Creating Collection-Level Metadata: A TELDAP Case Study

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Abstract

The Taiwan e-Learning and Digital Archives Program (TELDAP) has taken on the task of digitizing the nation's important cultural artifacts, and has produced over 3,000,000 metadata records. However, as the amount of data increases, the retrieval and utilization of these resources tend to be all the more difficult for users, and managers also find it hard to assemble and control the entire mass of digital data. Thus, in order to overcome these problems, this study has created a set of collection-level metadata for Taiwan's digital archives, seeking to explore new facets of knowledge organization, facilitating the searching of information for users and the administering of resources for collection managers.

The scope of this study covers the digital resources produced by eight major digital archiving institutions, including the Academia Historica, the Academia Sinica, the National Museum of Natural Science, the National Museum of History, the National Central Library, the National Palace Museum, the National Taiwan University and the Taiwan Historica, using the Dublin Core Collection Application Profile (DCCAP) as standard for describing their collections. Interviews with collection managers have been conducted in order to understand the contents and condition of their collections, and to create appropriate corresponding collection-level metadata. Our study has resulted in organizing a 5-step process for the reference of those institutions to create the collection-level metadata (see Figure 1).
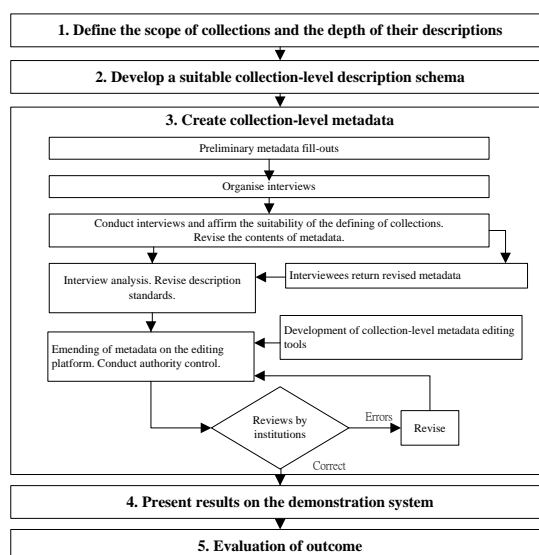
FIG. 1. Collection-level metadata creation procedures.

The outcome of our study is rewarding. 35 researchers and project workers are interviewed, and assembled 150 collections with the DCCAP as standard for description during the completion of relating metadata. The completed metadata are then exported to and presented on the Digital

DCPAPERS

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Taiwan – Culture & Nature portal website (http://culture.teldap.tw/culture) through faceted classification for users to browse and search TELDAP collections (see Figure 2).
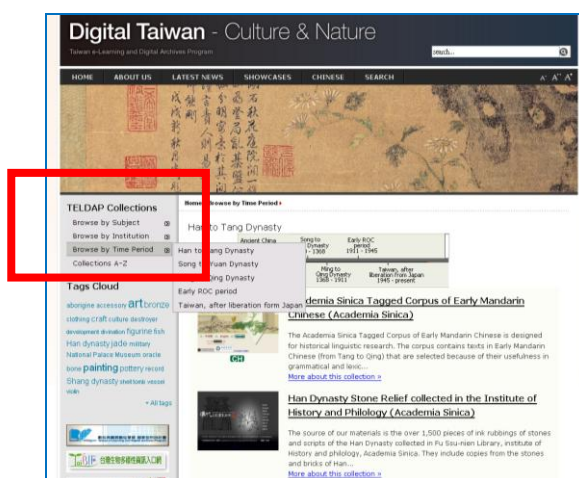

FIG. 2. Screenshot of the TELDAP Collection-Level Description Portal.

However, due to the heterogeneity and rapid growth of the TELDAP collections, directly applying DCCAP inevitably leads to certain difficulties. Thus, our study has reviewed all the problems that have been encountered during the creation of collection-level metadata, and brought forth corresponding solutions. To accord with the situation of TELDAP and the special features of different collections, the properties of 16 out of 30 DCCAP elements have been refined. For example, we expanded the Collection Description Terms recommended by DCMI, to more aptly describe the TELDAP collections.

Besides continuing to create and maintain collection-level metadata, we will design an evaluation scheme in the future and consider any possibilities for further improvement. The functions of our system will be enhanced for users assembling and combining different faceted classifications according to their needs to retrieve diversified information. Furthermore, relationships between collection-level and item-level metadata will also be established. Thus users will be able to access and utilize contents across and within the collections simultaneously, making information retrieval more complete and efficient. In addition to the current Chinese and English versions, the collection-level metadata of TELDAP will be translated into Japanese, Spanish and other languages to extent the international access.

Acknowledgements

References

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