

Utah Language Skills

SECTION 6 OF THE B&E PROFILE

09



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OVERVIEW

Utah's workforce has a rare and unique skill set that no other state in the country can boast – Utah has an unmatched number of bilingual residents of all ages. While no one knows exactly how many people in Utah speak a second language, it is far beyond expectations for a state without seaports or close proximity to other countries. Many businesses in Utah utilize this unique quality and implement workers' skills to further their business capabilities and relationships with their clients.

UTAH LANGUAGE SKILLS STRENGTHS

Just the Facts

- Collectively, Utah residents speak 90% of the world's written languages.¹
- 60% of all public school students study a world language.
- The National Security Agency (NSA) selected Utah for its language analyst offices. The NSA commented that Utah's famous facility with languages was a big factor in its site selection process.

Unique University Student Bodies²

- 77% of Brigham Young University's (BYU) 30,000 students speak a second language and 47% have lived outside the U.S. for at least one year.
- BYU offers studies in 80+ world language courses and there are over 170 languages spoken by BYU students, according to a 2004 campus survey.
- The University of Utah (U of U) offers studies in 17 different world language courses and there are over 180 languages spoken by students at the U of U.
- 31% of the current BYU student body is enrolled in a language course and 85% of seniors reported the ability to speak a second language.
- More than 4% of BYU's student body are foreign exchange students studying in Utah, representing over 115 different countries.

Religious Pursuits³

- With 17 training centers around the world, the Provo Missionary Training Center (MTC) is the LDS church's largest for both instructors and missionaries.
- Provo's MTC offers 1,100 instructors to teach one of 48 world languages to more than 24,000 missionaries annually.
- Return missionaries serve in over 165 different countries and return to Utah to make this state their primary residence.

EDUCATION

Private Colleges / Universities

Brigham Young University (BYU), located in Provo, Utah, creates a huge impact on Utah residents' language skill set. BYU attributes its high number of bilingual students to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints missionary services. A reported 80% of male and 13% of female students have served missions and returned to Utah for a continued education and for primary residence.

¹ Source: Time Magazine

² Source: Brigham Young University, 2006 data

³ Source: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The most current data released by the Modern Language Association (MLA) stated that BYU has the highest student enrollment in Russian classes than any other American university. On average, BYU graduates 35 to 45 Russian majors each year, that's three times the number of graduates at other universities. The MLA also stated that BYU has the most enrollments in Portuguese, Afrikaans, Icelandic, Welsh and Cebuano and the second most enrollments in Spanish. The BYU business school offers classes in 11 different languages, more languages than any other Center for International Business Education and Research school.

Private Colleges / Universities

Language	Lower Undergrad	Upper Undergrad	Total Undergrad	Graduate	TOTAL
Afrikaans	16	0	16	0	16
American Sign Language	1,658	218	1,876	3	1,879
Arabic	226	87	313	31	344
Aramaic	0	0	0	11	11
Bulgarian	0	14	14	0	14
Cantonese	8	0	8	0	8
Chinese	453	472	925	3	928
Danish	16	1	17	0	17
Farsi	4	7	11	0	11
Finnish	12	11	23	0	23
French	1,511	824	2,335	57	2,392
German	823	579	1,402	52	1,454
Greek (Ancient)	52	40	92	3	95
Greek (Modern)	36	0	36	0	36
Hawaiian	9	0	9	0	9
Hebrew (Modern)	112	44	156	3	159
Hindi	18	0	18	0	18
Icelandic	4	0	4	0	4
Italian	426	155	581	0	581
Japanese	612	386	998	2	1,000
Korean	63	115	178	0	178
Latin	217	67	284	4	288
Navajo	20	0	20	0	20
Norwegian	5	0	5	0	5
Persian	20	15	35	2	37
Polish	7	21	28	0	28
Portuguese	300	436	736	9	745
Romanian	16	0	16	0	16
Russian	220	534	754	7	761
Samoan	31	0	31	0	31
Scandinavian	0	37	37	0	37
Spanish	3,722	4,369	8,091	153	8,244
Swahili	10	0	10	0	10
Tagalog	14	8	22	0	22
Tonga	33	0	33	0	33
Turkish	19	0	19	3	22

Ukrainian	0	12	12	0	12
Welsh	31	13	44	0	44
STATE TOTALS	10,724	8,465	19,189	343	19,532

Source: MLA "Enrollments in Languages Other than English in the U.S. Institutions of Higher Education" (2006 data)

Utah Primary & Secondary Schools' Core Curriculum

Most schools across the state of Utah offer a number of world language courses in primary and secondary institutions. Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, nine elementary schools along the Wasatch Front have been selected to implement a Mandarin Chinese language immersion program. In these courses 50% of the instruction time will be conducted in Mandarin and the other half in English. Each year schools will add another year of Mandarin instruction and build a fully articulated K-6 immersion program.⁴ Currently, over 22 high schools and six junior highs offer Mandarin courses. The state is working directly with China to bring teachers from China to Utah to teach the courses. In the mean time, the University of Utah and Brigham Young University have started a Chinese teaching program and are educating future Chinese teachers that will stay in Utah and implement new Chinese language programs. Also of note, seven Utah high schools are now offering Arabic courses as a language study. This language has been deemed a critical world language to study. Utah is one of few states to offer this language in its high school language study programs.⁵

⁴ Source: Utah State Office of Education, World/Foreign Languages

⁵ Source: Campus Notes, Salt Lake Tribune, Deseret News