

Kate Hartig

ISTC 653

April 25, 2016

Libraries may be the place where newcomers to the United States begin their adjustment. Collections do not always reflect materials in the native language of the diverse community. Budgetary concerns are just one restriction (Lynch, G., 2015). Libraries seek to meet the needs of the community.

*Baltimore County Public Library serves ELL patrons*

The Baltimore County Public Library in Cockeysville serves its community in a variety of ways, relates Darcy Cahill, branch manager (Cahill, D., personal communication, April 26, 2016). The Cockeysville Branch locates its foreign language picture books in a special section in the Children's room. This makes it easier for librarians to find materials for their weekly bilingual story-time, easier for library users (patrons) to locate titles written in their native tongue, and easier for those re-shelving the books to do so. Fiction titles in Korean are shelved near the graphic novels in the adult fiction section. These titles have KOR on the spine above the author information. Spanish language titles are located in 3 other branches and are available at the Cockeysville library upon request. Magazines in Chinese and Korean are interfiled with other magazines in the quiet reading section. The language collection in the 400s houses foreign language dictionaries and interfiles all language learning cds and dvds in the 400 section. Ms. Cahill adds that foreign language books in the collection will reflect the needs of the community. On the BCPL site patrons have access to Mango, a language learning site. Librarians can request titles for patrons through Marina, which provides information and interlibrary loan from libraries throughout Maryland.

Reggie Reyes, a BCPL patron, wrote in a *Sun* Letter that there were not enough Spanish language books in his local library for the percentage of Spanish speaking and reading residents in the area (2016, February 11). He mentioned the nice collection of picture books, but went on to say that he was interested in Spanish language novels and nonfiction material. In response Paula Miller, Director of the Baltimore County Public Library, wrote that his concerns were being addressed in a new strategic plan (2016, February 19). She added that library offers programs for foreign language speakers and readers and that online opportunities to request new books from the website offer a few examples of how the library tries to reach out to the community.

#### *How other library systems serve ELL patrons*

Librarians Anna Winkel and Mariko Guziur ([2005]) polled Library systems in their Colorado area to see how non-English materials were housed and how library patrons were served. Colorado has a large population of Spanish language speakers. Of the three library systems that responded, all shelved materials separately when the population using it was great (Spanish or Russian). They marked materials by designating with a sticker or in the call number (SPA) to help reshelve the material. In most cases, nonfiction material was shelved with the regular collection. Each library mentioned other considerations including having or setting a goal to hire a Russian language or Spanish language speaker to serve their patrons better, having language learning materials available in the regular collection or in a special area as best needed, and having bilingual dictionaries and monolingual picture dictionaries available in the regular or special collection. In each case, the decision where to shelve materials was made to best serve the community using it. The libraries responding were the Boulder Public Library, which also has books in German and French; Glendale Library, which also maintains a collection in Russian; and Pitkin County Library, which separates out Spanish titles, but interfiles other foreign language titles.

### *School Library Concerns*

At the Our Lady of Grace School library, there is a call number designation on the few fiction and easy books that are located in the collection, (SPA [Spanish] or KOR [Korean]). Adding location information in the cataloging record provides another hint that the book may be shelved in a special area. The collection is so small that we interfile foreign language titles at our elementary school.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion the decision about where to shelve materials is a local decision which considers the size of the group being served. It may be easier for frequent users to find materials in their language if those materials are located together in a marked location. If materials reflect SPA (Spanish) or KOR (Korean) in the call number, the books are easier to reshelve. Libraries should reevaluate patron needs on a regular basis to make sure the community including its foreign language readers and speakers is best served. Even as their collections remain small, Librarians see to make available a variety of resources through interlibrary loan, local programs and online resources.

## References

Lynch, G.H. (2015, April 1). Libraries and English Language Learners. *School Library Journal*.

Retrieved by <http://www.slj.com/2015/04/diversity/libraries-and-english-language-learners/>

Miller, P. (2016, February 19). As Baltimore County's demographics change, so must its library *Sun*. Retrieved April 24, 2016, from

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/readersrespond/bs-ed-library-letter-20160219-story.html>

Reyes, R. (2016, February 11). Not enough Spanish books at the county library. *Sun*. Retrieved

April 24, 2016, from <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/readersrespond/bs-ed-library-spanish-letter-20160211-story.html>

Winkel, A. & Guziur, M. (2005). *Shelving of Foreign Language Materials* -

*shelving\_foreign\_language\_materials*. Retrieved from

[https://www.lrs.org/documents/field\\_stats/shelving\\_foreign\\_language\\_materials.pdf](https://www.lrs.org/documents/field_stats/shelving_foreign_language_materials.pdf)