Chapter 20

International Cooperation in Developing a Digital Library Software and South Asia Network

A. Neelameghan
Sarada Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science, India

K.S. Raghavan
PES Institute of Technology, India

ABSTRACT

Inter-country cooperation in any sector almost invariably begins with information exchange among the nations or groups involved. Briefly Describes international collaboration and networking in developing user-interfaces for selected Indian languages for an open source software - the GSDL (Greenstone Digital Library) software - for creating digital libraries of multilingual multimedia information resources, more particularly for the South Asia region. The steps in the formation of the related GSDL South Asia Network, the tasks assigned to the institutions in the SAARC countries, and the plan of work are mentioned. The role and contributions of the participating institutions and the organizations at the international level and in different countries is also briefly described. Further developmental work needed and problems to be solved as identified from the work done on user-interfaces in Indian languages are highlighted.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Inter-Country Flow of Information

Inter-country flow and exchange of information has an age-old history ever since people began to travel beyond their country boundaries – e.g. adventure, curiosity, trade, leisure and vacationing, sports, military mission, colonization, emigration, education, employment etc. Some brought back to their respective home countries information they had gathered; some provided information about themselves and their country to those with whom they interacted. Some of these exchanges and observations were recorded in diaries, travelogues and other writings and also as maps and photographs These activities and exchanges were mostly person-to-person or between small groups. Some may have been supported / sponsored by the rulers of the country. Later such ventures were institutionalized; for example, establishment of the East India Company in Dec 1600 A.D. to support and stimulate trade with the Indian sub-continent. Establishment of international intergovernmental organizations (IIGOs), such as the United Nations and its specialized agencies in the first quarter of the 20th century (and then the NGOs) provided international support in the implementation of their programmes and projects in different parts of the world. Information communication technology/ies (ICT) extended and accelerated such exchanges during the past few decades. Inter-country cooperation in any field for whatever purpose and in whatever sector, more often than not, begins with information exchange. Nobel Laureate Ian Timbergen (1978) pointed out that information and information exchange were respectively the substance and means of international cooperation in any domain to begin with.

Research and development since World War-II involves the participation and collaborative functioning of many researchers and managers often drawn from different disciplines – to achieve a common goal. This may also involve large invest-ments. In recent years thanks to the developments in technology such collaboration is becoming global that is participation of researchers and developers, institutions and organizations across several countries. Collaboration in any domain is possible only when there is a certain level of *openness* about what is being done and what is to be accomplished (the goal). Collaboration is also believed to have an impact on the quality of the work, higher the degree of collaboration, better is the quality of the resulting output.

Collaborative approach to problem solving also characterizes modern business. The '*flat world*' phenomenon characterized by business and knowledge processes outsourcing is another example that suggests the growing importance of collaboration in problem-solving. Collaborative content development is another recent phenomenon. Collaboration has assumed another important dimension – that of The Wikis and related Web 2.0 technologies extensively used by various communities of web users for effective collaboration. The *Wikipedia* is an example of what is possible through distributed collaboration. Co-creation is now a buzz word (Raghavan, 2010a). In the domain of software development the *open source* movement beginning with Linux marks the beginnings of collaboration - representing a new paradigm. The *open source* movement is not merely based on the philosophy of making software freely available to all, but, more importantly, such an approach leads to increasing collaboration resulting in continuous enhancement of the quality of the product. Another direct consequence of the *open source* movement has been the emergence of networks of user communities each centered on some software product and dynamically interacting with each other resulting in both sustenance and quality enhancement of the product (Prahalad & Krishnan, 2002). The *open source* movement in software development highlights the importance of collaboration in an effort to make best use of the available expertise in the domain and also to cut the cost of new product development.

15 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/international-cooperation-in-developing-a-digital-library-software-and-south-asia-network/103089

Related Content

Implementing Primo for the Michiana Academic Library Consortium (MALC)
Aaron B. Balesand Mark Dehmlow (2012). *Planning and Implementing Resource Discovery Tools in Academic Libraries (pp. 562-579).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/implementing-primo-michiana-academic-library/67843

Library Showcase: Darien (Conn.) Library - Interview with Alan Gray
Lisa Block (2014). *Information Technology and Collection Management for Library User Environments (pp. 229-230).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/library-showcase/102370

An Introduction to Bibliometrics and Informetrics
Sean Eom (2009). *Author Cocitation Analysis: Quantitative Methods for Mapping the Intellectual Structure of an Academic Discipline (pp. 1-35).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/introduction-bibliometrics-informetrics/5440

Collaboration Scenario in the Indian LIS Papers of the 21st Century
Bimal Kanti Sen (2014). *Collaboration in International and Comparative Librarianship (pp. 322-328).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/collaboration-scenario-in-the-indian-lis-papers-of-the-21st-century/103097

Voice-Based Speaker Identification and Verification
Keshav Sinha, Rasha Subhi Hameed, Partha Pauland Karan Pratap Singh (2021). *Handbook of Research on Knowledge and Organization Systems in Library and Information Science (pp. 288-316).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/voice-based-speaker-identification-and-verification/285501