

Collection Evaluation: Adult Spanish English Instruction Materials

Introduction

The Stanislaus County Library system, located in California's Central Valley, is comprised of 13 branches. The main branch is located in Modesto, California. In May 2011, Stanislaus County Library released its *Strategic Plan* for 2011-2015. The community profile indicates that Stanislaus County's "...population increased by 18%, from 451,190 to 530,584, between 2000 and 2010" (Stanislaus County Library, 2011, p. 11). The profile also indicates that residents have low education attainment levels and low incomes. The county has a high unemployment rate as well.

Nearly one-quarter of adults aged 25 and older have less than a high school education. This is about double the national rate...According to the U.S. Census Survey, 2009, the median family income is \$55,187 compared to \$61,082 nationally. In 2008, it was about \$10,000 less than the state average. The average salary is about \$33,000. The poverty rate in the County is 17% compared to 14.1% nationally. Unemployment is 18% in the County compared to 9.9% nationally. (Stanislaus County Library, 2011, p. 11)

The profile also indicates that the population is younger in age and diverse. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 29.2 percent of the population is under the age of 18 (2010). Only 10.5 percent of the population is over the age of 65. Nearly 42 percent of the residents are Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). It is estimated that more than 40 percent of residents speak a language other than English at home, and over 20 percent of the population was born outside the United States (Stanislaus County Library, 2011, p. 11)

The library's adult Spanish collection, which is housed separately from the adult English collection, has reference books, circulating fiction and non-fiction hardback and paperback books, books on CD, DVDs, a few magazines, books on tape, and VHS cassettes. The adult Spanish collection's emphasis is on popular fiction titles, learning English materials, parenting, cooking, auto repair, household repair, electrical repair, religious books, new age, citizenship test preparation, and Spanish/English dictionaries. The selector for the adult Spanish materials, Vicky Salinas, indicates that besides English instruction materials, Spanish/English dictionaries, and citizenship materials, popular items are books about angels, saints, dreams, horoscopes, and motivational or self-help books. This report evaluates the collection of adult Spanish learning English materials. Because of the popularity of these items, and the fact that the library system does not have an interlibrary loan program in place, it is important that this part of the collection has many items, including multiple copies of popular titles, and that the materials are current. Currently, the budget for the library system's adult Spanish materials is \$5,000 per year (V. Salinas, personal communication, July 14, 2011).

Evaluation

Scope and Coverage

The library classifies its materials using the Dewey Decimal Classification system with some modifications. In the Dewey system, the 400 section houses items relating to languages. For adult Spanish books, the call number begins with Sp and then the call number; books on tape begin with SpBOT; books on CD begin with SpBOCD; videos begin with SpVideo; and DVDs begin with DVD Sp. The call number for many learning English materials for Spanish speakers in the library system is 428.2461, but there is some variation depending on the specific aspect of the resource the cataloger has highlighted when creating the call number. One of the Library of Congress Subject Headings used to describe learning English materials is English language -- Self-instruction -- Spanish, but the heading can also be enhanced with the format of the material, such as CD, DVD, Video (VHS), and BOT (books on tape). Because Stanislaus County modifies its materials with a local call number system, figures for books, CDs, DVDs, books on tape, and videos using the call number 428.2461 were not readily available. Using a subject search for English language -- Self-instruction -- Spanish in the catalog as a guide, the results for this heading—and its variations by format type—show that the library owns 67 unique titles for this subject. These numbers, however, reflect the items in both the Spanish children's and Spanish adult collections. In exploring the individual records for these titles, 62 of these are adult materials. Of these, 30 titles are books (one title has the peculiar heading English language -- Self-instruction -- Spanish.poken English), one title is a book on tape, 25 titles are books on CD, three titles are DVDs, and three titles are videos (VHS).

Merced County is just south of Stanislaus County. The Merced County Library system, “has the support of over 100 San Joaquin Valley Libraries” (Merced County Library, 2011.). According to the the San Joaquin Valley Library system catalog, there were no items that used the heading English language -- Self-instruction -- Spanish. Using the title *Ingles Sin Barreras* as a guide for applicable subject headings, the learning English materials in Merced are cataloged with the heading English language--Study and teaching--Spanish speakers. Using this heading, there are 88 titles, however, there are other similar headings that are used to describe other learning English materials. There are six titles that have the subject heading English language -- Study and teaching -- Spanish speakers -- Audio-visual aids, and one title has the heading English language -- Self-instruction -- Interactive multimedia. When searching using the call number 428.2461, however, there are over 300 matches (unfortunately, the catalog only provides lists of up to 20 items and does not provide a specific number of matching items)! Because the Merced County Library is part of the San Joaquin Valley consortia, it has access to materials beyond those owned by Merced County.

Collection Age, Condition, and Observation

The sample used to evaluate the adult Spanish learning English section is comprised of 15 titles. Since the library owns 62 unique adult Spanish titles, the 15 titles represent 24 percent of this section. Of the 15 titles represented, seven are books, six are books on CD, and two are DVDs. Books on tape and videos (VHS) were not used as part of the sample as they are no longer purchased; there is one book on tape and three videos (VHS) in the collection that will be discarded when they become damaged.

Based on the 15 titles, the average age of the collection is 6 years old, which means that most of the materials were published in 2005. The oldest item, a book titled *Ingles esencial: nivel basico-intermedio*, was published in 1996. Both DVDs in the sample were published in 2004. All

of the books on CD were published in the 2000s; the oldest CD course, *Ingles Sin Barreras*, was published in 2003.

The selector for the Spanish collection, Vicky Salinas, indicated that Spanish language materials are difficult to obtain for a variety of reasons. Some Spanish titles do not have many prints, and materials that are printed overseas tend to be printed on lower paper quality and/or have poor binding. For these reasons, it is often difficult to purchase replacements for titles, so weeding is done very carefully. Items are typically only discarded if they are badly worn or have misleading or inaccurate information regarding health information, etc.

At the main library branch in Modesto, the Spanish section houses Spanish books, books on CD, books on tape, DVDs, and videos. In reviewing the physical stacks where the English instruction materials are housed, there were not any customers browsing this section, but there were a few customers within the greater adult Spanish collection. While the DVDs and books on CDs are difficult to determine condition without viewing or listening to the discs themselves, the books in the 428.3461 section had normal shelf and use wear. According to the selector, Vicky Salinas, the adult Spanish collection in Modesto went through a major weeding project in 2009. This might explain the relative good condition of the items in the section.

Circulation and Monetary Value

Since the Stanislaus County Library does not have an interlibrary loan program, it is important that the items in the system have more than one copy. The following is a chart that lists the sample titles, the cost to replace one copy of the title (based on information provided in the staff version of the library catalog), number of copies per title that the library owns, the circulation status for each copy, number of checkouts per copy, and the average number of checkouts per copy.

Title	Replacement Cost (1 copy)	Number of Copies	Circulation Status	No. Checkouts (per copy)	Avg. No Checkouts (per copy)
Aprende y mejora... (book)	\$17.95	1	Checked in	56	56
Ingles en 100 dias (book + 6 CDs)	\$42.99	4	Checked in, missing, 2 lost	17, 7, 18, 20	16
Ingles esencial...(book)	\$21.00	4	2 out, 2 in	47, 39, 61, 35	46
Ingles: gramatica (book)	\$11.50	3	All checked in	1, 5, 7	4
Ingles para latinos (book)	\$19.99	4	All checked out	7, 9, 11, 7	9
Larousse Redacte...(book)	\$15.00	10	1 out; 9 in	2, 4, 2, 1, 5, 5, 3, 4, 5, 0	3
Read and think...(book + 1 disc)	\$22.95	4	2 out, 2 in	19, 6, 3, 8	9
Auto ingles... (3 CDs + 1 book)	\$37.50	7	1 out, 6 in	23, 16, 14, 6, 12, 15, 8	13
Ingles: mas alla...(4 CDs + 1	\$50.00	2	Checked in, missing	3, 19	11

coursebook + 1 dictionary)					
Ingles para construccion ... (1 CD)	\$12.50	1	Checked in	7	7
Ingles para dummies (3 CDs + 1 book)	\$37.50	3	1 out, 2 in	5, 13, 11	10
Ingles para entrevistas (1 CD)	\$20.95	1	Checked in	6	6
Ingles sin barreras (12 CDs)	\$150.00	7	5 out, 2 lost	34, 35, 21, 56, 60, 21, 44	39
El Ingles de hoy (DVD)	\$28.99	2	All checked in	17, 9	13
Ingles sin barreras...(DVD; 12 volumes—ea. vol. has 1 DVD, 1 CD, 1 manual, 1 workbook)	\$100.000 (per volume); \$1,200 (complete set)	95 copies of various volumes	48 in, 9 on shelving cart, 26 out, 2 missing, 4 lost, 3 damaged, 1 mending, 1 on hold, 1 in transit	■ 1,431 for all copies	15

The total cost to replace just one copy of each of these fifteen titles, including a complete set of the *Ingles Sin Barreras* DVDs, is \$1,688.82. As previously mentioned in the introduction, the budget for all adult Spanish materials is \$5,000. The cost to replace all fifteen titles, which represents 24 percent of the collection, is nearly 34 percent of the whole adult Spanish budget.

Target Audience and Summary/Recommendations

The target audience for these materials is Latino adults who predominately speak Spanish and want to learn English. According to the Stanislaus County Library *Strategic Plan* (2011), “More than forty percent of the [Stanislaus County’s] population is Latino or Hispanic. More than 20% of residents are foreign-born while over 40% speak a language other than English in the home. These population trends are expected to grow in proportion to the overall population growth of the County.” It is increasingly important that the library continue to provide access to learning English materials for those Spanish speaking residents who would like to learn some English. Although many of the materials the library currently owns are six years old on average, weeding has to be done very carefully because it is difficult to obtain Spanish language titles; books published overseas typically use poorer quality paper and have poor binding and print runs tend to be small. Because of these factors, as well as the library’s small \$5,000 budget for all adult Spanish materials, and the lack of an interlibrary loan program, the collection has been described as fair by the selecting librarian, Vicky Salinas. After reviewing a sample of the learning Spanish materials, this assessment appears to be accurate. The following are suggestions to improve the quantity and quality of English instruction materials for Spanish speakers:

- Increase the budget through a grant specific for Latino and/or Spanish speakers
- Increase the amount of newer materials
- Continue to focus on obtaining multiple copies of English instruction materials
- Market the collection to the Spanish-speaking community

Bibliography of Sample Items

Books

Bima Lilov, Renata. (1999). *Aprende y mejora rapidamente tu ingles*. Barcelona: Editorial De Vecchi.

Galvan, J. (1996). *Ingles esencial: Nivel basico-intermedio*. New York: Living Language.

Ingles en 100 dias. (2007). Miami, FL: Aguilar.

Ingles: Gramatica. (2008). Mexico: Larousse.

Ingles para Latinos: Curso completo: Enfasis en la conversacion! (2010). Doral, FL: Aguilar.

Read and think English: los editores de la revista Think English. (2008). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Roland, Marie-Claude. (2004). *Larousse Redacte su curriculum en ingles facil*. Mexico, D.F.: Larousse.

Books on CD

Auto ingles: como pronunciar correctamente el ingles. (2005). Miami, FL: Brickell Communications Group.

Ingles: mas alla de lo basico. (2005). New York: Living Language.

Ingles para construccion: palabras y frases esenciales para comunicarse exitosamente en el trabajo de construcción. (2007). Miami, FL: NPG Music.

Ingles para entrevistas de trabajo: palabras y frases esenciales para comunicarse exitosamente en los trabajos de vendedores y cajeros. (2007). Miami, FL: NPG Music.

Ingles Sin Barreras: El curso en compact disc. (2003). Los Angeles, CA: Lexicon.

Langemeier, J. (2009). *Ingles para dummies*. Hoboken, NJ: For Dummies.

DVD

Ingles sin barreras: el video - maestro de ingles conversacional. Los Angeles, CA: Lexicon.

Rutman, N. (Producer). (2004). *El Ingles de hoy*. San Francisco, CA: Language Tree.

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