The Polar Library
Polar UDC, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition (1963)
‘Words are powerful. The way we name and classify the world around us is indicative of our values and beliefs. The words we choose to identify elements in our world can illuminate, educate, and elucidate, or they can perpetuate stereotypes and misinformation.’

Littletree and Metoyer (2015)
‘Names are linked to identity, and notions of identity are fluid. What I’m OK with you calling me might really annoy someone else. [...] Be prepared to listen to what people have to say about the term you use, and to respect what they suggest you call them instead.’

Vowel (2016)
‘We cannot do a classification scheme objectively; it is the nature of subject analysis to be subjective. Teaching, done critically and done well, offers a potential way out of this dilemma.’

Drabinski (2008)
Decolonising Polar UDC workshop

• Critical information literacy approach

• The Olonkho as case study
## Subject analysis of the *Olonkho*

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<td>Ethnography [Yakuty]</td>
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<td>Native peoples, folk beliefs and tales</td>
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<td>Poetry: Oyunskiy, Platon Alekseyevich</td>
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<td>Soviet Union</td>
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</table>
• Whose perspective takes precedence?
• What do you think of the terminology of the subjects? Does it accurately reflect the information held in the library?
• What is missing from this section?
• How does the hierarchy of the subjects work?
• How would you improve the subjects? Is there terminology you would change? Any terms you would add or remove?
Reflections & next steps

Should we be involving indigenous peoples in the categorisation of their politics, lives, religion, etc.?

is the act of categorisation from an 'outside' perspective undermining the right to self-identify?
References


Eades, V. (2018) ‘Hack your library: challenging labels’ in Towards a critical (art) librarianship: theories and practices. URL:www.slideshare.net/secret/7Ca5eoOaCEXo2c


Questions?

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