

Spanish-Language Print Materials within Academic Consortia: Assessing the Impact of Resource Sharing in Two Academic Libraries

Abstract

This study examines the current state of Spanish-language resource sharing in two academic libraries within the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA). The authors evaluate outbound loan transactions between 2011-2015 and aim to demonstrate the potential impact of Spanish-language print collections beyond the home campus. The dataset is evaluated by type of library, geographical location, and consortia. The article concludes by addressing the need for collaborative collections initiatives and institutional collaborations to alleviate the pressures of ongoing changes in academic libraries.

Keywords

Interlibrary loan; resources sharing; bibliometric analysis; area and international studies collections; Spanish-language collections

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: How do print materials support teaching and research beyond the home campus? And, how do library consortia support resource sharing of Spanish-language materials? To answer these questions, the authors analyzed interlibrary loan transactions of Spanish-language print materials between 2011-2015 in two academic libraries: The Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa. The authors speculate that a growing number of Spanish-language materials have been shared over the 5-year period within consortia. 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 types of institutions are requesting and loaning Spanish-language materials?
2. Where are the loans sent, in-state or out-of-state?
3. Are the borrowing institutions public or private?
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 Penn State University Libraries houses approximately 8 million volumes and the University of Iowa Libraries has approximately 5 million volumes ("Libraries Collections Statistics," n.d.; "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. 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 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 (Kellsey & Knievel, 2012, p. 575; Schadl & 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, & Delgadillo, 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 percent of the market, of which about 10 percent of these titles were of academic interest ("El libro en cifras, 2016). Similarly, in Spain, eBooks reached a high of 29.3 percent 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 nine percent 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; Way 2017; Linden, Tudesco, & Dollar, 2018). In particular, Way calls for increasing support for eBooks, and collaborative and coordinated collection development programs (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 (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 services 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 (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, Thacke, & Witt, 2015). Over 50 percent 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)

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.

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.

Using these call number ranges, the author 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
- Private/private status
- 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 use the collected ILL data set to determine the use of Spanish-language materials within these networks.

The authors use 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.

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.

As in other bibliometric analyses, there are additional limitations to this study. The Pennsylvania State University Libraries and the University of Iowa Libraries have both 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. Additionally, each ILL report was reviewed and sorted manually for Spanish-language materials since there is not 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 that a significant portion of the Spanish-language materials was loaned within consortia. Similarly, the authors expected most loans were sent to doctoral institutions. The authors also speculated that, in addition to research universities and institutions of higher education, public libraries and community colleges might be significant users of these collections. Moreover, the authors assumed geographical proximity determined where loans were sent.

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 percent of all transactions. The University of Iowa loaned a total of 1788 titles, representing 61.3 percent of all transactions. Out of the total number of transactions, 2120 loans, representing 72.7 percent, 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 percent of all transactions.

TABLE 1: Borrowing Libraries 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

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 percent of all combined loans, went to non-academic institutions, in contrast to the 8.39 percent of loans in the 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 amongst their own consortia or local networks before turning to a research university library.

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

In-state lending for the two institutions was similar. The Pennsylvania State University lent 364 books to in-state libraries, while the University of Iowa Libraries lent 347. The two 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 2: Location of Borrowing Institution (In-State vs. Out-of-State)

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

Both institutions, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa, are 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 borrowing institutions public or private?

The Pennsylvania State University Libraries loaned a total of 718 titles to public institutions, 24.6 percent; 390 titles to private institutions, 13.4 percent; and 21 titles to international institutions, .7 percent. The University of Iowa Libraries loaned 1243 titles to public institutions, 42.6 percent; 507 titles to private institutions, 17.4 percent; and 38 titles to international institutions, 1.3 percent.

TABLE 3: Public-Private Status of Borrowing Institution

	PSU	UI	Total
Public	718	1243	1961
Private	390	507	897

International	21	38	59
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These results indicate that the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa loan more Spanish-language books to public institutions than private and international libraries combined.

Are the loans circulating within consortia?

During a five-year period 1389 were loaned within BTAA and 199 within PALCI for a total of 1588 transactions within both consortia. These results represent a total of 54.4 percent of all transactions were loans within BTAA and PALCI combined.

TABLE 4: Loans by Year

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
PSU (ALL LOANS)	235	225	181	232	256	1129
UI (ALL LOANS)	313	327	309	382	457	1788
	548	552	490	614	713	2917

TABLE 5: Loans by Year within Consortia

	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

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 the year. Within the parameters of this study, the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa saw a combined overall increase of more than 30 percent in outbound loans. Both institutions saw dramatic increases within the BTAA from a total of 181 in 2011, representing 33 percent of total loans, to 398, representing 58.8 percent in 2015.

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 contributed to the increased numbers.

In contrast, within PALCI, the Pennsylvania State University Libraries experienced a decrease in the number of outbound loans from 62 in 2011 to 30 in 2015. These results may be the result of the growing number of PALCI consortial members from 35 to approximately 70.

TABLE 6: Loans by Year for PSU within PALCI

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

Conclusion

The results of this study show that Spanish-language materials are used beyond the home institutions. The transaction data for the Pennsylvania State University and the University of Iowa exhibit similar patterns in outbound loans and show the increasing requests for Spanish-language print materials from borrowing institutions within and outside consortia.

The study also demonstrates the use and importance of consortia for Spanish-language resource sharing. Results for the BTAA show a significant increase from 2011 to 2015 in the number of outbound loan transactions within member institutions, and an increased reliance on collections outside the home institutions. These results suggest the need for systematic collaborative initiatives for developing area and international studies collections in general, and Spanish-language collections in particular. Librarians at 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 Iberian and Latin American studies.

Relying on online access through digital libraries and eBooks for support area and international studies currently represent a risk. Collaborative collections initiatives may alleviate the pressures caused by the ongoing changes in academic libraries and simultaneously support the shift to a collection-as-service model.

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