

## **Abstract**

Public libraries are facing a great challenge to succeed in serving their increasingly diverse communities. This thesis focuses on the acquisition of foreign-language books in public libraries and attempts to address the question whether libraries have special strategies to select and acquire foreign-language books. Particular attention is paid to fiction, the main genre offered by public libraries. To help answer the thesis question, the author compares the acquisition strategies of the Municipal Library of Prague and the Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin using structured interviews with the key persons responsible for the acquisition of foreign-language books. As a background, the author provides a literature review of foreign-language materials in public libraries and specifically, the acquisition strategy for those materials (i.e. including case studies, research projects and trends from the Czech Republic, the US, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Denmark and Netherlands). This knowledge foundation is considered in the comparison of the two libraries and their acquisition strategies. The comparative study confirms the trends highlighted in the literature review, such as outsourcing, approval plans and gifts as common ways of acquiring foreign-language literature. This thesis further contributes by starting the discussion of how the acquisition strategy of foreign-language materials differs from the traditional acquisition process and how libraries might learn from best practices to improve their foreign-language acquisition processes, using key initiatives such as identifying the targeted community and user needs, strategic hiring of library staff, outsourcing where key competences are lacking, and having a dedicated budget administered independently.