Multilingual access to moving image collections

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Abstract

The Association of Moving Image Archivists and the Library of Congress have established MIC; a collaborative website to catalogue the World's movies. The interface to this valuable resource is currently available only in English.

This paper describes an IFLA-funded project to help localize MIC, for non-English language users. We are developing a toolkit to show members of other language groups how to research local collections and build non-English versions of the site. We will to test this toolkit by constructing versions of the site in three languages: French, Spanish, and Arabic, and providing MIC with html files ready to install.

This paper includes material derived from the MIC website at:
http://mic.imtc.gatech.edu/

About Moving Image Collections (MIC)

Moving Image Collections (MIC) is an integrated online catalog of moving images held by a variety of organizations, including libraries, museums, archives and television broadcasting companies. The **mission** of MIC is to immerse moving images in the education mainstream, recognizing that what society uses, it values, and what it values, it preserves.

MIC has the **goal** of providing a window to the world's moving images for educators, researchers, exhibitors, and the general public that also allows archivists to collaborate in describing and maintaining these unique resources and thus avoid costly duplication of effort and further loss of our cultural heritage.

Moving images are unique in the use of multiple information streams (audio, visual and textual) to provide a compelling and immersive educational experience. Yet moving images have remained isolated from the mainstream of information resources, rarely cited in research papers, for example, or consulted as primary reference materials. Therefore another important goal of MIC is to integrate moving images into the information mainstream by creating a flexible yet standardized metadata architecture for these diverse resources

The history of MIC began in 1994 with the publication by the Library of Congress, of a National Film Preservation Plan[1]. In 1997, following publication of its Television and Video Preservation Plan[2], LC invited the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) to partner with the Library to develop strategies for implementing the numerous recommendations that were included in these two documents.

AMIA commissioned Grace Agnew to identify requirements and to seek funding to develop the infrastructure and technologies for MIC, and a National Science Foundation grant of just under $1,000,000 was awarded in September 2002. In that year, LC agreed to host MIC and to collaborate with AMIA to develop it further into the future.

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[1] Redefining film preservation: a national plan; recommendations of the Librarian of Congress in consultation with the National Film Preservation Board. ISBN 0-8444-0819-0 http://www.loc.gov/film/plan.html

[2] Television and video preservation 1997: A report on the current state of American   television and video preservation: report of the Librarian of Congress. ISBN 0-8444-0946-4 http://www.loc.gov/film/tvstudy.html

The components of MIC

- Union catalog of moving images, including films, videos, and digital streaming video.
- Searchable directory of organizations with moving image collections.
- Search displays combing information about services and access to collections with title and collection information.
- Portals for archivists, educators and other communities.
- Resources about moving images and moving image preservation for archivists', educators, and the general public.

What MIC does

- MIC documents moving image collections around the world through a catalog of titles and directories, providing a window to the world's moving image collections for discovery, access and preservation.
- MIC provides a technology base and informational resources to support research, collaboration, preservation, and education for archivists, exhibitors, educators, and the general public.
- MIC is a portal for integrating moving images into the 21st century education.
- MIC is a key access program of the Library of Congress' National Audio Visual Conservation Center.
- MIC's two databases can be searched from anywhere on the site.
- MIC portals provide searches, displays, and informational resources that are customized for specific audiences.
- MIC integrates information about individual moving images with information about the organizations that own them.
- MIC lets you discover, locate and even sometimes view moving images from around the world.

The need for Localization
While the strap-line of MIC is "A Window to the World's Moving Images", the reality has not yet lived up to the rhetoric. The Archive Directory only has partial entries for just 16 countries outside North America, and the 11 current contributors to the MIC Union Catalog are all from within the USA.

The MIC Education and Outreach Committee has made it very clear that they would welcome contributions from the records of organizations or individuals throughout the world. It is the belief of IFLA's Audiovisual & Multimedia Section (AVMS), that one inhibitor to world wide contribution, is likely to be the monolingual character of the project to date.

The AVMS Project
The interface to MIC is available only in English. Supported by an IFLA project grant agreed on 14 March, an AVMS project is studying how the MIC site might be localized for users in communities that speak languages other than English in order not only to collect moving image from all over the world in different languages, but also to be used and searchable by non English speakers or readers.

Building on work the AVMS has already done in studying the needs of other language communities, we have started developing a toolkit that can be installed on the MIC site to show members of other language groups how to research local collections and build versions of the site for their language group.

We intend to test this toolkit by constructing versions of the site in three languages: Arabic, Spanish and French, and providing MIC with html files ready to install.

Before the Seoul Congress, the Project team (the Author from Egypt, plus partners from Uruguay and Canada) have been working together to develop the project methodology and timescales and the structure of the toolkit. We will then hire student assistants to accomplish the construction of the three pilot websites to validate the kit itself.

Total Project Budget is about €9.500 which should cover: employment costs of the students in Montreal, Montevideo and Alexandria; Administrative costs (telephone, postage, duplication) and travel and subsistence for a project team meeting.
The project is classified for Promoting information literacy, through capacity building particularly for information professionals.

The results of the project will be disseminated via a toolkit to be mounted on MIC website and IFLANet, and publicized by a paper in the AVMS session at IFLA and by circulation to the AVMS and CCAAA email discussion lists.

Specific Objectives:
- To advise the management of the MIC project on the information needs of communities that speak languages other than English;
- To make versions of the site in three of the world's important languages: French, Spanish, and Arabic;
- To identify moving image resources in these languages;
- To provide information on these resources for inclusion in the MIC site;
- To build a kit that can be installed on the MIC site to show members of other language groups how to research local collections and build versions of the site for their language group.

The Project Team:
Work on the MIC project has been carried out since the IFLA conference in Berlin 2003 by:
- James M Turner: (Project Leader) École de bibliothéconomie et des sciences de l'information, Université de Montréal (Montréal, Canada)
- Samira Sambaíno, Escuela Universitaria de Bibliotecología y Ciencias Afines (Montevideo, Uruguay)
- Marwa El Sahn, Alexandria Library (Alexandria, Egypt)

And they prepared the project proposal which was selected by IFLA to be funded in 2006. The duration of project is planned for one year starting from spring 2006 with a strategic plan that should be achieve during this period.

The members of the Project Team will make contributions from their own countries (Canada, Uruguay and Egypt) in their official, non-English language. And it is expected that this will encourage other countries who speak French, Spanish and Arabic to contribute through this portal with their collection from all over the world.

The project team plans to search for and collect information about organizations and individuals who own moving images collections and may be ready to cooperate within the MIC project. Members will be responsible for selecting students in their countries and training them in using the MIC professional toolkit and monitoring their work procedures. Members will be also responsible for help and support to students for documentation and collection of information about moving images collections.

Project Activities:
- Planning and evaluation meetings to organize the work of the project
- Hiring and supervising student assistants in the work of identifying moving image resources in the languages studied
- Overseeing the work of preparing the resources identified for inclusion in the MIC site
- Modifying the existing MIC site html files to make versions of these pages in the languages studied
- Building a kit that can be placed online at the MIC site, as a resource for users who wish to build versions of the site in other languages.

Intended Results:
- Availability of the information on the MIC site to a much broader user community worldwide.
- Consultation of the site by users who speak languages other than English.
- Validation of the usefulness of localized Web sites.
- Provision of self-help resource members of other language communities can use to provide their populations with a localized version of the MIC resources.
- Greater awareness in Anglophone audiences, of the richness of the moving image heritage in languages other than English.

Expected Problems:
- Languages and especially Arabic script. This includes the translation of titles and subtitles of moving images into different languages for search inquiries.
- Technical problems such as networking and loading of moving images from development countries or countries where their communication infrastructure is still poor.
- Negotiating copyright in different countries with different concepts and awareness of such issues.
- Convincing organizations and especially individuals that it will be worth their while to donate and preserve their country's heritage for free.
- Availability of the equipment and computers necessary to play moving images in developing countries.
- Availability of well equipped and advanced digital labs for digitizing and conversion of the moving images collections.
- Availability and reliability of existing documentation of moving images collections.

Success and performance indicators:
- Increased use of the MIC resource by groups that speak languages other than English.
- Successful installation versions of the MIC site in three other languages.
- Identification of local resources perhaps not widely known previously.
- Increased knowledge and experience for student assistants.
- Increased awareness of the necessity for localizing international resources.

Monitoring and evaluation:
- The project is being overseen by the Audiovisual and Multimedia Section (AVMS) of IFLA to encourage international, multilingual take up.
- Local representatives in Montréal, Montevideo and Alexandria will supervise students work.
- Senior members of the AVMS will act in an advisory capacity.
- Working meetings between the IFLA conferences will assure that problems are identified and addressed.
- Dissemination of results of the project will ensure the new knowledge gained is shared with the community.
- User feedback will help identify additional work that needs to be done.

Members of the Project Team have to:
a. Start with their own organization's moving images collection.
b. Search and investigate about other collection of individuals and organizations within their countries.
c. Negotiate the copyright issues with the donor or the producer of the moving image collection.
d. Select Library Science graduate students for collecting information and data entry.
e. Monitor and support students and review work procedures.
f. Liaise with other members of the project and update the team with latest results.
g. Give advice and suggest new solutions and recommendations.
h. Promote the usage of this free web solution in educational and cultural organizations.

In conclusion:
The purpose of the presentation at Seoul is to update delegates on the progress of our project, and hopefully to enthuse them about the potential importance of this initiative, which explicitly supports the IFLA Professional Priorities of:

- Supporting the role of libraries in society;
- Defending the principle of freedom of information;

- Providing unrestricted access to information;
- Promoting resource sharing
- Preserving our intellectual heritage, and
- Promoting standards, guidelines and best practice.