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## The Journal of Academic Librarianship

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/jacalib](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jacalib)

## Spanish-language Print Materials Within Academic Consortia: Assessing the Impact of Resource Sharing in Two Academic Libraries<sup>☆</sup>

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### Introduction

Over the past 20 years academic libraries have been experiencing significant changes in collections issues and practices. Recent developments in scholarly communications, open access, and the rapid and easy access to academic content are transforming the role of academic libraries. Amidst these changes, academic libraries also need to adapt to new economic realities. Facing internal and external pressures, libraries have experienced diminishing budgets over time. Space for collections is also shrinking as the cost for collection management is rising and interest in repurposing library space for information commons and learning spaces is growing.

Area and international studies and foreign languages librarians face less obvious challenges as well. Foreign language materials continue to be difficult to acquire in North America and only a small number of materials are available online. While resource sharing is often suggested as a solution, the authors recognize a need to evaluate the use of foreign-language collections and the impact across consortia. This article attempts to find answers to two general questions: Are Spanish-language print materials used beyond the home campus? And, how do library consortia support resource sharing of Spanish-language books? To answer these questions, the authors analyzed interlibrary loan transactions of Spanish-language print materials between 2011 and 2015 in two academic libraries: The Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa. The authors speculated that an increasing number of ILL loans have been shared within consortia for all disciplines and languages within the five-year period. Also, the authors expected that Spanish-language print materials exhibit similar trends to all ILL trends. This study fills a gap in the literature and advocates for a coordinated collection development plan across institutions and consortia.

### Problem statement and research questions

To draw conclusions about the current state of resource sharing and the use and impact of each institution's Spanish-language local holdings, the authors evaluated multiple years of ILL transactions. By

analyzing these data, the authors attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What is the total number of loans in all disciplines and languages (all print loans) and what is the total number of Spanish-language print books shared through ILL?
2. What types of institutions are requesting and loaning Spanish-language materials?
3. Where are the loans sent, in-state or out-of-state?
4. Are the loans circulating within consortia?

The answers to these questions provide insights on how often Spanish-language materials circulate beyond the home institution, what kind of institution is requesting and using these materials, and how consortia support interlibrary loan of print materials. More broadly and significantly, this study attempts to reveal the value of Spanish-language collections and may help libraries and subject librarians in collection development decisions.

### Background and literature review

The Pennsylvania State University Libraries and the University of Iowa Libraries actively collect print and digital resources to support the teaching and research needs of scholars, faculty, and students across disciplines. Ranked among the largest academic libraries in North America, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries houses approximately 8 million volumes and the University of Iowa Libraries has approximately 5 million volumes (Penn State University Libraries: Collections statistics, n.d.; The University of Iowa Libraries: About the Libraries, n.d.). In recent years, librarians at both institutions have aimed to increase international collections to respond to growing interest in area studies across academic departments (Carter & Whittaker, 2015; Edwards, Jones, & McGinnis, 2017; Lenkart, Thacker, Teper, & Witt, 2015). In particular, the authors focus on enhancing Spanish-language collections in support of Iberian, Latin American, and Latino studies and related international and area studies programs. Although both institutions have strong, valuable, and unique Spanish-language

<sup>☆</sup> This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacalib.2017.12.005>

Received 3 July 2017; Received in revised form 11 November 2017; Accepted 13 December 2017  
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materials neither library has historically been a major collection. Spanish-language collections represent the cultural, intellectual, creative, and political production of over 20 countries and their diasporas. By virtue of being primarily in a language other than English, these collections see lower circulation patterns than English-language materials (Kniewel and Kellsey, 2012, p. 575; Schadt & Todeschini, 2015, p. 141).

Libraries and librarians continue to confront additional challenges in the acquisition of Spanish-language materials. Most Spanish-language books available in North America are imported from Spain and Latin America (Ahuile, 2016). Although large media conglomerates dominate the Spanish-language publishing landscape, most of these print materials are distributed within local and regional markets and may not always be available in the United States (Shirey, 2007). In addition to the complexities of the Spanish-language publishing industry, librarians face the problem that there is no single comprehensive vendor or distributor of Spanish-language materials in North America (Griego, Barnhart, & Delgado, 2015). As universities are moving toward a globalized education, research and teaching in global and area studies have expanded beyond the humanities to areas such as science, technology, and public policy, complicating the access to academic materials even more (Hazen, 2014).

Online and digital access of Spanish-language materials from Spain and Latin America represent an additional challenge. Although the number of eBooks published in Latin America continues to increase, by 2016 electronic books represented only 23% of the market, of which about 10% of these titles were of academic interest (“El libro en cifras,” 2016). Similarly, in Spain, eBooks reached a high of 29.3% of the total books published in 2016 (“Datos más significativos,” n.d.). Data shows that access to academic content through digital libraries is not much different. A recent citation analysis found only about 9% of materials used by Latin American scholars at the Pennsylvania State University are available online (Ostos, 2017).

Recent literature suggests the need to reevaluate academic libraries approach to collection building. As a result of budget constraints, libraries and librarians are no longer working to build local collections but rather to connect users with information without considering location and format (Dollar, 2015; Linden, Tudesco, & Dollar, 2018; Way, 2017). In particular, Way calls for increasing support for eBooks, and collaborative and coordinated collection development programs (Way, 2017, pp. 286–289). Dempsey, Malpas, & Lavoie describe how print collection development and management have shifted from an institutional scale to a group scale within regional geographies and reorganized as library consortia (Dempsey, Malpas, & Lavoie, 2014, p. 414).

The Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) offers coordinated resource sharing and rapid access to 90 million books available from 15 university libraries and the Center for Research Libraries through the interlibrary loan service UBorrow (Reciprocal Library Borrowing, n.d.). Sandler et al. in their projected goals for Committee on Institutional Cooperation Shared Print Repository (now BTAA) advocate for the integration of library members into a national network of collectively managed research library resources including print (Sandler et al., 2012, p. 240). Similar resource sharing initiatives include the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium (PALCI) whose membership consists of approximately 70 academic and research libraries, private and public, in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, and New York. Similar to BTAA UBorrow, PALCI’s mission includes coordinated resource sharing through services such as E-ZBorrow and RapidILL (“An overview,” n.d.). Other significant resource sharing initiatives include the Columbia and Cornell University Libraries’ partnership (2CUL), a collaboration to integrate collection development, acquisition and cataloging, as well as reciprocal offsite use of collections (Harcourt & LeBlanc, 2017).

Although academic libraries are moving toward collaboration and adopting resource sharing practices and services, literature on the

impact on area and international studies is limited. In a recent study, librarians at the University of Illinois analyzed the relationship between less commonly taught language collections and ILL services (Lenkart, Teper, Thacker, & Witt, 2015). Over 50% of these materials were sent via ILL to institutions within the Midwestern United States (p. 227). However, the study does not discuss the impact of the BTAA membership in the borrowing process, resulting in the need for further research.

## Methodology

This study examines five years of outbound interlibrary loan (ILL) transactions of Spanish-language print materials from the calendar years 2011–2015. The authors received reports of all outbound ILL transactions for the Pennsylvania State University Libraries and the University of Iowa Libraries. The authors reviewed all transactions and isolated all records of completed loans and eliminated all canceled requests. Book chapters, journals and journal articles, and audiovisual materials were not evaluated in this study and therefore eliminated from the dataset.

The authors evaluated all print book outbound transactions from the reports and identified all titles within four call number ranges in Library of Congress Classifications (LCC):

- DP1–899 (Iberian History)
- F1200–3999 (Latin American History)
- PC3800–4900 (Spanish linguistics, Catalan linguistics)
- PQ6000–8999 (Spanish literature, Latin American literature)

The DP1–899 and F1200–3999 ranges include books on the history of Anglo-, Franco-, and Lusophone countries in Iberia and Latin America and were manually sorted by language. F1200–3900 range covers all Latin American history. PC 3800–3999 range covers mostly Spanish translations of Catalan literature and linguistics. Given a lack of academic programs on the language at either university, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries and the Iowa University Libraries are more likely to collect Catalan literature translated into Spanish than in the original Catalan and treatments of Catalan linguistics in Spanish rather than in Catalan. PQ6000–8999 range includes all Spanish and Latin American literature and criticism.

Since ILL reports do not include any indicator for language of materials, the authors reviewed the reports and separated all transactions in languages other than Spanish manually. The authors selected these call number ranges since both institutions have strong literature, history, and linguistics collections.

Using the call number ranges above, the authors tallied the dataset to identify the borrowing institutions. The borrowing institutions were coded by the following categories:

- Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education
- In-state vs. Out-of-state
- Consortial membership

Both institutions, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa are part of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA). (For a list of member institutions see the BTAA Library Initiatives website: <https://www.btaa.org/projects/library/home>). Additionally, the Pennsylvania State University is part of the Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium (PALCI). PALCI membership consists of nearly 70 academic and research libraries in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, West Virginia, and New York. (For a complete list of PALCI institution see PALCI website: <http://www.palci.org/member-list/>). The authors used the collected ILL data set to determine the use of Spanish-language materials within these networks.

The authors used the basic Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (available at: <http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>). However, certain categories were combined. All doctoral classifications

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