

Lambertson, Jesse A. May 2012

Title: "Classifying Away Diversity: Questioning Indexing Structures of Local Populations"

*Thank you Leigh Estabrook and Kathryn LaBarre.*<sup>1</sup>

I want to introduce by stating that this paper is an examination (with a critique built in) and is built upon a structure that allows for associations.<sup>2</sup> In taking this approach, the idea is to write ideas and take them apart but leave room for the reader. In fact, because of the nature of this paper, one that takes to task the disparity and dichotomy of monolithic classification/indexing Vs. subjective order, it seems perfectly appropriate to build a paper that encourages the reader. I hope this goal is accomplished. I am establishing a view of a bridge (that, in a way, does not exist) between the freedom to be who one is (populations and their knowledge indexed) and the tendency to impose systems and constructs upon those same populations. It is not clear, to me at least, that we can accomplish both of these goals – they conflict. Yet, I am not saying there is anything wrong per se with writing and organizing what we “know” about life. This may be an unavoidable drive for humanity. There are a lot of different “categories” in the world. There may even be a category of the world under which is a world without possibility of categorization. This paper cannot explore this notion perfectly, but hopefully it will evoke or suggest a slide that allows us to slip into that category somehow. For it is not clear the world even wants us to tell it what it is “about.” Except this same world has humans which do seem to want to tell it what it is about because humans seem to have certain understanding (knowledge) systems in use. It is the same with people declaring “aboutness” of other people. I still have to keep in mind that my action of writing, of drawing attention to declarations of “aboutness,” suffers from a similar paradox. So, at risk of sounding arty or abstract, I state that this article is to be read and then it should somehow slip away into that uncategorized, ungoverned area. Thank you for reading.

I am not writing on Library of Congress Subject Headings only, but they are brought up several times throughout the paper. The Library of Congress

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<sup>1</sup> Lambertson, Jesse A. "The Postulate of Indigenous-ness: A Report to the Academy on Conundrums of Global Totalization and Classification." 2012 February. <http://hdl.handle.net/2142/29953> (accessed 05 April 2012). This paper referenced is the original document I have been improving and unfolding. It's a work-in-progress. I want to Thank Leigh Estabrook for her guidance on the first part and for the encouragement to continue with my ideas.

<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested to me that I completely change the formatting of this document for future editions. So I leave this in IDEALS in its current status as an in-progress project.

Subject Headings (LCSH) is one of the most popular subject access strategies in the world. It covers a lot of nuance. Yet LCSH was not designed to become an international tool. It has just turned out that way. Their Mission Statement is, "...to make its resources available and useful to the Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations."<sup>3</sup> Though this Mission Statement is internationalist in tone, the user-base is Congress and the US population. Library of Congress does, however, seem to want to bring a great deal of the world under its domain for the US to see and study. The result of LCSH's popularity is that a United States-based construct has become international in tone, standardization and adoption. It has some problems as all such schema will. But some of these troubles are multiplied as we consider its international adoption and conformity. In particular, its adoption by countries with populations often categorized as "indigenous." It is not just that this categorization is adopted (internalized), but that it reflects a certain imperial bias as well as some other problems - specifically the problem of dehumanization by application of certain terms. This paper is about language (control and diversity), its use and what it implies of assumptions "about" the world. In so exploring this language issue, this paper is organized around explorations of power, factors that have contributed to the death of language diversity (such as the rise of the nation-state and other political machinations), ethnology and its connections to previous critiques of LCSH and concludes with an abstract analysis of categorization meaning and potential.

The Library of Congress defines "Indigenous" this way: "Here are entered works on the aboriginal inhabitants either of colonial areas or of modern states where the aboriginal peoples are not in control of the government. General works on the ethnological composition of specific places are entered under [Ethnology] with local subdivision. Works on a specific indigenous people or group of peoples are entered under the ethnic group."<sup>4</sup> There are several ways to take this definition, but for our purposes here, let's take the way open to us by the notion that these populations are not in control of their government. And since we are looking at this definition from the point of view of LCSH, a standards-maker in subject access and knowledge management, and since classification terms are terms, I will connect this to an ongoing trend of language diversity erosion, politics and power. Another, not unrelated, feature in this Library of Congress definition is the overlap with ethnology and "ethnologies." I will not be able to tackle "ethnology" in this paper. But it is not clear that power (governance) and ethnology are separate schemas. For this

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<sup>3</sup> Library of Congress Mission Statement. <<http://www.loc.gov/ndl/mission.html>> (accessed 05 April 2012).

<sup>4</sup> "Indigenous peoples" as defined by LCSH. <<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/subjects/sh85090174.html>> (accessed 31 Oct 2011).

paper proposes to bring together loss of language diversity, those who are not in control of their government and classification terms.

Loss of Language diversity is not inherently evil, but it is troubling. One of the reasons for this upset is the set of situations in which so much language has been lost. I am not here to decry changes to language as that seems a perfectly normal thing – for people to adapt to ever-changing factions and contexts. My purpose is to begin exploration of political machinations and policies (some brutal and some imperial) that have tried to make standards in language and have created a fracture between those in power and those not in power. One of the tensions in this critique is that those who are in charge of their government may not actually be classified as “indigenous.” But I think that as we look at this point from the point of view of decisions of politics and economics (and later information “access”), we will see the eerie truth of Library of Congress’s definition mentioned above. There are so many examples from all over the globe of political machinations designed to standardize and “turn off” “others” within a political border or nation-state.

One of these examples is from the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) - Vladimir Belikov writes about the early Communist (USSR) policy of encouraging different nationalities to blossom within its borders (groups such as the Swedish of the Poltava district of Ukraine, Gypsies and some Estonian and Latvian immigrants in Siberia. Then the Communist party realized that varied languages and ethnicities slowed the growth of Communism. Belikov also tells the story of a fisherman recounting past moments in a hybrid of Russian and his native *Komi* (Finno-Ugric people) in which the formerly “pure” *Komi* speaker had become bilingual and had forgotten how to speak “pure” *Komi*. Belikov claims this story represents a normal curve in linguistic/aculturation. He adds that early Soviet textbooks were written (multi-lingually) on the same topics (Lenin and the goodness of Communism). But as the 1920s wore on and the 30s began, all language began to be pressed into Russian. He then provides the example of the *Udihe* language and that its folklore was declared illegal in 1938. This deliberate trend was continued for decades. For example, by 1957, the Party declared annihilation of many languages of the North by deliberately closing schools and shops in small northern towns, places where older languages would be spoken still.<sup>5</sup> Iryna Ulasiuk adds to this context her own data which dovetails with Belikov’s.<sup>6</sup> She writes that in the 1920s, Lenin believed in language parity and wrote policy in different languages. But then Stalin took over and believed in stronger state/linguistic hierarchical measures. These changing contexts

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<sup>5</sup> Belikov, Vladimir. 1994. "Language death in Siberia." UNESCO Courier 47, no. 2: 32. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (accessed September 26, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Ulasiuk, Iryna. 2011. "Legal protection of linguistic diversity in Russia: past and present." Journal Of Multilingual & Multicultural Development 32, no. 1: 71-83. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (accessed April 7, 2012).

brought about a circumstance in which Russian would come to dominate the USSR.<sup>7</sup> Karelian, Buryat, Kalmyk, Kabardian and Balkan languages were eventually dropped from Soviet policy and consideration.<sup>8</sup> It was not that there was an official policy against languages, but the rise of the state militated against those languages.<sup>9</sup> Russia, even after the USSR's "fall" wrote in 1993 that it allowed all local languages to be used but that the state language would be Russian.<sup>10</sup> Russia has made all public use of language to be in Russian but there have been troubles understanding other meanings with regards to communication with the authorities by locals who are multi-lingual.<sup>11</sup>

The values in this example are myriad. First of all, it is clear that language itself, as "pure," is questionable because even though people realized their use of *Komi* (as one of the examples from the history mentioned above) was altered from the early days of Soviet rules to its end, it is not clear the language disappeared. And given that framework, we are not able to see within this context how that language might have already lost its "purity" already – before Soviet policy imposed itself. But we do recognize that stories told by the "other," non-Russian, were quashed and that folk life probably was destroyed as well. It is not as if *Komi* is inherently a better language than Russian. But it is clear that something from that people was eradicated with its linguistic erosion because peoples' lives, mental habits and minds were altered with the imposition of these policies. For one of the elements we have to take into consideration is that as language forms are killed, ceased, allowed to dry up etc., knowledge itself is altered. There are many points of view in this topic as the debate about deep structures (Universal Grammar Vis-à-vis Noam Chomsky) and surface language use. Many argue that language itself exists squarely at the center of knowledge (and knowledge systems) - even many writing from areas formerly colonized by European nations where an imposed language (English) has already made a serious alteration in the social dynamic of the land (for example, Nigeria).<sup>12</sup>

There is severe debate between the camps for Universal Grammar and those against. To follow the logic of Universal Grammar, Noam Chomsky's

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 72-73.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>12</sup> Adésinà, Jìmí O. 2002. "Sociology and Yorùbá Studies: epistemic intervention or doing sociology in the 'vernacular'?" African Sociological Review, Vol. 6, No. 1, 91-114. Via African Journals Online <<http://www.ajol.info/index.php/asr/article/viewFile/23204/19892>> (accessed 06 Oct 2011).

writings would be a core reading on the topic. But the idea basically is that even though there are numerous surface differences between languages, there is still something inherently *the same* about them – sort of “behind” what is actually what is used. There are some philosophical assumptions built within this premise as there are others (some at odds) in the camp that has rejected Universal Grammar. Nicholas Evans and Stephen C. Levinson have written a strong argument against Universal Grammar.<sup>13</sup> They take the point of view that Chomsky’s Universal Grammar is not true and that there really are a myriad of grammars in the world. The implication is that grammars also reflect knowledge systems.<sup>14</sup> They reference Ethnologue (an international group that catalogues and lists information about the world’s languages),<sup>15</sup> which suggests that 82% of the world’s languages (6,912) are spoken by populations less than 10,000 and states there are at least 100 languages that have no observable connection to other known languages. There may have been as many as twice the number of current languages 500 years ago, before colonization.<sup>16</sup> Evans and Levinson generalize by saying that what was formerly analyzed as universal is now being considered as a strong tendency.<sup>17</sup> And in support of their stance against Universal Grammar, they provide evidence.

For instance, some Australian languages have such developed kin-ship ties that “pronouns” are unknowable outside understanding precisely the nature of relationships involved.<sup>18</sup> To take this further, Evans and Levinson have also found there are 121 sign languages and that some of these are consistent and used to communicate to populations of hereditary-deaf people by non-deaf people (which I bring up to show the real variations at play in this linguistic debate).<sup>19</sup> The most powerful result of this position is that there are several obvious points that suggest any attempt to classify will inevitably lead to the creation of a different language system, one that is neither the original nor the language used to classify. For instance, if kin-ship ties of the Australian language are un-knowable through the language and only knowable

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<sup>13</sup> Evans, Nicholas, and Stephen C. Levinson. 2009. "The myth of language universals: Language diversity and its importance for cognitive science." *Behavioral & Brain Sciences* 32, no. 5: 429-448. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (accessed March 17, 2012).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 430.

<sup>15</sup> Ethnologue. <http://www.ethnologue.com/> (accessed 22 March 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Evans and Levinson, 432.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 434.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 435-436.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 438.

within context, then any form of policy to impose meaning will lead to loss of meaning of those contexts because the language imposed will be neither the language of pronouns used nor the “invisible” contexts that will always remain “invisible.” In part, this examination reflects a standard way of thinking about language. Secondly, the Australian languages Evans and Levinson write on are Aboriginal languages – usually considered “indigenous.” This is important because in this example, we see the new direction taken by some linguists who believe that language is indicative of knowledge possibility and that that language has already run into trouble via colonial actions (the British in Australia). The Aboriginal peoples of Australia, though involved, are not technically in charge of their government and they have had their language changed by imposition of political powers from the outside.

So much discussion of local populations (which some refer to as “indigenous”) details examples from Australia, but peoples not in charge of their governments are all over the globe. To grab an example from the United States of America, Frank Little Bear Exner writes about the impact of English and European domination on North America.<sup>20</sup> He writes, “Prior to contact with Europeans, North American Indians lived in oral cultures. Colonization brought both spoken and written European languages along with the institutions of the colonizers. Over time, then...oral cultures adopted new languages (partially or fully) and writing (some individuals more fluently than others). The personal names of North American Indians may represent a pre-contact culture, a mixed state (some fully traditional oral people, some people fully integrated into the European-based culture, and many people between the extremes).”<sup>21</sup> Little Bear’s quote shows that diversity still results in North American “native” American naming, but that it has clearly entered a new context as imposition of both language and coding of text and culture has redrawn the map of those languages. Even if the “original” naming/language is used somewhere in the mix, English and traces of English abound all through the language matrix.

Pamela J. MacKenzie writes on the gap between those who decide state languages in India and those who must learn them in order to conform to state standards.<sup>22</sup> She argues that second languages must be understood before adapted to educational contexts and that textbooks produced in a language not

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<sup>20</sup> Exner, Frank, Little Bear. “North American Indian Personal Names in National Bibliographies.” *Radical Cataloging: Essays at the Front*. Ed. K.R. Roberto. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008. 150-164.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>22</sup> MacKenzie, Pamela J. 2009. "Mother tongue first multilingual education among the tribal communities in India." *International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism* 12, no. 4: 369-385. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 16, 2011).

used as mother-tongue by tribal children makes it discouraging for them.<sup>23</sup> In a way this makes sense. And we can surely relate to multi-lingual kids in American classrooms. But in India, the problem is particularly interesting as there are as many as 1652 languages.<sup>24</sup> And as scripting language tools in one language may be needed in different borders, the contact of governmental organization and the linguistic divide may fracture people even further from the goals of the state - India has 623 tribes/peoples and 80 Million people (at the time of MacKenzie's writing). For an instance of the divide between state policy and the population, in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, most of the children who can't really follow the Hindi language teaching, can copy alphabets and remember the right "answers, but have not contextualized any more than that. This non-contextualized learning creates a population that can recite but is not learning to think critically through this language that is not theirs. But what is India but a legally binding border of land with a great deal of documents attesting to its existence? These people in Chhindwara may not be "Indian." Yet they are still very real. Classification of these people and their language appears rather problematic. Plus, this problem can be amplified if classification schemas are applied to these populations by Indian "officials" who do not speak the local language in the same way. It is not clear that the original language is lost, but it is certainly being pressured by the imposition of certain policies. Language is tied to place - so is culture. But then again, if that culture has been "coded" by an outside or technical system such as government, what happens to the original language/culture if it has not done the coding itself? I ask this question because tied to this idea of language diversity erosion (there are 196 endangered languages in India)<sup>25</sup> is the declaration that there is also a gap (in the same way as above with India and its multi-lingual populations) between culture and "culture."<sup>26</sup>

This section on the death of language diversity concludes with an example from Africa because it represents some of the effects of language diversity erosion in a locale troubled by so many factors. Plus, the data seems to suggest there a great deal of overlap between the areas of the highest language diversity and areas of the highest bio-diversity. And so many of these spaces (Africa, Brasil and India) are also home to populations referred to as "indigenous" (those not in control of their government). In Africa, English has

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 370.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Mohanty, Ajit K. 2010. "Languages, inequality and marginalization: implications of the double divide in Indian multilingualism." *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 2010, no. 205: 131-154. Communication & Mass Media Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed October 6, 2011).

<sup>26</sup> Da Cunha, Manuela Carneiro. "Culture" and Culture: Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Rights. Chicago, Prickly Paradigm Press, 2009. 3.

certainly displaced local languages.<sup>27</sup> Makoni et al write that most of the literature on the topic is set up as a battle (binary) of colonizing Vs. indigenous languages and rejects that as totalizing because of its essentializing effect (we will come back this idea of essentialization later).<sup>28</sup> Languages such as Tswana, Zulu, Xhosa, and chi-Shona reveal something more than binary and varieties of chi-Shona in Zimbabwe (chiZezuru, chiKoreKore, chiManyika, chiKaranga, and chiNdau) have been heavily constructed by colonizing powers.<sup>29</sup> Much daily interaction does not take place in the “standardized” language. Instead, a great deal of this interaction takes place in local vernaculars.<sup>30</sup> Of course, people have adapted to the situation at-hand in order to live and communicate. This is normal. But we also must acknowledge that in this context, these languages, or whatever they “were” before colonization are gone. They have been re-coded by political changes and movements of other peoples. And it sounds like the populations themselves are making decisions daily that will also re-code language possibility in the future.

The truth is that there are a lot of languages in danger of fading away and it is not obvious once can judge each scenario as right or wrong of course. This observation of fading languages is important because language is tied to knowledge. And if language diversity erodes, then so does knowledge diversity. There are a great number of elements in the death of language diversity that cause this erosion. Some of the factors have to do with computer technology itself and its coding habits begun by English-language coders.<sup>31</sup> Some of the “blame” can be laid at the feet of mass media. And these days, the intersection of computer technology and mass media is probably scarier for activist linguists trying to “protect” languages from fading. Marcia Langton and Zane Ma Rhea suggest that in the next century, as much as 90% of current language diversity will have disappeared.<sup>32</sup> But UNESCO and other groups are asking that declarations be signed by nations to classify languages as resources for

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<sup>27</sup> Makoni, Sinfree, Janina Brutt-Griffler, and Pedzisai Mashiri. "The use of "indigenous" and urban vernaculars in Zimbabwe." *Language In Society* 36, no. 1 (February 2007): 25-49. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (accessed March 17, 2012). 26.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* 28, 30.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* 32.

<sup>31</sup> Dalby, Andrew. *Language in Danger: The Loss of Linguistic Diversity and the Threat to our Future*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. ix-x.

<sup>32</sup> Langton, Marcia, and Zane Ma Rhea. 2005. "Traditional Indigenous Biodiversity-related Knowledge." *Australian Academic & Research Libraries* 36, no. 2: 47-72. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (accessed October 5, 2010). 52.

preservation purposes.<sup>33</sup> How does one define “language?” To declare language as a resource is full of philosophical assumptions surely worthy of unfolding in another paper. Clearly the debate on the death of language is international in scope and has brought many large-scale players to the table. This also means that just as nation state creation has played a role in language diversity erosion, nations are playing a role in turning that trend in another direction (reversal). The problem with that assumption is the same kind of mistake Stephen Hawking originally made with his thoughts on the reversal of the universe. He assumed the expansion of the universe would “reverse” to its original state. But he then realized that the ongoing movement of the universe simply set its own new “rules” through which it would continually change. There could be no “rewind” for the universe back to the same beginning. The next section contains a more literal connection to the erosion of language after detailed examples of previous critiques of classification and subject access.

For LCSH-critique example one, Sanford Berman’s

“...famous book, *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People* (1993), in which he sheds light on the Library of Congress Subject Headings for people. For instance, he critiques the use of “**mixed Blood**” as a subject heading for **Indians** [Native Americans] from all over the Americas. He suggests a more nuanced canvased term that allows for more represented differences between assorted groups. With these critiques, many of which have been adapted by the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) Committee. In fact, LCSH now has a button on its site to suggest new uses or new terms to replace the ones in current use. This shows that Berman and others have made an impact and that classification has a political aspect. And with this example of “**mixed blood**,” above, we see that even Berman saw the limitations of such overarching context-stripped terms applied to resources on “**Native**” Americans – people that are also referred to in North America as “indigenous.”<sup>34</sup>

Berman’s critique presents us with an opportunity to connect the already troubled past of language imposition (ref: Little Bear) with declarations of “aboutness” attached to those same populations in the same language of the power that already made such significant changes in language and life of these populations. Plus, it seems Berman’s critique is one attempting to rethink tensions of condescension in classification as well as subtle (sometimes) racism. And to label somebody as “mixed” blood is a classification that has real potential to box people into certain “types” as opposed to seeing “mixed” status in other places too. In other words, not only does this classification have racial segregation intimations, it also may not be a productive classification in terms of “separating” one type of category from another. Berman also suggests separating Africans and African-Americans because even though African-Americans are of African descent, he does not believe these populations are the

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<sup>33</sup> Maffi, L. (2002), Endangered languages, endangered knowledge. *International Social Science Journal*, 54: 385–393. doi: 10.1111/1468-2451.00390 (accessed 09 Sept 2011). 391.

<sup>34</sup> Lambertson. / Berman, Sanford. *Prejudices and Antipathies: A Tract on the LC Subject Heads Concerning People*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 1993.

same.<sup>35</sup> And to take this even further, he questions the use of “**Society, Primitive**” as clearly racist (or at least condescending). He would prefer the use of **Traditional** or **Folk**, which he says takes the humanity of the populations classified more seriously.<sup>36</sup> Berman is asking for more nuance in taking people and where they are into consideration. I don’t know when LCSH added the suggestion button to its interface, but it is clear that it is trying at least nominally to respond to cultural and political changes in America’s societal fabric.

Race (ethnicity, etc) is not the only indexing Broad Term given critical attention in papers on LCSH - gender and sexual orientation have been getting attention as well. For instance, Joan K. Marshall writes on the increase in awareness, not just by women outside the sphere of librarianship and classification, but also within it.<sup>37</sup> It was clear to them that indexing and cataloguing had already been quite gender biased and that they needed to make some changes. In Marshall’s book, she lays out a fairly detailed schema to replace current schemas. She wants to arrange a classification hierarchy that centers women in indexing instead of subtly building their classification as after men or the like. She does not focus on sexual orientation issues within the schema, but it certainly is part of her plan of change.

Matt Johnson has taken the issue of indexing and cataloguing Queer and sexual orientation materials more directly in his, “A Hidden History of Queer Subject Access.”<sup>38</sup> He lists the history of librarians trying to create better access to materials for the LGBTQ user-base. He acknowledges the history of activist librarians. And he cites Sanford Berman extensively – which reveals overlap between multiple views of people as categorized, indexed and catalogued within LCSH and other index schemas. He also references Joan Marshall, a citation that makes even more obvious that there is a history of critique against these schema.

There is a growing trend now to rally access for and attach value to knowledge gathered (sometimes taken) from populations all over the globe – populations often referred to as “indigenous.” But this classification is unproductive because it neither creates access nor attaches value. There are a myriad of reasons for this point of view. To add to this collection of well-known critiques and authors, one cannot fail to acknowledge the work of Hope

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<sup>35</sup> Berman. 43.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>37</sup> Marshall, Joan K. 1977. *On Equal Terms: A Thesaurus for Nonsexist Indexing and Cataloging*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

<sup>38</sup> Johnson, Matt. “A Hidden History of Queer Subject Access.” *Radical Cataloging: Essays at the Front*. Ed. K.R. Roberto. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2008. 18-27.

Olson.<sup>39</sup> She suggests that as scientists name nature, the world, the universe, they have not simply applied “labels” to nature-in-itself, but have made a new nature. She writes, “Naming nature is the special business of science...the scientist simultaneously constructs and contains nature....Naming is the act of bestowing a name, or labeling, or creating an identity.”<sup>40</sup> Olson is thinking along the same lines as Berman, Johnson and Marshall, the line that states assumptions/biases/ideologies are built into classification schema and that these schema are not simply “scientific” and bias-free, but instead are examples of human beings applying labels because that’s what they actually may think “about” the thing indexed/classified/catalogued. These thoughts become impositions. Michel Foucault already tackled this idea of course. It fits into his overall project. But he writes on the debate between those are able to allow uncertainty into nature (classification) and those who want it classified-in-stone.<sup>41</sup> He states, “Classification, as a fundamental and constituent problem of natural history, took its position historically, and in a necessary fashion, between a theory of the mark and a theory of the organism.”<sup>42</sup> He allows himself to understand that classification is a human endeavor and that this will have the types of problems that humans bring to the table. Does this not mirror the kind of criticism leveled against, say, LCSH (and other classification schema), by Sanford Berman, Matt Johnson, Joan Marshall and Hope Olson? Not one of these people is alone in rethinking the potential of classification in regards to people.

To take this a step further, in her book, Hope Olson states that information managers/organizers do need universal “subjects.”<sup>43</sup> The real question is why we need universal subjects. If we accept the mantra that “indigenous” populations are those defined as not in charge of their government, then classifiers become a form of governance, one regulating access and value-attachment to these populations and their knowledge/practices etc. In this case, hierarchical, nearly monolithic standards creation by LCSH, designed for Congress and the American people is

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<sup>39</sup> Olson, Hope A. *The Power to Name: Locating the Limits of Subject Representation in Libraries*. Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Foucault, Michel. 1994. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books. 126-127.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

<sup>43</sup> Olson, 143.

being downloaded and applied to information resources all across the globe.<sup>44</sup> The result is a de facto governance of classification and “aboutness.” Surely, this mirrors Foucault’s suggestion that classification always already lies between a theory of the “organism” and the mark. And to take this just a little further, the populations that are being universally classified as “indigenous” mostly reside in places where bio-diversity is the highest as well as language diversity. And if we accept this de facto governance of “aboutness” applied by LCSH and other “standards” institutions, we are also seeing the erosion of language diversity being applied in new ways, ways also connected by politics and power – just as all the examples above about governmental language control and the nation-state above exhibit. In this case, linguistic “scientific” control has been imposed by choices made across the globe – choices which erode nuance linguistic options only available to the local populations. Not only that, but we are seeing that these same populations referred to as “indigenous” are also people of colour.<sup>45</sup> It is not as if “indigenous” is inherently a racist term, but in use, it does seem to be applied to certain populations and not others. There is a line of thought that has critiqued lines of knowledge in which those lines between populations have been declared blurry.<sup>46</sup> It just does not seem a productive classification – indigenous.

To make one more reference to Michel Foucault; he stated that classification resides historically between a theory of the “organism” and the mark. He means “organism” to be a loose term that attempts to leave open exactly what is being classified. Also, indirectly, in Foucault’s quote one more troubling trace needs to be exposed – that of *nature (organism)* assumed within the classification of “indigenous.” The OED defines “indigenous” as, “Born or produced naturally in a land or region; native or belonging naturally to (the soil, region, etc.). (Used primarily of aboriginal inhabitants or natural products.) / Inborn, innate, native.”<sup>47</sup> I have been wondering why some people are considered “natural” when others (of European descent) are not. Why is it not perfectly logical to concede that peoples have moved about over time as we

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<sup>44</sup> Amaeshi, Basil. 2001. "Subject indexing in the Nigerian National Corporation Library: design of an instrument." *Library Review* 50, no. 9: 457-460. Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts, EBSCOhost (accessed October 6, 2011).

<sup>45</sup> Piller, Ingrid, and Kimie Takahashi. 2011. "Linguistic diversity and social inclusion." *International Journal Of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism* 14, no. 4: 371-381. Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost (accessed March 17, 2012).

<sup>46</sup> Agrawal, Arun. (1995), *Dismantling the Divide Between Indigenous and Scientific Knowledge*. *Development and Change*, 26 (3): 413–439. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-7660.1995.tb00560.x (accessed 10 October 2010).

<sup>47</sup> “indigenous, n” Born or produced naturally in a land or region; native or belonging naturally to (the soil, region, etc.). (Used primarily of aboriginal inhabitants or natural products.) / Inborn, innate, native” *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. OED Online. Oxford University Press. (accessed 13 Oct 2010).

know people do? This new classification does two things simultaneously. One, it separates (segregates) certain populations from other populations - seems a racist separation too. Two, it attempts to mechanize (essentialize) certain populations within the same “scientific” classifications applied to biology, cosmology and physics. In other words, by referring to people with the same terminology applied to scientific or natural processes, the classification results in another separation between people as humans and people as something from nature. It is not clear via the classification of “indigenous” that these are the same. In fact, it seems that there is a specific segregation within this classification. Some people have tried to apply the term “native” to these populations. The OED Online definition in the footnote below is a longer definition, but suffers from the same inherent vice.<sup>48</sup> It still refers to “natural state” and the like. “Indigenous,” then, is not a productive term to apply to people and materials “about” them and it is not promotive of linguistic diversity if an already troubled term gets built into a schema that takes nothing into consideration about the local populations or their language.

Secondly, even if we wanted to use other terms already in play in indexing, we could use country names such as Africa, Brasil or India. But as we have already seen, the people we are searching for are not in charge of their government and it is not clear that they really are Brazilian or Indian. I left out Africa from this list because it is a continent and does not necessarily assume the rise of nation states – of which there are 54 currently in Africa. These are people who have had to conform to education and linguistic policy imposed by governments and colonialism. Thus, I am not sure it is productive to use nation states as term facets in any indexing schema because this too does not represent the thousands of languages available to these populations. Imposed indexing/classification schema make sense, theoretically, but it seems a more worthy goal to build a schema representative of the local populations and ask information searchers to learn the local premise or something. Anything else will simply fall in line with the trend of unification of mass media and technological contexts that further the decline of linguistic diversity. Plus, as stated above, there are groups building LCSH compatible indexing schema. But LCSH’s Mission Statement is for US Congress and the American people.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> “native, adj” “I. Senses relating to natural state or condition. 1. a. Inherent, innate; belonging to or connected with something by nature or natural constitution. b. inherent in the nature of, belonging naturally to. 2. a. Left or remaining in a natural or original state or condition; free from or untouched by art; unadorned, simple, plain. 3. a. Of a metal or other mineral: occurring naturally in a pure or uncombined state; (also) occurring in nature, as opposed to having been formed artificially.” The Oxford English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989. OED Online. Oxford University Press. (accessed 01 Sept 2011).

<sup>49</sup> I am in no way suggesting LCSH can’t be used by any population that so chooses, but I am trying to emphasize that American interests in information gathering may not be the same as any other place.

Jean Baudrillard writes, “Let us suppose two antagonistic trends: Integral Reality: The irreversible movement towards the totalization of this world. The Dual Form: the reversibility internal to the irreversible movement of the real.”<sup>50</sup> If his assertion is correct, then we have no expectation of more linguistic diversity in the future. And our tendency to build universal classification will probably continue. Even Joan K. Marshall in her critique of sexist terminology suggests universal language a problematic suggestion. Yet, Baudrillard implies there is some room for fighting, somewhere in there – in that Indestructible Dual Form where internally, inside the irreversible totalization of the world, there is room to build a schema of classification and subject access that reflects only the local populations and their interests instead of reflecting impositions from universal standards makers such as LCSH, nation states and the rise of a one-world language (such as English or XHTML). Otherwise, LCSH’s definition of “indigenous” as the term used for those not in charge of their government will remain “true” and these populations will have more and more “aboutness” imposed upon them. Maybe there is hope.

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<sup>50</sup> Baudrillard, Jean. 2005. *The Intelligence of Evil, or the Lucidity pact*. Trans. Chris Turner. New York: Berg, 2005. 21.