Demand for Non-English Materials Study (Public Libraries)

Executive Summary
Objectives
OCLC conducted a web-based survey to measure the demand for non-English materials in public libraries.

For those libraries with demand for non-English materials, understanding how libraries select, acquire and provide access to non-English materials was evaluated.

Methodology
An invitation to participate in the web-based survey was sent to the Collection Development Librarian at 1,300 OCLC and non OCLC public libraries. The survey was in the field from February 9 to March 7, 2008 and resulted in 230 completes; a response rate of 18%.

Demand for Non-English Materials
More than half of the respondents (58%) indicate there is a demand for non-English materials at their library, 32% said there is no demand and 10% are not sure.

Adult fiction, adult nonfiction and children’s fiction are the most frequently mentioned type of non-English materials in demand and books (print) is overwhelmingly the format in demand. Most respondents report Spanish is the language in demand for non-English materials and also report it as the largest in growth.

Monitoring Demands for Non-English Materials
Patron requests and staff input are the most frequently mentioned ways respondents say they monitor the demands for non-English materials at their library.

Selecting Non-English Materials
Nearly two-thirds of respondents (62%) do not have a language specialist in-house. Recommendations from vendors, pre-selected sets and community/student assistance are typically how respondents select non-English materials and they are satisfied with these methods.

Non-English materials are primarily cataloged in-house. The vast majority of respondents report the funding for non-English materials comes from their own library’s budget.

No Demand for Non-English Materials
More than three quarters of respondents (77%) determined there is no demand for non-English materials based on demographics of the community. Nearly a third mentioned other determinants which include no requests/demands and circulation statistics.

Respondents who are not sure if there is a demand for non-English materials were asked how important it would be to build a non-English collection upon discovering a demand. The vast majority of respondents (94%) feel it would be at least somewhat important.
Demand for Non-English Materials Study

Demand for Non-English Materials

Current Demand

More than half of the total respondents (58%) say they currently have demand for non-English materials, just under a third of respondents (32%) do not and 10% are not sure.

Types of Non-English Materials in Demand

The most frequently mentioned type of non-English material in demand is adult fiction (86%). More than half of respondents report adult nonfiction (79%), children’s fiction (77%), entertainment (60%) and children’s nonfiction (57%) as types of non-English materials in demand at their libraries. A quarter or more of respondents report education (40%) and general reference (27%). Sixteen percent (16%) mentioned curriculum support and 4% mentioned other types.
Formats of Non-English Materials in Demand
The vast majority of respondents (96%) report books (print) as a format of non-English material in demand; more than half of respondents report movies/DVDs (78%) and popular magazines (59%). A third or more of respondents list audiobooks (45%), newspapers (40%), and audio materials (34%) as formats that are in demand. One-tenth of respondents report CD-ROM (Computer software) (12%), and 4% report electronic books.

Languages of Non-English Materials in Demand
Spanish is the most popular language in demand for non-English materials. Nearly a third or more of respondents report Chinese (35%) and Russian (31%), while a nearly a quarter or more report Korean (28%), Japanese (26%), Vietnamese (26%) and Hindi (24%) as languages in demand for non-English materials; 10% report Arabic. More than a quarter report other languages (28%). French was the most mentioned other language, at 16%, followed by German (8%), Polish (8%), and Gujarati (7%). Other mentions with 2% or more of responses are detailed in the table below the chart.
### Other Languages in Demand for non-English Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>% of Other Responses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farsi</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalong</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Monitoring Demands for Non-English Materials

The majority of respondents rely on patron requests (90%) and staff input (77%) as ways to **monitor the demand for non-English materials**. Nearly half of the respondents monitor the demand via city/state demographic information (48%). Nearly a quarter or more rely on suggestions from their suggestion box (32%), community surveys (25%), and U.S. Census information (23%). Twenty percent (20%) monitor the demand of non-English materials by analyzing interlibrary loan requests, while 10% or less of respondents use reference question logs (10%), monitor leisure reading needs (7%), faculty requests (7%), monitor state mandates bilingual education (3%) and monitor courses/disciplines (1%).
Growth in Demand
Respondents were presented with a list of eight languages and asked to rank order up to five that show the largest growth in demand for non-English materials currently not available in their collection, with “1” being the largest growth. The Spanish language shows the largest growth in demand with an average rating of 1.5 among those who responded it was applicable (85% of those responding to the question). The Chinese language shows the second highest growth, with an average rating of 2.3 among the 66% of respondents who said it was applicable and Arabic came in third, at 2.7, among 47% of respondents. Japanese, Russian, Hindi and Vietnamese ranked similarly. Respondents were also provided an opportunity to list other languages and how they would rank them on a scale of 1 to 5. French, Polish, German and Urdu were the most mentioned other languages, with average rankings of 3.2, 1.7, 3 and 1, respectively.

More than half of the respondents (62%) report they do not have an in-house language specialist, 9% have an in-house language specialist that handles all languages, and 28% have an in-house language specialist that handles some languages but also use other methods of selecting non-English materials.
Satisfaction with Methods of Selecting Non-English Materials

More respondents were likely to use recommendations from a vendor, pre-selected sets and community/student assistance when it comes to selecting non-English materials when a language specialist is not available and are satisfied with these methods; 81%, 78% and 85% of respondents report they are satisfied (very satisfied or satisfied), respectively. Fewer respondents hire a consultant/outside language expert or use faculty assistance, but for those who have, most respondents are satisfied, at 80% and 95%, respectively.

Reasons for Satisfaction
Respondents were asked to explain if they indicated they were dissatisfied with any method of selecting non-English materials. Respondents not satisfied with pre-selected sets say the titles selected do not match the needs of their community. Unfamiliarity with their clientele and high prices are reasons for dissatisfaction with vendor recommendations.
Centralized Purchasing for Non-English Materials

The majority of respondents (82%) do not participate in centralized purchasing for their non-English materials; 18% participate in centralized purchasing.

![Participation in Centralized Purchasing (n=120)](chart)

Nearly a third or more of respondents who participate in centralized purchasing allocate a portion of their budget (37%) or purchase as a branch library where the main library does all the purchasing (32%) in cooperative collection development. Twenty one percent (21%) are involved in the decision making of what is purchased, 16% share their collection through ILL, and 11% collect languages where they have expertise and allow other libraries to collect in their expertise. Other ways in participating in cooperative collection development include sharing a pool of funds (5%) and purchasing through a loosely organized group of libraries (5%).

Ways of Centralized Participation (n=19)
Base: Respondents who participate in centralized purchasing

- We allocate a portion of our budget: 37%
- Purchase as a branch library, the main library does all the purchasing: 32%
- We are involved in the decision making of what is purchased: 21%
- The collection is shared through ILL: 16%
- Collect languages we have expertise, allow other libraries to collect in their expertise: 11%
- We share a pool of funds: 5%
- Purchase through a loosely organized group of libraries: 5%
Among those who participate in centralized purchasing, nearly a two-thirds (63%) say they have **less than 10** libraries participating in the group purchase; 19% have **10 to 20**, 6% have **21 to 30**, 6% have **31 to 50** and 6% have **More than 50**.
No Demand for Non-English Materials

Determinant for No Demand
Respondents who indicated there is no demand for non-English materials in their library were asked how they came to that conclusion. More than three quarters of these respondents (77%) report they have no demand based on the demographics in their community. Eight percent (8%) rely on community studies that assess the need for non-English materials and nearly a third (32%) provided other responses, which included no requests/demand and circulation statistics. (See the table below).

Respondents provided other ways in determining the lack of demand for non-English materials and no requests made up nearly three quarters of the responses (70%). Circulation statistics made up nearly a quarter (22%) of the other responses. Nine percent (9%) say they review and analyze the reference questions received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Determinants for No Demand (n=23)</th>
<th>% of Other Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No requests/demand</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circulation statistics</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze reference questions</td>
<td>9%</td>
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Not Sure of Demand for Non-English Materials

Ten percent (10%) of respondents are not sure about the current demand for non-English materials because no time or cost has been allocated to determining a need. These respondents were asked to rate the importance of building a non-English collection upon discovering a need. Nearly half of these respondents (47%) feel it would be important, while 47% felt it would be somewhat important and 5% said it would be not important.

Respondents were asked to explain their importance rating to building a non-English collection for their library upon discovering a need. Respondents who feel it would be important say they are willing to do what it takes to support the needs of their patrons. Those who feel it is somewhat important expressed they need to define the criteria to determine the actual demand and need to work within a limited budget to meet the need of the majority of patrons.