LCMPT/LCGFT Training Workshop
Co-Sponsored by MOUG and MLA-BCC
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The 2015 MOUG annual meeting opened with a four-hour workshop on two new Library of Congress thesauri now available for music catalogers: the LC Genre/Form Thesaurus (LCGFT) and the LC Medium of Performance Thesaurus for Music (LCMPT).

Presenters of the session were: Beth Iseminger (Harvard University), Thomas Pease (Library of Congress), Kevin Kishimoto (University of Chicago), Casey Mullin (Stanford University), Hermine Vermeij (UCLA), and Janis Young (Library of Congress), as well as Nancy Lorimer (Stanford University), who contributed to the presentation but was unable to attend.

For further details, references, and examples beyond this summary, please see the presentation slides, which are available at:
http://www.musicoclcusers.org/mougmeetings/2015meeting/2015presentations.html.

First, an overview of the Genre/Form Thesaurus project: Many current Library of Congress Subject Heading (LCSH) headings used to describe music materials are not truly topical, but instead refer to genres or forms. A genre term describes "what something is, not what it is about." A form term describes a category of works with a particular format or purpose, such as encyclopedia, poetry, or suite.

Presently, there are many genre and form terms in LCSH, both as headings and as subdivisions, but a computer is unable to distinguish them from topical headings. They are coded identically, and sometimes a term is used both as a topic and a form or genre. (For example, "Old time music" is a genre, but "Old time music – History and criticism" is a topic.) Other terms are used as topics when singular ("Waltz"), but genres when plural ("Waltzes"). Catalog users are expected to make the distinction without much guidance. The genre/form terms are designed to solve this issue. These terms are coded in a separate MARC field 655, rather than the topical subject heading field 650. This will allow computers to distinguish between them.

The Music Genre/Form project is a collaboration between LC and the MLA Bibliographic Control Committee Form/Genre Task Force, which was formed in 2009. 567 proposed genre terms were approved on February 13 of this year, joining finished genre projects in the areas of moving images, non-musical sound recordings, cartography and law. Besides music, ongoing projects include literature, religion and art.

The Medium of Performance Thesaurus for Music is already in use. Traditionally, many LCSH form headings have consisted of, or included, musical mediums of performance. An example of a heading combining a form term with medium of performance is: "Suites (Bassoon, clarinet, flute, horn, oboe with string orchestra)". In other cases, medium has been used in subdivisions: "Operas – Vocal scores with continuo". The LCMPT terms are coded separately in the MARC field 382 in bibliographic and authority records. Their principal goal is access, but they may also be used for the RDA medium of performance element.

Another forthcoming thesaurus is the Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms, which will include audience characteristics (MARC 385 field), and creator and contributor characteristics (MARC 386 field.) These terms will be assigned when the audience is clearly stated, or when the creator or contributor self-identifies as a member of a particular demographic group.

Three groups have been working on the new music vocabularies: The Library of Congress, the MLA-BCC Genre/Form Task Force and the MLA-BCC Subject Access Subcommittee. The task force reviewed existing LCSH terms and added terms which were missing, then added new terms from reference sources. This resulted in very large lists, especially for world music genres and instruments, so the project scope was narrowed to include LCSH terms, with a few exceptions. Genre/form and medium facets which were combined as single LCSH headings were separated, and the syntax simplified (e.g. "Violin", not "Violin music".) By separating these elements, we are moving from pre-coordinated strings to post-coordinated facets. Facets are easier to identify than pre-coordinated text strings, a definite advantage for the user. In addition, multiple facets (geographic region, country, ethic group, language, instrument, etc.) can be used in the same record. An authorized term now represents only one aspect, and terms do not overlap in meaning. Multiple examples of LCGFT music terms and hierarchies are available in the presentation slides.

Part Two of the presentation began with Best Practices for using the LCMPT. The top terms of the LCMPT hierarchy are Performer, Ensemble, and Visuals. Some terms can be under more than one hierarchy. ("Tenor voice", for example, is a narrower term under both "Male voice" and "High voice".) The Medium of Performance is coded in MARC field 382, using the most specific terms available in the LCMPT. (Please see the slides for specific instructions for coding the various subfields.)

Provisional best practices for using LCGFT are scheduled to be published in the very near future. Further development will, of course, be forthcoming, but catalogers are urged to begin using the new terms immediately. Genre/form terms are coded in the MARC 655 field, and the most specific and appropriate term should be used (i.e. "Symphonic poems", not "Program music".) However, there are circumstances in which a term could fit in more than one hierarchy, which will necessitate the use of the higher-level term. ("Songs" could be used with either "Art music" or "Popular music"; thus, "Art music" or "Popular music" should be assigned along with "Songs", when possible.) Terms relating to the format of notated music such as "Scores" are now coded in separate MARC 655 fields, rather than as subdivisions.

It must be noted that for the foreseeable future, catalogers should continue to use the LCSH subject headings and subdivisions in addition to the new Genre/Form and Medium of Performance terms. This will lead to records with Medium of Performance in the MARC 382 field, LCSH terms in the 650, and Genre/Form terms in the 655.

The new vocabularies may be found in several places: LCMPT and LCGFT are included in Classification Web, while Genre/Form terms are now available in Connexion. Both vocabularies are also included in the LC Linked Data Service, located at http://id.loc.gov. While the inclusion

of new terms will indeed add more work for catalogers in the short term, eventually LCSH headings will be discontinued for non-topical uses. Since music catalogers are exploring this new territory together, everyone is encouraged to make educated guesses, ask questions, and participate in discussions, all of which may influence future versions of best practices.

After a series of examples and exercises, the next portion of the workshop discussed the potential display, indexing, and faceting of LCGFT and LCMPT in library systems. Genre/form terms are already in use for other subject areas, such as moving images, but display parameters remain inconsistent. Most systems do not yet use the information contained in the MARC 382 field, since programmers need a significant data set with which to work before creating indexes and displays.

The adoption of these new thesauri will necessitate the conversion of legacy LCSH headings to medium of performance and genre/form terms. This conversion will of course need to be automated, and the process of developing this conversion is currently in progress, with the hope of having a converter ready for production databases by 2016. LCSH headings will likely remain in score and sound recording records for some time, however, as it will take longer for discovery systems to catch up. It is important to note that topical headings will remain in works about music.

A short discussion of the relationship between LCMPT and RDA followed. The principal goal for LCMPT is access, but it is also used for identification. The JSC Music Working Group is looking at revising some of the instructions in RDA for identifying mediums of performance, especially those that pertain to ensembles. In addition, work is being done to harmonize the differences in the use of the MARC 382 field in bibliographic and authority records.

The session concluded with instructions for the submission of new term proposals. The SACO Music Funnel is accepting new LCMPT terms and revisions. Music LCGFT terms will be accepted by the funnel later this year. Proposing terms through the music funnel is the recommended method for new terms.