The Landscape of Contemporary Canadian Subject Access

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Presentation Outline

- Project overview - Julia
- Approach and findings - Amber
- Discussion & next steps - Both
Project Overview

- Groundwork for a longer investigation into national knowledge infrastructures (more on that later)
- Literature review = complete
- Up next:
  - Ongoing empirical work on author’s impressions of these systems
  - Opportunities for collaborative work on individual and interrelated systems
Scope of the Lit Review

- Broad definition of Subject Access
- Limited timeframe, to focus on current & ongoing projects
- Focus on Canada (with some exceptions)
Results

44 total projects

- Standalone
- Adaptation/Derivative
French only systems:

- RVM (Le Répertoire de Vedettes-Matière)
- RASUQAM (Répertoire des Autorités-Sujet de l’UQAM)
- RAMEAU (Répertoire d’autorité-matière encyclopédique et alphabétique unifié)
- ONF (Le thésaurus de l’Office National du Film du Canada)
- Le système de classification des jeux ESAR
Bi- & Multilingual projects

- English only: 58%
- French only: 11%
- Multilingual: 18%
- Bi- or multilingual: 13%
Indigenous Knowledge Organization

- Out of the 17 IKO systems, the most robust/well-documented include:
  - Digital Library North (DLN)
  - Brian Deer Classification System (and derivatives/adaptations particularly Xwi7xwa + FNHL SH and UBCIC)
  - MAIN
  - Inuit language cataloguing standards
Starting to explore the patterns beyond the numbers (and their consequences)

- How many come specifically from LC/LCSH
- How many were Canadian and are re-forming
- Not all adaptations/derivatives come from US systems
- Size/usage/complexity/impact
LC/LCSH adaptations/derivatives
Systems being re-absorbed
Discussion

- Tons of influence from the US
- Canadian supplements with limited shelf lives
- Standalone Canadian born systems either have limited scope and/or aren’t widely used
- Of the active sites of original growth and research, many emphasize Indigenous knowledge organization
- Gaps in the scholarship
Conclusion & Next Steps

- Findings suggest next approaches for analysis
- How are these systems into other national and cultural initiatives?
- Which systems do not meet needs for Canadian and Indigenous scholarship?
- Who else is working on Canada-US infrastructure?
- Starting points for more detailed analysis of individual systems and their histories
references:


- Bone, C. (2016). Modifications to the Library of Congress Subject Headings for use by Manitoba archives (pp. 1–8). Presented at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress, Columbus, Ohio. https://doi.org/10.5203/ss_ama.main_bon.chr.2015.1


Thank you!

Questions?