The Role of Multilingual Thesauri in Enhancing Descriptive Metadata for Images of Cultural Works

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Abstract

Digital imaging technology is advancing by leaps and bounds, and millions of images of works of art, architecture and material culture have been made available on the Web. But descriptive metadata (once known as "cataloguing") remains a major issue. Without adequate textual descriptions, many images remain un-findable and/or undecipherable. This paper will address some of the challenges and opportunities in using electronic thesauri to enhance end-user access and understanding of images of cultural works in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural world of information and images.

Author Biography

Murtha Baca, Head of the Digital Art History Program at the Getty Research Institute (GRI), is also an adjunct professor at UCLA, teaching metadata and indexing and thesaurus construction. Her research and publications have focused largely on descriptive metadata and controlled vocabularies for art, architecture, and material culture.