages. The co-editors of this volume would like to thank the following expert peer reviewers for the hard work and thoughtful contributions that helped to make this publication possible.

Roberta Lavine, University of Maryland
Mary K. Long, University of Colorado Boulder
Lourdes Sánchez-López, University of Alabama at Birmingham
Deborah S. Reisinger, Duke University
Margaret Gonglewski, George Washington University
Christopher Mellinger, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Anita Huang, Columbia University
Malinda O'Leary, University of Alabama at Birmingham

The volume is organized into three sections. The first part focuses on meaningful interdisciplinary reflections at the K–12 and the post-secondary levels. The second section addresses connecting world languages with professional schools and real-world contexts, such as law, healthcare, and business. These articles highlight partnerships between language departments and professional schools that allow for project-based learning. The third section is about English for Special Purposes (ESP) and STEM. There is on-going debate about shared pedagogies and research on the compatibility between LSP and ESP. These essays allow the reader to explore potential synergies and lessons to be gained from both fields. Also, with the constant demand for STEM training to prepare our students for global industry, this section underscores the urgency for STEM students to work successfully with teams of individuals from diverse cultures and languages. This is particularly evident when dealing with developing economies, such as the ones addressed in the final two articles.

The articles included in this collection depict the advances in LSP through professional school or industry connections with world language instructors and curriculum. Models discussed throughout the issue emphasize the importance of dialog and input from all

stakeholders. This broad involvement is essential in order to provide students with authentic and meaningful learning experiences. Below the reader will find a brief description of each article, offered as an orientation to the volume. They appear below in order of publication.

"Collaborating across organizational lines in LSP" by Yu, Vincent, Merfeld-Langston, and Pérez-Muñoz provides a taxonomy that examines various levels and types of LSP initiatives. The classifications serve as a guide to design similar activities within and among outside institutions. Their models include Chinese, French, and Spanish in professional contexts like healthcare and business. Two unique features of this article are the collaborations with the campus career center and the LSP connection with a minor in area studies focusing on Latin America and technical careers. The authors conclude that these types of interdisciplinary efforts contribute to engaged students, increased enrollments, and interest in study abroad.

In "A question of reframing: how LSP improves math fluency, economics, and financial literacy at the secondary level," Hill shows that LSP is not limited to higher education and demonstrates how it can be incorporated into secondary school language curricula through numerous interdisciplinary examples. The reader is guided step by step through a curricular redesign process where Spanish language learning supports instruction in English, Math, Business, and other subject areas. The overarching goal is to promote student engagement and to boost student achievement on mandated assessments. Hill concludes that reframing lessons and activities is the path forward for secondary teachers because separate K–12 LSP courses may have difficulties being approved at the state level.

In Viana da Silva's article, "Business Portuguese in the age of digital instruction," he provides a useful and up-to-date compendium of online materials available for Business Portuguese courses in the United States. The article also includes survey results to assess the needs of students who might take a business Portuguese class. With information from the survey and the business community, Viana da Silva proposes an online course for Business Portuguese with open source material to bolster enrollment in Portuguese in the US and promote multilingual business interaction.

The article, "Language for a specific purpose: Business Russian," offers a unique approach to LSP featuring courses where students are introduced to real-world research as a primary assignment and competition. The student with the winning project then works with the instructor on an LSP conference presentation and publication promoting Russian LSP. In the particular instance of this research project, the student gathered information from companies working with Russia. The project resulted in cultural insights on best practices for conducting business with Russia. Additionally, co-authors Czeczulin and Greydak provide an outline of their courses in general and briefly mention their efforts to integrate Russian in local schools.

"Preparing students for the global workforce: Chinese and Non-Chinese working professionals on key employability skills" shares the results of a quantitative survey that provides current perspectives of businesspeople working with China. The respondents state that intercultural awareness and language proficiency are the most important skills. Zhou emphasizes striving for higher levels of proficiency. Also, Zhou suggests that LSP faculty modify their Chinese curriculum to meet employer needs and simultaneously feature career opportunities using language skills to students.

In "Designing an intermediate-level introductory Legal Spanish course," Huempfner writes about the design and implementation of said course at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. The course forms part of a minor in Professional Spanish. The course target enrollees are students considering careers in law enforcement, social work, public safety, public

administration, foreign service and officers of the courts. Beyond the initial description of course design with objectives, the article includes a link to a complete syllabus. The study pilots the course for a period of two years with an eye toward course improvement by surveying students on the usefulness of course activities (such as court observations, guest speakers, etc.), as well as over-all course satisfaction. Students ranked the unit on the overview of immigration law as most important.

"Real-client projects in the LSP classroom: business and German students teamworking across disciplines" exemplifies experiential learning and interdisciplinary collaboration between world language and a professional school faculty member. Gonglewski and Helm provide an overview of the benefits of experiential learning and then describe the detailed phases involved in student work with the local non-profit, the German Language Society. The authors close with specific recommendations to guide and encourage other faculty to implement similar course activities that can benefit students, faculty, and the community client.

Next, Pérez offers a model for a short course on Spanish for students who are training for careers in healthcare at the University of Houston. The article, "Integrated curriculum design: outcomes of a two-week Spanish intensive course for nursing students," presents objectives, such as conducting the initial nurse-patient interview and providing instructions to take vital signs in Spanish. The study concludes that by restricting the objectives to the targeted medical vocabulary in Spanish (that the nurses had recently learned in English), the goals of the short course were met. However, the author cautions that cultural competence was not addressed in the two-week course.

In Nekrasova-Beker's study, "Vocabulary demands for engineering students studying English in Russia: Comparing ESP course materials across three engineering disciplines," she aims to assess the effectiveness of teaching materials in a Russian institution designed by ESP and content experts for three courses of distinct engineering disciplines, chemical, computer, and thermal power. The study applied a corpus-based analysis to respond to the research questions. Results suggest that pre-teaching of most frequently used words in each of the fields can increase student comprehension of subject area texts. The study concluded that all three fields shared enough similar terms to offer basic preparation for students to advance in a general ESP engineering course where it may not be possible for a campus to offer separate courses for each field.

The final article features Sacco's report, "Creating a bilingual campus at a polytechnic institute in French West Africa: interdisciplinary issues, challenges and recommendations." The reader is transported to the Ivory Coast and learns of an institution's challenges to meet the needs of multinational corporations to employ local students with workforce-ready levels of English. A needs assessment recommends (1) implementing content-based pedagogy, (2) seeking additional state and private sector support for the level of bilingualism on campus, and (3) developing a dual degree program with an institution in English-speaking Ghana. Multi-year changes are outlined to reach the goal of a bilingual campus.

While the present volume captures a number of vectors in LSP, there is much work to be done in the future. Doyle (2013) states that Business Spanish "has become a mainstay" in the curriculum and Long and Uckinski (2012) found that LSP in general has become more established and diverse. LSP educators and scholars will need to continue efforts in LSP advocacy initiatives and a research agenda to advance the field of LSP. It is of even more importance to begin focusing on strategic goals as vectors (1) to grow LSP courses in more career fields and languages beyond the well-established areas of business languages and Spanish,

(2) to fill the gaps where there may be missed opportunities in enhancing the classroom learning environment to be more authentic and real-world to better prepare students at all levels for jobs that do not yet exist, and finally, and (3) to strategically identify and harness possible synergies with LSP initiatives and approaches around the world yet to be explored.

In this volume, the lack of infrastructure in the legal field for Spanish was made salient by Huemphner and is slowly being developed. Animal science (Zeller and Velázquez-Castillo, 2018) is another less developed area of LSP in need of more attention. One can name a variety of areas heretofore almost untouched by LSP research and practice such as cybersecurity and the growing demand for data linguists in a variety of languages. To continue the advances in LSP, all scholars must make a concerted effort to do thorough literature reviews and consult recent and well-cited LSP sources so that we might build on the work of LSP pioneers without "re-inventing the wheel" and losing momentum. The 2016 ISLSP volume (Lafford and King, 2018) already addresses the importance of 21st century skills and propose connections between LSP programs and social justice concerns. Lafford, Abbott, and Lear (2014) and Clifford and Reisinger (2019) have also built links with service-learning courses, texts, and off-campus experiences, which has served to advance LSP and raise its visibility. Now is the time to identify opportunities in emerging areas giving LSP a broader opportunity to engage society such as additional social justice perspectives, humane education, entrepreneurship, leadership, environment, emerging industry fields, less commonly taught languages, languages for military purposes, dual language learning, and community engagement. The opportunities for connections beyond the corporate world to link with non-profits and community groups are endless.

With the growing demand for work skills in culturally diverse virtual environments and teams (Larson and Makarius, 2018), LSP courses would benefit by regularly integrating collaborative projects through virtual exchange, also referred to as Telecollaboration (O'Dowd, 2016). Project-based learning across borders focused on real world activities is a perfect scenario to have students practice future workplace skills such as virtual teaming (RW3, 2018). This would be of particular value to non-urban institutions lacking certain global industries in their region for internships or community projects.

A key vector involves exploring the field of LSP beyond the United States and considering opportunities for collaboration in the field within the global context. The biennial ISLSP/CIBER Business Language Conference event in the United States documented in this issue is one of the many LSP professional development opportunities available throughout the globe. There are recent and longstanding organizations and events researching and integrating LSP across the curriculum in England, France, Hong Kong, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, and Spain, among other sites. Some examples are the Asociación Europea de Lenguas para Fines Específicos (AELFE-Spain), Conference on Languages for Specific Purposes (Italy), Congreso Internacional de Español para Fines Específicos (CIEFE-Netherlands), Asia-Pacific LSP and Professional Communication Association (Hong Kong).

The ubiquitous nature of the Internet has allowed for more access to learn about the plethora of thriving LSP groups and initiatives around the world. Questions to ponder are how might LSP cohorts connect more efficiently and identify possible synergies to advance the field? How do these groups interact without losing their distinct national identities? How does one connect LSP entities around the world to avoid redundancies and share knowledge and pedagogies? What are the primary LSP languages of focus across world regions, what are the teaching methodologies, research needs, and theoretical frameworks? In terms of ESP, the

dominant language for specific purposes outside of the U.S., how might there be an exchange of models and ideas? Might there be lessons to be learned from each other, or are the fields currently too divergent? These are just a few questions for LSP scholars and practitioners to contemplate as the field develops to meet the demands of a rapidly changing labor market and the need for empathic citizens with language skills and cultural understanding to envision and sustain a better world for all.

Before we close, we would like to acknowledge key individuals beyond the generous and professional authors whose scholarship comprises this collection and our aforementioned expert reviewers. Particularly inspiring to us are the editors of the first three ISLSP volumes that captured prior LSP achievements. They include Lourdes Sánchez-Lopez, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Mary K. Long, University of Colorado Boulder; Barbara A. Lafford, Arizona State University; and Carmen King de Ramírez, University of Arizona. Additionally, we are profoundly grateful to our colleague Jennifer Brady, University of Minnesota Duluth, who served as our highly skilled copy editor and adviser on this project. We would like to acknowledge the vision and drive of Margaret Gonglewski (George Washington University) for leading the charge to bring back *GBL* and for agreeing that our ISLSP volume was the right fit for the inauguration of *GBL* 2.0. We also recognize two key entities—UF and CIBER—for the ongoing support of IV ISLSP and this publication.

Finally, we invite you to read this collection! We sincerely hope you enjoy the articles and that in the future you will consider contributing your own research, successes, and challenges in your work in the growing field of LSP.

Mary E. Risner and Sheri Spaine Long, Guest Editors

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