

Facets, views and frames: enhancing connectedness in information organization.

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Library and information science (LIS) has long been concerned with providing optimal access to cultural heritage resources, yet serious obstacles to this goal remain. This presentation will discuss ongoing work to address the difficulties in creating effective access for two types of cultural heritage materials – films and folktales. This discussion will center upon the role that facets can play in enhancing access to these kinds of complex materials through evaluating the lessons learned from two projects: *Films and Facets* (La Barre and Cordeiro, 2012) and *Folktales and Facets* (La Barre and Tilley, 2012). Both projects used facet analysis as the centerpiece for user-focused and task-focused approaches which sought to better understand the needs of librarians, scholars and storytellers working with folktales (*Folktales and Facets*) and casual film enthusiasts (*Films and Facets*).

Chief among the lessons that will be discussed is the abiding positive valence of frames of reference, viewpoints and context as guideposts during searching for both groups of users in these projects. Here, frames and views or viewpoints represent those ideas or assumptions that determine how a resource might be approached, perceived or understood. Frames, a familiar concept to LIS, are structures that divide knowledge into ‘stereotyped situations’ and can be connected together to form a complete idea (Minsky, 1977). Today we most often think of frames in the context of structure-based knowledge representations. The concept of framing is integral to the way in which the user groups in *Folktales and Facets* interacted with cultural heritage materials, and the source of greatest disconnect in search systems which did not provide these users with the means to search according to context or viewpoint. Provision of a variety of views of films, including descriptions that included subject access and pointed to related items, were highly desired among the casual film enthusiast group in *Films and Facets*

Reaching toward the provision of optimal access to information resources, several researchers including Maria López-Huertas and Hope Olson have placed feminist theory at the center of their research as positive step towards the creation of access and discovery structures which are deeply situated in a context of social and cultural differences. These two projects continue in this vein and build upon Olson’s

(2007) observations of the four ‘traces of connectedness’ in existing systems of information access and discovery. These traces consist of associative relationships in thesauri and subject headings, the existence of facets and synthetic devices in subject access systems, the entity relationship model of FRBR and collaborative tagging practices. These four areas are identified as especially fruitful approaches that may well enhance access to information resources. Pointing towards the need for increasing the connectedness of subject access is part of the long trajectory of Olson’s work which builds upon Maron’s (1977) three types of aboutness: S-about (subjective), O-about (objective) and R-about (retrieval), though Robert Fairthorne (1969) is credited with the first use of that term.

Themes of aboutness and the need for connectedness are deeply embedded in the results from the folktale project in the form of the *viewpoint facet* which relates to the worldview, ethnic origins, ethical concerns or possible methodological approaches to a given item. *Viewpoint* encompasses whether or not a teller can recount a tale from a different culture without express permission. Awareness of viewpoint can extend to the circumstances of the time of year during which a tale can be told, and to whom. Themes of connectedness are also a critical part of the results of the films project which found a need for an *associations facet* which could support searching for awards, derivations. *Mise en scène* with correlate search extensions such as setting, time and theme are also highly desirable features of online search systems for digital films. Olson’s observations about the prospects for using switching languages, metathesauri and other approaches that help better situate and map such syntagmatic relationships are a key part of the future directions for both research projects to be discussed.

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