Report

on the database „Lituanistika"

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS
CoI Conflict of Interest
DC Dublin Core
ERC European Research Council
GS Google Scholar
LABA Lithuanian Academic Libraries Directors' association
LDB Lituanistika Database
LMBA Lithuanian Research Library Consortium
LMT Research Council of Lithuania
OAI-PMH Open Access Initiative - Protocol for Metadata Harvesting
OPAC Online Public Access Catalogue
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I. Introduction

1.1. Background of the evaluation and the topic being evaluated

Lituanistika Database is created to provide scientific information, as well as Lithuanian scientific terminology on humanities and social sciences research, the object of which is the past and present of Lithuanian society, culture, history, nation and language as a part of European scientific production. LDB is in operational phase since 2006 prepared by the Lithuanian Research Council (LMT) in cooperation with the Lithuanian research institutions, ministries, publishers and libraries, including Ministry of Education and Science, Lithuanian Academic Libraries Directors' association (LABA); Lithuanian Research Library Consortium (LMBA), 117 publishers, and selected national experts. Lituanistika Database is selecting, organizing, preserving and providing access to the publications in the humanities and social sciences.

The project "Lituanistika database" is operated in accordance with the programme of the Development of Human resources the 3rd priority *Consolidation of researchers' abilities* means of implementation *Development of competences of Scientists and other researchers (e-documents of science database)*.

Building upon the outcome of the previous Lituanistika projects (2006-2011), this project seeks to further contribute to the development of Lituanistika Database focusing on database development, testing of new review methods, implementing modern ICT, seeking integration with other information systems, and to improve national publishing, bibliographic and bibliometrics capacity in integrating Lituanistika Database data collection into wider network of international databases for SSH research, thereby improving accessibility, interoperability, quality and comparability of bibliographic and citation data to support Lithuanian research in the field of SSH.

1.2. Purpose, objectives and outputs of the evaluation

An evaluation has been commissioned to assess the present phase and procedures and to appraise the future performance of the project.

1.3. Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation scope has been discussed with Lituanistika Database leaders and consists from the following topics:
- the overall philosophy of preparation and usage of the DB,
- structure and functionalities,
- evaluation criteria of research to be included into the DB,
- the procedure of expertise,
- citation analyses,
- option for the search and presentation of the information,
- possibilities of integration of the DB Lituanistika into wider network of international DBs for SSH research.

1.4. Limitations

Limitations of this review could be present because of the fact that most of the documents about Lituanistika are written in Lithuanian language, and some misinterpretations are possible.

II. Methodology

The evaluation used different manners to obtain data and information:

- The Research Council of Lithuania organized the post-conference seminar at Mykolas Romeris University on 25 September 2013 on Databases and Evaluation of SSH Research to present a peer-reviewed open access bibliographic database on Lithuanian studies Lituanistika (presenters: Prof.

Rūta Petrauskaitė - Vice-chair, *Research Council of Lithuania*, Lina Bloveščiūnienė - project manager, and Antanas Štreimikis - project IT leader) followed by a panel discussion (Contributors: Jadranka Stojanovski - *University of Zadar*, Croatia, Nina Kancewicz-Hoffman - *European Science Foundation*, Thed van Leeuwen - *Leiden University*, Netherlands, and Gunnar Sivertsen - *Norwegian Institute for Studies in Innovation Research and Education*, Norway);

- Lituanistika Database web site at http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/;
- documents about the Lituanistika Database Project.

III.   Findings

3.1.   The overall philosophy of preparation and usage

The aim of the Lituanistika Database project is the development of the repository, accumulating and disseminating certified, high-quality information about the Lithuanian studies research in Lithuania and in the world. The main focus is on the selection process to obtain the high quality of publications submitted to the LDB, but there are also goals to accumulate and store full-text documents, integrate the database in other international databases, repositories and archives, and widely disseminate this way the data about Lithuanian studies across the global research community to became part of the global human knowledge. The additional goal is to serve SSH community in Lithuania and abroad and to raise competences of SSH researchers and students. Because the Lituanistika Database is not only bibliographic and full-text database, but also citation database, the usage of LDB could be applied in the field of bibliometrics, informetrics and scientometrics. Lituanistika Database serves also as a full-text repository for publications about Lithuanian studies. In that sense a collaboration with more than 117 publishers has been established which is a great success and offers future co-operation between different stakeholders in the area of scholarly communication on the implementation of the new trends in the scholarly publishing.

The workflow is carefully prepared and includes:

- search and selection of Lithuanian studies publications, archiving, preparation of recordings for publications, preparation of bilingual abstracts;
- the expert evaluation of publications;
- transfer of the data to other databases, experience interchange with foreign experts;
- solving legal issues and preparation of the legal documents accompanying full-text documents.

The usage of the Lituanistika database is tracked and examined in order to identify user's needs and expectations. Regular surveys of the HSS users are obtained using questionnaires to collect user's opinions, as well as information literacy training courses for researchers and students. There is also excellent possibility to review and tag specific publication, or just to comment. Introduction of some additional Web 2.0 tools (chat, etc.) as a part of Lituanistika Database portal could provide more interaction with online users, who can then ask a questions or just communicate with librarians.

3.2.   The structure and functionalities

The Lituanistika Database has five service packages:

- cataloguing, submission and preservation
- review (experts) and administration (librarians)
- search and delivery (OPAC)
- citations and bibliography

Service packages are providing different interfaces for different kind of users or administrators of the database. The cataloguing service is using Aleph (Ex Libris) as a software with Oracle database, and for submission and preservation open source tool Fedora is used, which is considered the best open source tool for preservation purposes. The approach to the full-text storage is very comprehensive. Every digital object is described and stored with following elements: bibliographic record in MARC21 and Dublin Core (DC), full-text, cover, table of contents (TOC), information about access conditions, links, and other specific files and data. It is not completely clear is it the full-text available in different formats, but using search interface a PDF file is available. Every document is also accompanied with the legal document (licence) regulating access and usage rights. The Lituanistika Database is providing at the moment access to more then 16.000 full-text publications in open access, and all documents are searchable. The review and administrative services are using MySQL relational database (44 tables) in combination with PHP for web interface. The new components of the review and administrative services are export and import possibilities, expert evaluation and regulative evaluation interface, and administrative interface. Expert evaluation interfaces are integrated in the Lituanistika Database Portal. The main administrative interface is providing the management of SSH experts and administrators, SSH scientist and repository classifiers and services parameters (system settings). The search and delivery services are providing access to the Aleph Web OPAC, Ex Libris' discovery service Primo, and are supporting all web browsers like Internet Explorer, Chrome, Firefox, Opera, Safari, etc. The citation and bibliography services are based on MySQL database.

The citation services and the Lituanistika Database Portal which is designed as the main access point to the database will be described in „Citation analyses" and „Option for the search and presentation of the information" sections accordingly.

3.3.   Evaluation criteria of research to be included into the DB

There is a set of general criteria for the assessment of the scientific quality of the work which could be considered as universal:

- The extent of the problem, the nature and the place in the branch, the area in the context of a particular research issue. The critical reflection of the question in a scientific work;
- The significance and novelty of the pending problem (topics, methodology, empirical);
- The perspective of the research works, the significance for further research;
- The relevance of the work in terms of scientific development (branch);
- The elements of scientific research:
    o   methods and critical reflection;
    o   theoretical problems;
    o   theoretical, methodological, or empirical justification;
    o   legitimacy of the conclusions, and their coherence with the problems;
    o   legitimacy and consistency of work structure.

An adjustment of these criteria has been made according the specific HSS discipline, nature of the research (empirical or theoretical), and publication type. Additional bibliographic elements assigned by an expert, like SSH area and discipline, language, keywords, are helping in the selection process regardless of scoring.

For the specific publication type the set of general criteria is modified, so there is specific evaluation questionnaire for:

- monographs, studies, syntheses, theoretical publications;
- articles and similar publications (published conference proceedings, prefaces, analytical reviews);
- HE textbooks;
- other publications;
- catalogues, reference books, bibliographies, maps, and other similar publications.

For example, articles are assessed according the problem formulation and significance, including possible applications in industry, critical issues, relevance for Lithuanian society and culture, international relevance, theoretical validity, methodology, interpretation of empirical results, style appropriateness, content novelty and originality, level of contribution to the research discipline, future research perspectives, etc.

The evaluation criteria are systematically categorized and very detailed, providing appropriate guidance and objectivity during evaluation process. For every category an average score is calculated and for some more relevant categories, average score is doubled. LDB evaluation criteria can be used as the best practice example for other countries, especially for publishers.

3.4. The procedure of expertise

The aim of the expert evaluation is to assure the high quality of the publications included in Lituanistika Database. The selection of the experts is according several criteria which approve expert's competencies and absence of the Conflict of Interests (COI). All experts should agree upon deadlines for the assessment, evaluation conditions and procedure schedule. There are 230 experts selected from various Lithuanian higher education institutions. Additional Expert Council, with the representatives from the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science and Lithuanian Research Council is deciding upon the matters related to the expertise of publications, as are criteria for scholarly journals publishing articles which can be included in Lituanistika Database without an expert evaluation. These criteria are rigorous and more than 90% journal articles should be evaluated as high quality articles. Currently 34 scholarly journals, with the editorial policies following best international practices and standards, are satisfying those criteria.

Every publication selected for the inclusion into Lituanistika Database has been positively peer reviewed by two experts, gaining at least 18 points (from max 35) according the evaluation criteria. In the case of controversy between publication reviews, a third expert is invited. During the evaluation procedure experts are following a list of well defined criteria as the significance and novelty of the problem, relevance and perspective or the research, etc. The criteria are adopted according the SSH discipline and the publication type, and a special web module supporting the publications review process is guiding an expert through the assessment procedure helping to avoid errors, to gain the high level of objectivity, to score efficiently, and to make a final evaluation decision. The peer review process is double (or triple) blind and an expert remain anonymous.

The implemented procedure of expertise (post peer review) is highly efficient and reliable, and could be used not only for a selection decisions, but also for other evaluation purposes. Received points for the specific publication could be converted in „stars", and publications could be „starred" on public portal. This approach could offer researchers using Lituanistika database to select „best starred" publications when searching for an information, but have also some disadvantages.

3.5. Citation analyses

Citation analyses present separate module/service available from the LDB Portal homepage which is offering separate search interface, although availability of citation data on different searching and browsing

levels. As a newest service an evaluation of the citation indexes is available providing links between citations and distribution of citations among authors, sources, SSH disciplines and keywords.

For a single publication present is citation report, cited references, citing references, link to the bibliographic record in the Lituanistika Database, and Citation Index which is using visualization tool for presenting citing references, cited references and citing/cited references as a citation map. The report of the citation could be obtained.

3.6. Option for the search and presentation of the information

The Lituanistika Database Portal offers a modern web interface with numerous information as well as possibilities for searching and browsing. There is Lithuanian and English interface, and possibility to translate the content in other languages too. There is site map which is very important as navigational tool, and version of the interface for disabled persons.

In the left menu there are detailed information about the contact, project, process of publication selection, options for experts, modules for accessing the database, journals covered, list of included publishers and full-text journals, information about scientists (with browsing possibilities), as well as information and documents about Lituanistika, workshops and seminars, surveys, news, and press releases.

The main homepage area is for searching and browsing the database, with provided information about the present content (very valuable!), SSH disciplines included, and description of the selection process. Search results are presented in the user-centric way, with numerous facets on the left side for narrowing the search results by full-text, genre, topic, author, year, publication type, language, and journal name. There is some overlapping between genre and publication type categories which could be unclear for users. Search results can be sorted by relevance, publication year, popularity author, and title. Search results can't be selected and stored. Also because of software (Primo) limitations cover page is not used as a thumbnail for search result. Building query using Boolean operators is not supported in Advanced search but there is possibility to combine different search fields with Boolean operators in menu. During the search process there are additional features:

- Full-Text Online (Open Access)
- Citation and bibliography
- All articles in the same journal
- All articles in the same issue

Excellent browsing possibilities are including authors, publication titles, journal names and research disciplines. When browsing, the link to the specific publication is targeted to the very detailed bibliographic record in Aleph OPAC, while search results are opening full bibliographic record from Primo which is reduced, which could be confusing for inexperienced users. Using Primo bibliographic record with link to detailed record in OPAC could be a good solution.

3.7. Possibilities of integration

In the Lituanistika Database bibliographic records are available using two schemas: MARC21 and Dublin Core (DC) which approve serious approach towards comprehensive bibliographic description (MARC21) and possible interoperability (DC). Lituanistika Database is present in the OpenDOAR and OpenROAR directories of open access repositories, as well as it is partially searchable using Google Scholar (GS). There is not accurate reference regarding the number of bibliographic records included in GS because of very limited GS search options.

In order to achieve high level of interoperability it is necessary to define the policy on the usage (by machines, computers, harvesters) of metadata and full-text, and to regulate possible re-use of metadata and full-text. Other issues concerning interoperability policies are already solved in Lituanistika Database: subjects and types of the deposited content, submission requirements and long term preservation and data regulation.

To provide common way of interoperability it would be good solution to implement the OAI Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH) which is provided by most repository software platforms. OAI-PMH is based on DC metadata schema which is already present in LDB. OAI-PMH allows other repositories, archives and specialist search services to harvest and process XML metadata for the records in the LDB. Also fully functional Portal in English language would contribute and improve the usage, widening the interest for this repository abroad and opening new possibilities for integration. In the future implementation of RDF could be considered.

IV.   Conclusion

The Lituanistika Database is highly relevant project for the Lithuania, and excellent source of information for all researchers interested in Lithuanian studies. Following well defined project strategy, during the years Lituanistika database develops in the powerful tool with more then 30.000 bibliographic records and more then 16.000 full-text publications covering all disciplines of Lithuanian studies. There is a strong vision for the development of the Lituanistika Database which was present from the very beginning and led to the present state, when Lituanistika Database offer numerous searching and browsing options, citation indexes and brilliant opportunities for exchanging valuable data on different levels with similar databases, repositories, archives and search tools, and to gain international reputation. Lituanistika database is peer reviewed database which is the main strength, and every publication is carefully selected by librarians and evaluated by experts. Peer review process is what makes this database different from other sources where it is very difficult, if not impossible, to select the most relevant and high quality publications. The expert evaluation process is designed very precisely as are evaluation criteria helping experts during evaluation process. In the view of evaluator minor improvements could be made regarding fully operational English interface, full-bibliographic record presentation at different levels, and OAI-PMH implementation. For the next phase vision maybe RDF and linked data could be included to provide the development of the semantic web. Strong collaboration with local publishers is also offering numerous opportunities for improvements in the scholarly communication processes. Much of what has been accomplished under the Lituanistika Database project can serve as a good example for similar projects in other countries.

Evaluation report date : 1th October 2013

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