
Limited English proficient users and the need for improved reference services

Ajit Pyati

The author

Ajit Pyati is a Graduate Student in Library and Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, California, USA.

Keywords

Reference services, Ethnic minorities, Public libraries, Linguistics, English language, United States of America

Abstract

Public libraries have long neglected the needs of limited English proficiency (LEP) users. With the changing demographics of the USA, however, services to LEP users will become more important in the future. Current programs that target ethnolinguistic minorities focus mainly on outreach programs, and not on reference services. This paper addresses some of the issues in reference services for LEP users, namely reference interviewing, information-seeking behavior, foreign language reference materials, and multilingual online catalogs. Possible research avenues and future directions in improving reference service for LEP users conclude the discussion. Libraries must address issues of multiculturalism, and the needs of their limited English users, to survive and flourish in the coming decades.

Electronic access

The Emerald Research Register for this journal is available at <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/researchregister>

The current issue and full text archive of this journal is available at <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/0090-7324.htm>

The traditional reference service in US public libraries has focused mainly on English speaking users. With immigration and changing demographics, however, languages other than English are gaining a foothold in the USA, and must be accounted for in reference services. For instance, latinos make up 12.5 percent of the US population, and this percentage is expected to increase to 17 percent in 2020 (US Census Bureau, 2001a,b). In California, a high latino population already exists, and is poised to become a majority in the near future.

Although not all latinos are limited English speakers, many recent immigrants have low English proficiency skills and cite Spanish as their primary language. In addition to latinos, various other ethnolinguistic minority groups exist in the US population, most notably Asian-Americans. For Asian-Americans, 1990 census data revealed that 56 percent of the population do not speak English very well, and 35 percent are considered linguistically isolated (Zhang, 2001). As the USA's linguistic and cultural makeup changes, public libraries must meet the challenge with appropriate reference services for limited English proficiency (LEP) users.

Despite the multicultural and multilingual realities of the USA, public libraries are not meeting the needs of ethnolinguistic minorities. LEP users have traditionally been underserved by traditional library services, as very few strategies have been implemented for them on a national scale. de la Pena McCook and Immroth (2000) and Alire and Archibeque (1998) have addressed the needs of latino communities nationally, but other LEP groups have remained ignored by the library community. Libraries are missing out on a critical opportunity to transform themselves into multicultural organizations ready to meet

This paper was submitted as the final work for Dr John Richardson's Fall 2002 information access course in the UCLA Department of Information Studies. The author would like to thank Dr John Richardson for his guidance and encouragement. In addition, Dr Anastassis Petrou, the graduate student reader for the course, provided valuable assistance in the development of this paper. Finally, the author would like to thank fellow classmates and the information studies department at UCLA for creating an intellectually challenging and supportive environment.



the needs of an ever-changing and diverse US population.

In fact, one can argue that libraries have a unique responsibility to help society deal with issues of multiculturalism (Stoffle and Tarin, 1994). Public libraries, in order to be relevant in the future, must position themselves to serve the needs of their diverse communities.

Outreach programs for communities are useful, and can help change perceptions of the library from a place to just read and study to a vital community information and resource center. Libraries are slowly warming to this idea, and programs such as the Queens Borough Public Library's (QBPL's) "New Americans program" are models to follow.

Since 1977, this program has served the needs of immigrants in Queens, New York, whose primary language is not English (Gitner, 1998). QBPL embraces the diversity of its service community, and has various creative components to their program to better meet their service goals. For instance, QBPL has cultural programming, the largest library-based ESOL program in the country, as well as a "Coping skills" program for new immigrants (Tjoumas, 1995). Needless to say, QBPL has taken a comprehensive approach to library services for LEP users that is a model for other programs to follow.

Despite the efforts of some metropolitan public library systems such as QBPL, however, more work is needed to make programs like QBPL's more widespread in US public libraries. LEP users have much to gain from a wider implementation of outreach programs. In the case of recent latino immigrants, for instance, their high rate of growth and the urgent needs created by low income and literacy levels place them in a great position to benefit from improved library services (Quinn, 1993). Although recent latino immigrants are a highly visible group in many areas of the USA, they are not often present in the public library (Luevano-Molina, 2001).

The case for more LEP user outreach is amplified when we consider that many latino immigrants with limited English skills hold the public library in high esteem and see it as a place of opportunity (Luevano-Molina, 2001). The information needs of this community go unmet when public libraries fail to provide

effective LEP user service. Moreover, LEP users have the potential to be avid library supporters in the future if appropriate services are targeted towards them (Luevano-Molina, 2001).

Part of better LEP user outreach includes reference service. Despite the idea that reference is the "backbone" of overall library services, however, not much of the professional literature discusses this topic in detail when LEP users are involved. Much of the literature focuses on general outreach work, and does not go into detail about effective reference services for LEP users. Partly out of a need to fill this void, this paper will focus on reference for limited English speakers.

This paper will focus on the various aspects of reference service for LEP users, from the reference interview to multilingual online catalogs. The reference interview consists of both linguistic and cultural communication issues, and these aspects will be highlighted. In addition, the information-seeking behavior of LEP users will be discussed, and particularly how this information can be applied to improving reference transactions. Moreover, new models of viewing LEP reference must be examined, including ideas of information and referral (I&R) services (Metoyer-Duran, 1993).

Another important aspect of effective reference service is the presence of foreign language reference materials. A section of the paper will be devoted to a discussion of this topic. Online catalogs also play a significant role in providing access to collections, and the challenges in developing multilingual online catalogs will be presented.

The final portion of this paper will be dedicated to proposed research studies on improving LEP user reference services. Moreover, future directions in improving overall library service to ethnolinguistic minorities will conclude the discussion.

Reference interview

The reference interview is an exercise in communication, and is at the heart of the reference process. Rather than being an entirely different activity, reference interviews with LEP users can be thought of as adding another layer

of complexity to traditional reference. Communicating with LEP users is not only a question of language, but a question of culture as well. Reference librarians must be sensitive to the different communication styles of ethnic groups, and understand that these differences are often due to culture.

Cultural literacy lies at the heart of reference librarianship (D'Aniello, 1989), and this cultural literacy should extend to minority cultures in the community, and not just the dominant one. Improving reference librarians' cultural sensitivity goes hand in hand with fluency in the languages of target ethnolinguistic minorities. This is important when we understand that a key barrier to latinos' use of libraries are primarily linguistic and cultural (Asch, 1998). Moreover, library staff in predominantly latino neighborhoods of Los Angeles have observed that if bilingual and bicultural staff are present, people will feel more comfortable asking questions (Asch, 1998).

An ideal service environment for LEP users would include having reference librarians on staff who are fluent in the target language groups. This ideal is not easily realized in practice, however, and LEP user reference strategies must work with this fact. We can understand this problem in a large, multiethnic community with many different linguistic minority groups. One cannot presume that a librarian can know multiple languages fluently. Emphasizing the communicative approach of reference interviews, therefore, can help overcome some of the language barrier difficulties. In fact, some researchers state that sensitivity and a user-friendly approach are more important than linguistic knowledge (Simsova, 1992) in conducting reference interviews with LEP users. Improving LEP reference transactions involves new methods of training for reference librarians.

In the case of librarian staff development, a training which emphasizes listening skills and incorporates communication theory with information on styles of communication from other cultures would be useful (Blenkinsopp, 1994). This type of training program needs more study and development in order to be effective. In fact, the intercultural aspects of the reference interview have not been considered at length in the professional literature (Lam,

1988). More research in this area can yield better training methods in the field.

In general, however, reference librarians can improve the effectiveness of their transactions with LEP users by exercising patience and a user-friendly attitude. Refocusing on better human interaction should be the goal of the whole reference interview process (Lam, 1988). Part of the interaction with users includes better non-verbal communication, and a willingness to understand the needs of the individual and the particular ethnolinguistic group. Librarians can better serve their LEP users at the reference desk by using gestures and pointing (see Swis (2001)), as well as utilizing better multilingual signage. Some have even suggested using gadgets to bridge the language barrier, such as bilingual communication cards (Simsova, 1992). Regardless of the methods, however, the ultimate goal should be better communication with LEP users that leads to a resolution of their needs.

While the focus thus far has been on the traditional reference process, other researchers have suggested moving towards different models when dealing with LEP users. The reference interview can be expanded to more of an I&R process (Metoyer-Duran, 1993). This is a model that has had some followers in the past, and might serve to complement the current reference process. Public libraries shifted to I&R programs in the 1970s when they felt traditional reference services were not working for LEP users, but abandoned them shortly afterwards due to funding issues (Metoyer-Duran, 1993). What distinguishes I&R programs from traditional reference are that they forge integral links to formal and informal community associations and leaders (Metoyer-Duran, 1993).

I&R programs highlight a need for a community-based approach to the information needs of LEP users. Librarians who are sensitive to the needs of their local ethnolinguistic minorities will provide better services to these communities. A move to a more comprehensive reference approach that includes greater alignment with local ethnic communities and referrals to community agencies represents the future of reference for LEP users.

In order to make this expanded reference approach feasible, however, we must know more about the information seeking behavior of LEP communities. Even a single linguistic group consists of various ethnic communities. For instance, the “Spanish” speakers can comprise a whole range of groups, including people from Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, to name a few. Moreover, ethnic groups are not limited to just one linguistic group. For example, the term “Asians” covers 22 separate ethnic groups with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and different information needs (Zhang, 2001). Understanding the unique information needs and information-seeking behaviors of the different LEP communities can help improve reference and other library services. With the knowledge gained by studying the information-seeking behaviors of LEP communities, better reference strategies can be modeled. The next section of this paper will focus on information-seeking behavior, and how it can inform the reference process.

Information-seeking behavior of LEP users

Before we can discuss how to improve reference services to LEP users, it is helpful to understand some of the ways LEP users view the library and the services it offers. Linguistic barriers prevent many LEP users from taking advantage of reference, but also many language minority groups come from countries without a public library tradition (Asch, 1998). The absence of a public library tradition in many countries can help explain why LEP users do not take greater advantage of library resources.

LEP users certainly have distinct information needs, and how they resolve them is of importance in designing better library services. Studies have shown that Asian LEP users, mostly recent immigrants, seek survival types of information such as English study materials, immigration forms, and health benefits (Zhang, 2001). In regards to the latino recent immigrant community, studies in Santa Ana, California, have shown that users are interested in utilizing the library for life-long learning, assisting

children in completing school assignments, and recreational purposes (Luevano-Molina, 2001).

Having knowledge about the information needs of LEP communities is important, but it is also crucial to understand the factors that prevent them from using the library as a primary source of information. Many new Asian immigrants, for instance, are not aware of the reference services offered at libraries, and instead rely on family and friends for their information needs (Zhang, 2001). In general, moreover, it has been observed that many Asian immigrants, if they do utilize the library, are reluctant to ask for help and are passive information seekers (To, 1995). Recent Asian immigrants’ information-seeking behavior is directly related to both their experience and their culture (Zhang, 2001).

Within ethnolinguistic minority groups, various subgroups also exist. For instance, in the latino immigrant community, day laborers are a subgroup with distinct information needs. Also known as jornaleros, they have been ignored by traditional library service (Jensen, 2002). Some needs of this group include information on chemical safety, local health clinics, immigration laws, and back care and lifting techniques (Jensen, 2002). These information needs are slightly different from their ethnolinguistic group in general, and knowledge of these needs can help improve library services for them.

Once we can identify some of the general needs of specific LEP groups and some of the subgroups within these populations, knowledge of the dynamics of their information-seeking behavior will be useful. As discussed earlier, LEP groups have specific cultural factors that make them likely to use one information source over another. Research into the mechanics of information-seeking behavior in LEP communities has been enhanced by the “gatekeeper” concept. Gatekeepers link members of ethnolinguistic communities to resources in order to help solve problems (Metoyer-Duran, 1993). Gatekeepers can fit into many models, from informal to institutional positions in the community, and they generally serve as opinion leaders and data gatherers for others (Metoyer-Duran, 1993). It would be fruitful, therefore, to understand the information-seeking behaviors of these

gatekeepers to help better model reference and other library services for LEP users.

Very little is known, however, about the information-seeking behavior of ethnolinguistic gatekeepers who provide links between communities and information resources (Metoyer-Duran, 1991). More research is certainly needed in this field to help in the development of library services. The few studies available regarding this topic suggest that gatekeepers have a positive perception of the public library, but they make limited use of it and do not think of it as an information and resource center (Metoyer-Duran, 1993). This reality suggests that public libraries, through better outreach, can identify and partner with gatekeepers to improve reference services. Moreover, influencing gatekeepers and opinion makers in LEP communities about the library's benefits can only strengthen its position with LEP users, and the public in general.

In addition to gatekeepers, intercultural mediators (ICMs) in LEP communities have often been ignored. These ICMs can play an important role in facilitating the daily interactions of limited English speakers. Recent research has revealed that children often serve as ICMs in LEP communities (Chu, 1999), helping their parents deal with their language barriers. Understanding that children can mediate for their limited English speaking parents provides insight into improving library services for LEP users. Studies have shown, however, that ICMs do not cite libraries as a main information source (Chu, 1999).

Libraries, therefore, must make more of an effort to attract these young ICMs. Reference librarians can be more sensitive and educated about the needs and information seeking behavior of this group. Outreach can be focused in schools, where these young ICMs spend much of their time.

We have thus seen the importance of understanding the unique needs and information-seeking behavior of LEP groups. The next section will focus on foreign language reference materials and the development of multilingual online catalogs. These two aspects are important in supporting the reference process.

Foreign language reference materials and multilingual online catalogs

Maintaining a good reference service for LEP users includes providing appropriate foreign language titles and reference materials. Just as dictionaries, encyclopedias, indexes, and atlases expedite the reference process for English speakers, the same can be expected for LEP users. For selecting foreign titles in general, however, the lack of appropriate selection tools is a major problem (Quinn, 1993). In the case of Spanish language books, "Libros en Venta" is analogous to "Books in print," but due to short print runs, it is often out of date and does not provide information on current Spanish titles (Quinn, 1993). One can only presume what types of difficulties arise in selecting current foreign titles in other languages.

With the difficulty in selecting and acquiring foreign titles in general, foreign language reference materials face similar problems in this regard. Many librarians are unhappy with current US reviewing tools of foreign language reference materials, and also express frustration with the scarcity of reviews (Dickinson, 1993). Periodicals such as *Criticas: An English Speaker's Guide to the Latest Spanish Language Titles*, are helpful, but more publications such as this that review Spanish language materials are needed.

The lack of critical evaluation of foreign reference titles makes libraries face tough decisions about acquisitions. With limited critical information, librarians are often relying on publishers' advertisements and staff recommendations to make their purchasing decisions (Dickinson, 1993). This situation is certainly not ideal, but is often the only solution for libraries at the present moment. With limited budgets and rising publication costs, moreover, it may be safe to presume that many American libraries are not buying foreign reference titles, especially with the lack of evaluative information (Dickinson, 1993).

In certain public libraries, some methods to deal with limited budgets for foreign titles have been devised. For instance, the Queens Public Library supports 16 languages in its collection, and the Literature and Language division of the central library provides rotating collections of foreign language books to branches in order to "test-market" a language (Gitner, 1998). This

way, libraries do not have to invest in foreign language books they may not need in the future. This method of foreign language title acquisition reflects a community-based philosophy that is important in serving LEP communities.

Understanding the information needs of local LEP users will create a better foreign titles and reference books collection. Being sensitive to the local needs of the LEP community is highlighted by an example in Chinese reference book collections. The Chinese language has both a simplified and a traditional written form, and people from different parts of the world use either one or the other of these systems. If a library purchases encyclopedias and dictionaries in traditional form (e.g. from Hong Kong), but has a Chinese user population predominantly from China (which uses simplified characters), a seemingly beneficial acquisition will be rendered useless (To, 1995). Thus, for foreign title collection development, knowing the specific needs of the community is ultimately the most important factor.

Another important tool of reference is the online catalog, which helps users search a library's collections. Creating multilingual catalogs is an obvious measure to help LEP users access library collections and become more effective searchers. Although slowly appearing in public libraries across the country, multilingual online catalogs have significant issues that prevent them from reaching their full potential of usability and effectiveness.

Current research in the field has identified three primary problem areas in the field of multilingual online catalogs, namely character set standards, known item search facilities, and subject search facilities (Cousins and Hartley, 1994). In the case of character standards, difficulties exist with non-Roman languages, such as Chinese, Japanese, or Arabic. Most library catalogs use a Roman script to retrieve Asian language materials (Zhang, 2001). In addition, records with non-Roman characters are represented in a Roman character transliterated form. Complicating this issue of character set encoding is the lack of standards in transliterations of languages, which create problems with access and multiple authority records (Cousins and Hartley, 1994).

Known-item searching issues are related to authority problems, as multiple names in different languages can exist for single records. Subject searching, however, presents some of the more significant problems in multilingual online catalogs. Most multilingual catalogs have English subject headings, and this limits the capabilities of multilingual subject searching (Cousins and Hartley, 1994). For instance, it has been noted that in the case of Spanish language materials, most are listed under English subject headings (Asch, 1998). Therefore, not only do interfaces have to be multilingual, but subject headings need to be as well.

Some of the major public libraries in the USA have multilingual online catalogs, most notably Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL). The Queens Library Web site (www.queenslibrary.org), has a link to the online catalog. From the catalog screen, the user can choose five different catalog screens – either English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, or Korean. In addition, users have the option to search materials in 16 different languages. This diversity is remarkable, but the subject searches prove most difficult. Irrespective of the language interface screen in the catalog, all subject headings are in English. Moreover, it is unclear how users can type in non-Roman characters for the Mandarin and Korean screens unless they have the software to support it. Supporting all these languages on one keyboard at a library computer terminal could prove confusing to the user.

Another major metropolitan system's catalog, that of the Los Angeles Public Library (www.lapl.org), has Spanish as the only other language option besides English. Subject searches are troublesome, as the majority of subject headings are in English. An additional problem is the language specificity of materials. A keyword search in Spanish brings up only records in Spanish. For instance, if a user performs a keyword search with the term "perros" ("dogs" in Spanish), she will retrieve only Spanish language materials pertaining to "perros." This result is not satisfactory if I want all materials about "dogs," regardless of the language. In fact, Cousins and Hartley (1994) sum up this problem well when they state, "a searcher should be able to enter search criteria in a chosen language and all the material which matches those search

criteria should be retrieved and offered to the user regardless of the language of the documents or the languages in which they have been indexed." This hope is far from reality, and very few online catalogs show this level of sophistication (Cousins and Hartley, 1994).

Some of these problems with online catalogs can alienate LEP users and make their searches more difficult. Online catalogs, however, can be foreign tools to some LEP users, and may not be utilized in the first place. In fact, most LAPL limited English users tend to ignore the online catalog and go straight to shelves for searching (Zhang, 2001). This is not the most efficient way to search the catalog, especially when users want specific titles. Placing foreign language materials in browsing collections restricts efficient access (Quinn, 1993). Since many foreign language titles require original cataloging, however, this can be costly and some libraries may choose not to have them as cataloged records (Quinn, 1993). This reality further complicates the issue of providing access to foreign language materials.

After reviewing the current state of reference service for LEP users, the last section of the paper will focus on possible research studies and future directions in this field. The growing need for better LEP user reference service makes future research and comprehensive service strategies crucial.

Possible research and future directions

In order to improve LEP user reference service, more research is needed in understanding LEP community needs. For example, more studies into the information-seeking behavior of selected groups in a library's service community will be necessary. Questionnaires on LEP users' perceptions of the library, and how they utilize it as an information source, can aid in designing better services.

A research study that collects and creates a database of the most common reference related questions of LEP user groups would be useful. This type of study would require extensive data collection from public libraries serving LEP communities. A goal of this study would be to begin understanding the common types of questions each ethnolinguistic minority group

asks. Although the needs of individual groups would be generalized, at least reference librarians might be able to get a basic understanding of some common LEP user questions. With this information, however, it may be easy to make assumptions about LEP user needs, and it is something to be cautious about.

With the information that more research into LEP user needs can provide, ongoing intercultural sensitivity and communication training for reference librarians in public libraries is essential. As the US population becomes more diverse, libraries have to be sensitive to the cultural needs of their user communities.

Research into some of the more successful library service programs for LEP users can be of use in creating broad guidelines for LEP user services. Systems such as the QBPL in New York and the Santa Ana Public Library in California come to mind. In the case of the Santa Ana Library, research has shown that a bilingual staff, large Spanish collections, and a staff with a high commitment and understanding of the community has done a great job in providing service to a majority population that is predominantly Mexican, highly immigrant, low income, and working class (Luevano-Molina, 2001).

Having reference librarians who can speak the languages of certain LEP user groups is important, but communities with multiple LEP user groups present a challenge. In this case, it is important to emphasize intercultural training and effective non-verbal communication techniques. Ultimately, understanding the needs of the LEP communities and better outreach are key steps in improving LEP user reference service. Libraries need to partner with local ethnic community organizations, which can create more of an information and referral service, as well as providing language support. Working with gatekeepers and recognizing information-seeking behaviors will be useful as well.

Libraries will need to develop a presence in LEP user communities, and create trust by showing that they can provide valuable services to these communities. Bilingual advertisements, LEP community networking, target language library handouts, and multilingual signage are some first steps libraries can take. A user-friendly and multicultural-embracing attitude

of the staff is the final key piece in providing better LEP user service.

The awareness of LEP users' needs is reaching a high level in the library community, especially in California. This trend is an encouraging one, as specific steps are being taken to address the diverse needs of LEP users. The Infopeople program, for instance, has workshops geared specifically to train librarians to better serve latino communities. The "Teaching Spanish speaking patrons how to use the Internet" and "Developing Spanish and latino interest collections using the Web and online sources" workshops are steps in the right direction. Continuing and expanding these types of workshops is necessary, as the needs of LEP users will be an ongoing issue, and not just a passing trend.

As we have discussed, public libraries have the crucial task of serving an increasingly diverse cultural and linguistic US population, and they must adapt soon to this challenge. The very survival of public libraries as relevant places for information provision and community empowerment is at stake.

References

- Alire, C. and Archibeque, O. (1998), *Serving Latino Communities: A How-to-do-it Manual for Librarians*, Neal-Schuman, New York, NY.
- American Library Association (1990), "Guidelines for multilingual materials collection and development and library services", *RQ*, Vol. 30 No. 2, pp. 268-71.
- Asch, S. (1998), "Urban libraries confront linguistic minorities: programs that work", in Constantino, R. (Ed.), *Literacy, Access, and Libraries among the Language Minority Population*, The Scarecrow Press, Lanham, MD and London, pp. 69-88.
- Blenkinsopp, H. (1994), "Communicating across cultures for reference librarians who supervise", *The Reference Librarian*, Nos 45/46, pp. 39-43.
- Chu, C. (1999) "Immigrant child mediators (ICM): bridging the literacy gap in immigrant communities", *The New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*, Vol. 5, pp. 85-94.
- Cousins, S.A. and Hartley, R.J. (1994), "Towards multilingual online public access catalogues", *Libri*, Vol. 44 No. 1, pp. 47-62.
- De la Pena McCook, K. and Immroth, B. (2000), *Library Services to Youth of Hispanic Heritage*, McFarland, Jefferson, NC.
- D'Aniello, C.A. (1989), "Cultural literacy and reference service", *RQ*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 370-80.
- Dickinson, D.C. (1993), "The reviewing of foreign language reference books: a woeful inadequacy", *RQ*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 373-80.
- Gitner, F.J. (1998) "The new Americans program: twenty-one years of successful partnerships serving diverse and changing communities", *Reference and User Services Quarterly*, Vol. 38 No. 2, pp. 143-5.
- Jensen, B. (2002), "Service to day laborers: a job libraries have left undone", *Reference and User Services Quarterly*, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 228-32.
- Lam, R.E. (1988), "The reference interview: some intercultural considerations", *RQ*, Vol. 28 No. 3, pp. 390-95.
- Luevano-Molina, S. (2001), "Mexican/latino immigrants and the Santa Ana Public Library: an urban ethnography", in Luevano-Molina, S. (Ed.), *Immigrant Politics and the Public Library*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT and London, pp. 43-63.
- Metoyer-Duran, C. (1991), "Information-seeking behavior of gatekeepers in ethnolinguistic communities: overview of a taxonomy", *Library and Information Science Research*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 319-46.
- Metoyer-Duran, C. (1993), "The information and referral process in culturally diverse communities", *RQ*, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 359-71.
- Quinn, M.E. (1993), "Hispanic collections in the public library: the Chicago Public Library experience", in Parrish, K. and Katz, B. (Eds), *The Acquisitions Librarian*, Nos 9/10, The Haworth Press, New York, NY, pp. 221-32.
- Simsova, S. (1992), "Multicultural populations: their nature and needs", in Zielinska, M.F. and Kirkwood, F.T. (Eds), *Multicultural Librarianship: An International Handbook*, K.G. Saur, London, pp. 9-41.
- Stoffle, C.J. and Tarin, P.A. (1994), "No place for neutrality: the case for multiculturalism", *Library Journal*, Vol. 119 No. 12, pp. 46-9.
- Swis, S. (2001), "Communicating with limited-English proficiency aprtrons", LIS Jobs.com available at: www.lisjobs.com/newsletter/archives/sept01sswis.htm
- Tjoumas, R. (1995), "Opening doorways to new immigrants: Queens Borough Public Library's coping skills component", *Public Library Quarterly*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 5-16.
- To, T. (1995), "Survey on the needs of and library use by the Chinese language readers in Fairfield, New South Wales: preliminary report", *Public Library Quarterly*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 27-50.
- US Census Bureau (2001a), "Resident population by Hispanic origin status, 1980 to 200, and projections, 2005 to 2050", *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, Table No. 15, Washington, DC.
- US Census Bureau (2001b), "Resident population by Hispanic or latino origin and state: 2000", *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, Table No. 23, Washington, DC.
- Zhang, X. (2001), "The practice and politics of public library services to Asian immigrants", in Luevano-Molina, S. (Ed.), *Immigrant Politics and the Public Library*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, pp. 141-50.