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Spanish-language Print Materials Within Academic Consortia: Assessing the Impact of Resource Sharing in Two Academic Libraries[☆]

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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

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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 (Kniviel 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

were combined without considering the institutional research level. Baccalaureate and associate colleges were also combined for a broader category since very few titles were sent to two-year institutions. The authors acknowledge the limitations of simplifying these two categories. Finally, the authors added categories for public libraries, international libraries, and other institutions (such as school libraries, museum libraries, prison libraries, etc.) to the classification coding of this study. The authors' modifications and additions to these categories resulted in the following six classifications of institution type: undergraduate, masters', doctoral, international, public libraries, and other.

As the flagship and land-grant institutions in their respective states, the strategic plans of both library systems, the University of Iowa Libraries and the Pennsylvania State University Libraries have the mission to contribute to research and teaching by connecting their citizens to collections, resources, and services (“The University of Iowa Libraries: Strategic Plan,” n.d.; “Penn State University Libraries: Strategic Plan,” n.d.). The authors, therefore, included a category to determine the number of Spanish-language in-state and out-of-state loan transactions to evaluate how their collections support this shared mission for teaching and research across the state.

It should be noted that all 24 campuses of the Pennsylvania State University dispersed throughout the state of Pennsylvania are considered a single institution. Therefore, the University Libraries form a single system across the state. All transactions between campuses are treated as a circulation transaction rather than an ILL transaction. The authors did not evaluate the Pennsylvania State University circulation transaction data for this study and acknowledge the limitations and the potential impact on this study.

Finally, the authors compared the numbers of all Spanish-language loan transactions with the overall ILL trends in both institutions as well as within consortia. The authors attempt to demonstrate that the use of Spanish-language print materials show similar patterns to all other ILL loan transactions. The authors speculate that there is a similar increase of loans within the five-year period for all loans and all Spanish-language loans.

As in other bibliometric analyses, there are additional limitations to this study. The Pennsylvania State University Libraries and the University of Iowa Libraries both have strong Spanish-language collections in the humanities. Therefore, the authors selected those transactions from specific LCC call number ranges that more represent the Spanish-language collections at these institutions. Each ILL report was reviewed and sorted manually for Spanish-language materials since there is no language code for these transactions. This may result in human error. For the purpose of this study, the authors did not take in consideration that ILL systems such as UBBorrow automate shipping without human intervention.

Results and discussion

The authors initiated this study under the presumption Spanish-language materials shared through ILL exhibit similar patterns to the overall ILL trends. Also, the authors expected that a significant number of the Spanish-language materials were loaned within consortia and to doctoral institutions. Finally, the authors speculated that in addition to institutions of higher education, public libraries and community colleges might be significant users of these collections. Moreover, the authors assumed that geographical proximity determined where loans were sent.

What is the total number of loans in all disciplines and languages and what is the total number of Spanish-language print books shared through ILL?

During the five-year period between 2011 and 2015, the total number of loans from both institutions the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa increased significantly. In the

Table 1

Total number of loans in all disciplines and languages by institution per year.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU	19,742	19,985	21,409	22,465	23,750	107,351
UI	16,754	18,598	18,236	18,864	19,734	92,186

five-year period the Pennsylvania State University Libraries increased the total number of loans from 19,742 to 23,750 representing an increase of 20%. Similarly, the University of Iowa Libraries loaned a total number 16754 books in 2011 reaching a total of 19,734 books in 2015, an increase of 18% over the five-year period. These numbers indicate the overall importance of print collections at these libraries and the increasing use and impact beyond the home campus (Table 1).

Although the number of Spanish-language materials loaned through ILL is significantly small in comparison to the total number of loans (in all disciplines and languages), the number of Spanish-language loans from the Pennsylvania State University increased from 225 titles during 2011 to 256 in 2015. This number represents an increase of 9%. However, the University of Iowa experienced a more dramatic increase of 45% of Spanish-language loans within the same five-year period. Therefore, while both institutions increased the number of loaned print books, loans of Spanish-language titles for the Pennsylvania State University increased by a lower percentage than the overall ILL trend. The University of Iowa, however, showed a significant increase in the number of Spanish-language loans and a much higher percentage increase when compared to the overall ILL trend (Table 2).

What types of institutions are requesting and loaning Spanish-language materials?

The total number of Spanish-language loans was 2917. The Pennsylvania State University loaned 1129 titles representing 38.7% of all transactions. The University of Iowa loaned a total of 1788 titles, representing 61.3% of all transactions. Out of the total number of transactions, 2120 loans, representing 72.7%, were sent to doctoral institutions. Undergraduate and master's universities, international institutions, public libraries, and other institutions borrowed a total of 797 items, only 27.3% of all transactions (Table 3).

These results support the premise that most of the Spanish-language loans were sent to doctoral universities with a smaller number of books sent to other types of institutions.

Significantly, 130 transactions, 2.4% of all combined loans, went to non-academic institutions, in contrast to the 8.39% of loans in the study by Lenkart et al. (p. 229). Public and school libraries commonly collect Spanish-language materials, and therefore, there is a much smaller reliance on either PSU or UI Spanish-language collections. Additionally, public and school libraries are likely to look among their own consortia or local networks before turning to a research university library. The results show that doctoral institutions represent the largest borrowers of Spanish-language print materials to support their research and teaching.

Where are the loans sent, in-state or out-of-state?

The Pennsylvania State University lent 364 books to in-state libraries, while the University of Iowa Libraries lent 347. The two

Table 2

Total number of Spanish-language loans by institution per year.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU	225	225	181	232	256	1129
UI	313	327	309	382	457	1788

Table 3
Borrowing libraries of Spanish-language materials by type.

	PSU	UI	Total
Undergraduate	160	241	401
Masters'	143	123	266
Doctoral	760	1360	2120
International	21	38	59
Public libraries	34	22	56
Other	11	4	15
	1129	1788	2917

Table 4
Location of borrowing institution (in-state vs. out-of-state) of Spanish-language materials.

	PSU	UI	Total
In-state	364	347	711
Out-of-state	765	1441	2206

institutions differed more on their out-of-state lending, with the Pennsylvania State University loaning 765 books out-of-state and the University of Iowa Libraries loaning significantly more at 1441 (Table 4).

Both institutions, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa, are the largest public universities in their respective states. However, Pennsylvania is a much larger state (population 12.8 million) than Iowa with much closer proximity to the urban east coast and a denser population of higher education institutions, including the 14 campuses of the Pennsylvania System of Higher Education. In contrast, there are only three public universities in the state of Iowa with a population significantly smaller (population 3.1 million). Overall, Iowa has 65 institutions of higher education compared to 234 in Pennsylvania, as counted by the Carnegie Classification. While there are more potential borrowers in Pennsylvania in proximity to the Pennsylvania State University Libraries, there are also more potential lenders and other institutions may fulfill loan requests for Spanish-language materials. On the other hand, in Iowa, the University of Iowa Libraries is more likely to be the only or nearest lending library in the state or the region.

Are the loans circulating within consortia?

During the five-year period 2011–2015 the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa loaned a total of 45,776 print items in all disciplines and languages within the BTAA. For the Pennsylvania State University the numbers of items increased from 4538 in 2011 to 11,320 in 2015, an increase of 149% in the five-year period within the BTAA. For the University of Iowa the numbers of loans increased from 6165 in 2011 to 11,364 in 2015, an increase of 84% (Table 5).

The increased number of loans within the BTAA in a five-year period may be the result of the reciprocal ILL privileges between member libraries. In 2012, BTAA member libraries implemented an expedited ILL system UBorrow without the need for review. Materials arrive within a week or less eliminating extra time in the process. The University of Maryland and Rutgers University joined the BTAA in 2013. The addition of these two new members could also have

Table 5
Total number of loans in all disciplines and languages within the BTAA.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU	4538	6986	8531	10,125	11,320	41,500
UI	6175	8802	9120	10,315	11,364	45,776
	10,713	15,788	17,651	20,440	22,684	87,276

Table 6
Spanish-language loans by year within the BTAA.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU BTAA	61	79	69	122	165	496
UI BTAA	120	137	184	219	233	893
	181	216	253	341	398	1389

contributed to the increased numbers.

During a five-year period the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa loaned a combined total of 1389 Spanish-language books to other BTAA institutions. For the Pennsylvania State University the number of loans increased from 61 in 2011 to 165 in 2015 representing an increase of 170% within the five-year period. The University of Iowa experienced a smaller but significant increase of 94% from 120 Spanish-language loans in 2011 to 233 in 2015 (Table 6).

Although the number of transactions within consortia is significantly less than the number of loans that the authors anticipated, it is important to note that these numbers increased by year similarly to the overall ILL trends when all print transactions are considered. The Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa saw a combined increase of 112% for all loans within the BTAA while Spanish-language loans for both institutions combined experienced an increase of 120% in the five-year period within the BTAA.

In contrast, within PALCI, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries experienced a decrease in the total number of outbound loans in all disciplines and languages from 4617 in 2011 to 3480 in 2015, a 25% decrease from 2011 (Table 7).

Similarly, the number of Spanish-language loans also decreased within PALCI from 62 titles in 2011 to only 30 in 2015. This numbers show a decrease of the number of Spanish-language loans by 52% within the five-year period (Table 8).

While the overall ILL trends showed an increase in the number of loans for both all loans and Spanish-language loans, the decrease in the number of loans within PALCI does not fit the overall upward-trending pattern and therefore warrants further investigation.

Conclusion

The results of this study show that Spanish-language print materials are used beyond the home campus and remain relevant amidst the major changes in the library landscape. While the authors expected a higher number of Spanish-language loans, these loans show similar patterns when compared to the overall ILL trends for these institutions. The transaction data for the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa exhibit similar patterns in outbound loans for all loans and show the increasing number of requests for Spanish-language print materials from borrowing institutions within and outside consortia within the five-year period 2011–2015. Significantly, the data also show that the majority of the Spanish-language loans originated in doctoral institutions and demonstrate the importance of these collections in contributing to language and literature research beyond the home campus. These findings may help international and area studies librarians make informed decisions for Spanish-language collections.

The study also demonstrates the use of consortia for Spanish-language resource sharing. The results show that the number of loans within PALCI has experienced a decline over the five-year period for

Table 7
Total number of loans in all disciplines and languages within PALCI.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU PALCI	4617	3750	3705	3843	3480	19,395

Table 8

Total number of Spanish-language loans within PALCI.

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU PALCI	62	44	36	27	30	199

both all loans and Spanish-language loans. While PALCI membership consists of more than 70 academic and research institutions, with the great majority in Pennsylvania, as well as in New York, New Jersey, and West Virginia, the results related to PALCI loans combined with the high number of out-of-state loans suggest that geographical proximity is not the primary ILL consideration. Further research is needed to clarify factors that contributed to the overall downward trend of these loans and determine best approaches for Spanish-language materials within the consortia.

On the other hand, results for Spanish-language loans within the BTAA show significant yearly increases replicating the ILL patterns for all ILL transactions and those within the BTAA. These results suggest that an increasing number of peer institutions are using the Spanish-language collections from the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa. The increasing outbound loan activity for all materials also suggests that the needs of researchers across the BTAA that may be met through collaborative collection development opportunities. With Spanish-language loans within the BTAA slightly outpacing all loans within BTAA in this study, addressing these specific needs may be a beneficial next step. The Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa have begun conversations with other BTAA area studies librarians to explore the possibility of establishing a collaborative collection to ensure coordinated coverage of academic content in Spanish-language materials to support literary studies and Iberian and Latin American studies. The efficacy of such collaboration presents a topic for future study.

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