Survey on Genre/Form Practices in National Libraries
IFLA Genre/Form Working group

- Formed in January 2014
- Members from Cataloguing Section & Subject Analysis and Access Section
- Conducted a survey on genre/form practices in national libraries
Survey:

- Open from February 1<sup>st</sup> – April 17<sup>th</sup> 2017
Main questions:

- Are libraries using one or more controlled vocabularies to express genre/form?
- What are the chief characteristics of the genre/form vocabulary?
- Are genre/form terms expressed through some other means?
- What are the main benefits and hurdles to using genre/form terms?
Survey structure:

- Section 1 – General questions
- Section 2 – Libraries using genre/form in their cataloging
- Section 3 – Libraries using one single genre/form vocabulary
- Section 4 – Libraries using multiple genre/form vocabularies
• Section 5 – Libraries planning to develop one or more genre/form vocabularies
• Section 6 – Use of broad subject vocabulary with genre/form instead, or in addition to, genre/form vocabularies
• Section 7 – Use of controlled vocabulary or other means to express genre/form concepts instead of, or in addition to, genre/form vocabularies
Section 8 – Benefits and hurdles of using genre/form terms
Section 1 – general questions
(key question – 5: Does your library currently use genre/form terms in its cataloging, or is it planning to use them in the future?)

Section 2 (already using)       Section 5 (planning to develop)

Section 3 (one)       Section 4 (multiple)

Section 6 (other vocabularies)
Section 7 (other means of expressing genre/form)
Section 8 (benefits & hurdles)
Question types:

- Multiple choice questions (accompanied by several possible answers)
- Free text questions (for explanations, reflections, contemplations, meditations)

Scope of the Survey

National libraries (forefront of genre/form developments)

But, with some exceptions with libraries acting as national in some domains
Languages of the Survey

- English & Arabic

Number of Responses

77

(66 in English + 11 in Arabic)
Respondents:

Austria, Bangladesh, Bermuda, Argentina, Republica Dominicana, Angola, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Paraguay, Peru, Italy, Spain, Canada, Cote d’Ivoire, France, Luxembourg, Russia, UK, Brazil, Denmark, Germany, Dubai, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, USA, Lithuania, Myanmar, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Japan, Belize, Singapore, Albania, Australia, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Montenegro, New Zelenad, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Sudan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Viet Nam, Chech Republic, Croatia, Iceland, Slovenia, Mongolia, Qatar, Belgium, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Switzerland, China, Finland, Sweden, South Africa.
SURVEY ANALYSIS
Jointly analyzing parallel (similar) questions in all tracks to draw general and comparative conclusions.
Other Libraries Using/Developing G/F Vocabularies?

- Yes, no further details: 17%
- Main library and network of academic libraries: 4%
- Network of University or Public libraries: 3%
- State/Main Public Library: 3%
- A named national/main library: 9%
- Don’t know / Not sure: 10%
- Most of the libraries: 6%
- No special G/F vocabulary, but use of MARC $v: 2%
- Not currently being developed: 1%
- No: 45%
Using or Planning to Develop G/F

25% Not being used, and not under development

10% Under development

65% Currently being used

75%

Branching question!

Track 1A

Using Single

Track 1B

Using Multiple

Track 2
When Copy Cataloging

- Yes, we accept them when copy cataloguing: 50%
- No, we erase them when copy cataloguing: 10%
- We accept them, but modified: 30%
- We don't do copy cataloguing: 10%
Single Vs. Multiple Vocab.

Using

Developing

44% Multiple genre-form vocabulary

56% Single genre-form vocabulary

29% Multiple genre/form vocabularies

71% Single genre form vocabulary
## In-House Vs. Elsewhere Development

### Only One Vocab.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developed its own</td>
<td>72.0%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed elsewhere (e.g., TGM, Art &amp; Architecture Thesaurus)</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mix of both</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals: 25**

### Multiple Vocab.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All home-developed</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All developed elsewhere e.g., Art &amp; Architecture Thesaurus</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A mix of both</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals: 21**
Content Vocab. Coverage*

Libraries Using a Single Vocab.

- 96% (25-26) include both genre and form terms.
- Only one library (National Library of Bulgaria) stated that its G/F vocabulary only included form terms.

Libraries Developing Vocab.

- 8-9 responses stated that would include both genre and form terms.
- Only one library (National Library of Sudan), only genre terms.

* This question was not asked for libraries using more than one genre/form vocabulary.
Subject Coverage

Single Vocab.

Multiple Vocab.
Plans to Add More Subjects?

- **Single**
  - 71% No
  - 29% Yes

- **Multiple**
  - 57% No
  - 43% Yes

- **Developing**
  - 88% All or most subjects
  - 13% Only certain subjects
Types of Materials Covered

- Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of libraries using one G/F vocabulary cover as many types of materials as possible (80%).

- In libraries using multiple G/F vocabularies, this percentage is higher (90%).

- In cases where the G/F vocabulary or vocabularies are used for specific types of materials, books and audiovisual resources have the highest percentages (over 80%), and comics the lowest (about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the time).

- Libraries at the stage of developing vocabularies are generally planning to include all kinds of resources (7-8 libraries).
Audience/Creator Characteristics

Using One Vocab.

- 42% Yes. Genre/form vocabulary expresses audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics
- 19% No. Audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics are expressed through a separate vocabulary (e.g., Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms)
- 39% No. Genre/form vocabulary does not express audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics and they are not expressed through any other vocabulary
- 60+% (Approximately)

Using Multiple Vocab.

- 80% Some of them express audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics
- 5% None of them express audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics, and these characteristics are not expressed through any other vocabularies
- 5% No. Audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics are expressed through one or more other vocabularies
- 10% Yes, all of them express audience and/or creator/contributor characteristics
- 95% (Approximately)
Frequency & Manner of Updating Vocabulary – Using Single

- Libraries using a single G/F vocabulary are updating more frequently than the ones using multiple vocabularies.
- 5-19 respondents claim they update vocabularies continuously, even daily.
Frequency & Manner of Updating Vocabulary – Using Multiple

- Most libraries using multiple G/F vocabularies answered that vocabularies are updated irregularly, on an infrequent basis, (in one case not at all)
- 2-20, depends upon the vocabulary, 3 responded: frequently and daily
- No specific answer on manner of updating
Frequency & Manner of Updating Vocabulary – Planning to Develop

- More specific about the answers on manner of updating.
  - 1 answer will be updated automatically (through the system).
- Not precise about the frequency of updating
  - Most of the answers were that it will depend on their needs.
One or Multiple Languages

Using Single
- 39% In multiple languages
- 62% Only in one language

Using Multiple
- 10% Separate monolingual vocabularies all in different languages (e.g., 1 in French, 1 in Spanish)
- 5% Separate multilingual vocabularies (e.g., 1 in English & French, 1 in Arabic and Hebrew)

Developing
- 75% In multiple languages
- 25% In one language only
- 86% Separate monolingual vocabularies all in the same
Use of Geographical Aspects

Single
- 35% No
- 58% Yes
- 8% Only under a limited number of terms

Multiple
- 14% No
- 29% Yes
- 14% Only under a limited number of terms
- 5% Some do, but only under a limited number of terms
- 19% All of the controlled vocabularies do
- 10% All do, but only under a limited number of terms

Developing
Expressing Geographical Aspects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using Single</td>
<td>Subdivisions (e.g., Science fiction--Sweden)</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phrase headings (e.g., Swedish science fiction)</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual facets</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Multiple</td>
<td>Some or all use subdivisions (e.g., Science fiction--Sweden)</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some or all use phrase headings (e.g., Swedish science fiction)</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual facets</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Phrase headings (e.g., Swedish science fiction)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual facets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undecided yet</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No Subdivisions
Use of Chronological Aspects

**Single**
- 44% No
- 52% Yes
- 4% Only under a limited numbers of terms

**Multiple**
- 29% Yes
- 48% Some do
- 19% All of the controlled vocabularies do
- 33% None do

**Developing**
- 29% Yes
- 29% Undecided yet
- 14% Only under a limited number of terms
- 29% No
Expressing Chronological Aspects

Using Single

- 47% Individual facets
- 53% Subdivisions (e.g., Science fiction—Nineteenth century)

Using Multiple

Check all that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some or all use subdivisions</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., Science fiction—Nineteenth century)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some or all use phrase headings</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g., Nineteenth century science fiction)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual facets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developing

- 29% Subdivisions (e.g., Science fiction—Nineteenth century)
- 14% Phrase headings (e.g., Nineteenth century science fiction)
- 14% Individual facets
- 43% Undecided yet
Expressing Chronological Aspects

• Taking all libraries as a whole, **subdivisions** are the most common way to express them (over 50%, 20-31), while a little over ⅓ of the libraries use or plan to use individual **facets** (14-31).

• **Phrase heading** is the **least** used (3-17 in Track 1B, 1-7 in Track 2 use or plan to use phrase headings, 0 in Track 1A)

• **Similar to the geographic aspects**, individual chronological **facets** have a **lower** response in Track 1B than Track 1A (3-17 libraries vs. 8-17 libraries).
Indexing of G/F Terms

**Single Vocab.**

- A separate genre/form index: 40%
- Part of a subject index: 70%
- Part of a general keyword index: 10%

**Multiple Vocab.**

- Multiple genre/form indexes: 30%
- A separate genre/form index: 20%
- Part of a general keyword index: 40%
- Part of a subject index: 30%
Availability of G/F Terms as Linked Data

A little **over 1/2** of all respondents of any track responded that they are publishing/planning to, some or all of their G/F vocabs as linked data **(53% or 28-53)**.
Retrospectively Adding G/F to Legacy Data

- The majority of respondents who already are using genre/form vocabularies are not considering at this moment to retrospectively add G/F terms to legacy data (18-26 libraries in Track 1A and 11-21 libraries in Track 1B; total: 29-47, or 59%)
- Libraries developing vocabularies, the percentage of those not planning retrospective addition of the terms is slightly lower (37.5% or 3-8), with 1 library undecided
- Taking all libraries as a whole that are adding G/F terms to legacy data or planning to do so, one half will employ a combination of automated and manual means (11-22). The other libraries are about evenly split between just using manual or just using automated means.
Questions Asked Only in Track 1B

Reasons for Using Multiple G/F Vocabularies

- No one thesaurus is rich enough to cover all kinds of resources in every subject area (about \(\frac{2}{3}\) of responses)
- The library creates cataloging records in several languages.

Which Multiple Vocabularies Do They Use

- LCGFT is listed in 10-18 responses
- AAT (Art & Architecture Thesaurus), 5 responses
- TGM (Thesaurus for Graphic Materials), 4 responses
Other Means of Expressing G/F

Using G/F concepts through a broad subject vocabulary instead of/in addition to G/F dedicated vocab.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals: 70

Using genre/form subdivisions applied to subject headings (as in MARC21 6xx $v)

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Totals: 70
Other Means of Expressing G/F

- Coded values: 50%
- "Form of work" element: 40%
- General material designations (GMDs): 50%
- Content, media or carrier: 40%
- Broad subject vocabulary with genre/form in it: 70%
- Other - Write In: 10%
Benefits & Hurdles:

Benefits:

- For users: enhanced searching possibilities, more specific and direct access, provision of additional access points, ability to filter searches by a specific genre or form, better and more direct access to materials...

- For librarians: control and standardization, improvement and simplification of cataloging and classification...
Hurdles:

- For Librarians: not enough trained specialists, not enough money, not enough time, indexing and faceting are difficult to build, needs continuous development and a lot of resources...
Conclusion:

- Majority of libraries are using or planning to use genre/form vocabularies
- There are more similarities than differences between libraries using vocabularies
- Libraries developing vocabularies tend to create more comprehensive, flexible and extensible tool than the existing ones
- The future of genre form vocabularies: will their use be increased or enhanced, will they be printed or digital, is there a preference for using one vocabulary whenever possible...
Thank you for your attention!

Rehab Ouf
Ana Stevanović