



Towards a Prague Definition of Grey Literature

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Current definition

Luxemburg

“[Grey literature is] that which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers.”

New York

“[Grey literature is] that which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers i.e., where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body.”

Content analysis and survey

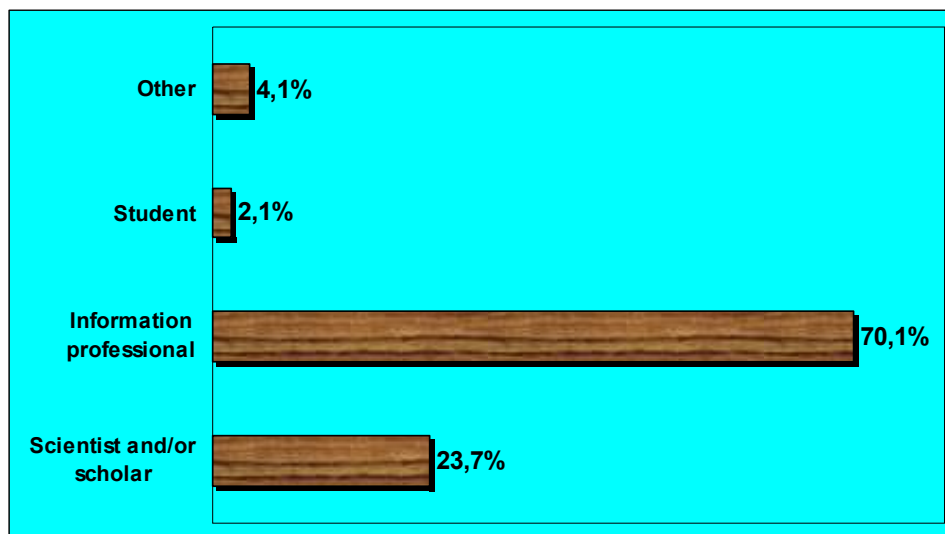
- Corpus: 35 original GL papers and TGJ articles 1993-2008 (11%)
- Selection criteria: papers with substantial debate on GL concept

Conference	GL1	GL2	GL3	GL4	GL5	GL6	GL7	GL8	GL9	GL10
Year	1993	1995	1997	1999	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total nb	27	21	28	26	18	24	27	16	17	15
Selection	4	4	3	6	5	4	0	3	1	2

Figure 1: Corpus of GL communications

Volume	Vol 1	Vol 2	Vol 3	Vol 4	Vol 5
Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Selection	1	2	0	0	0

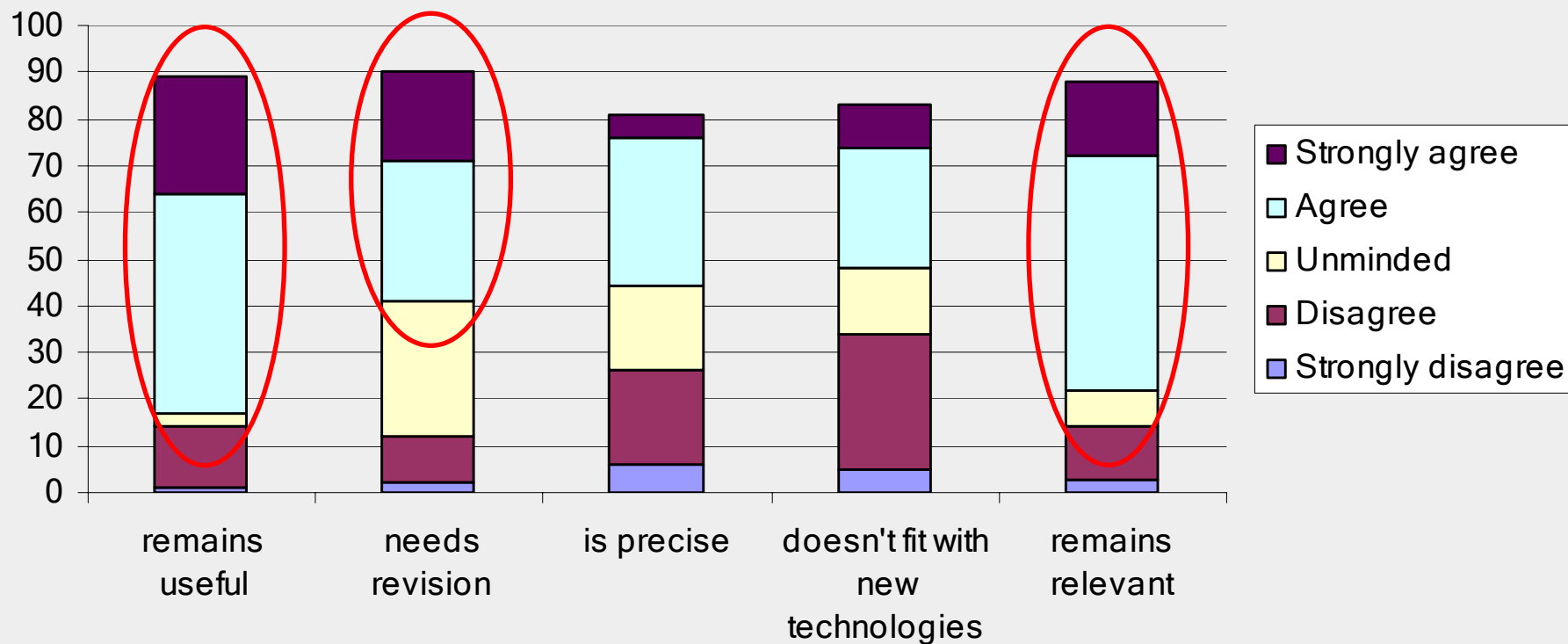
Figure 2: Corpus of TGJ articles



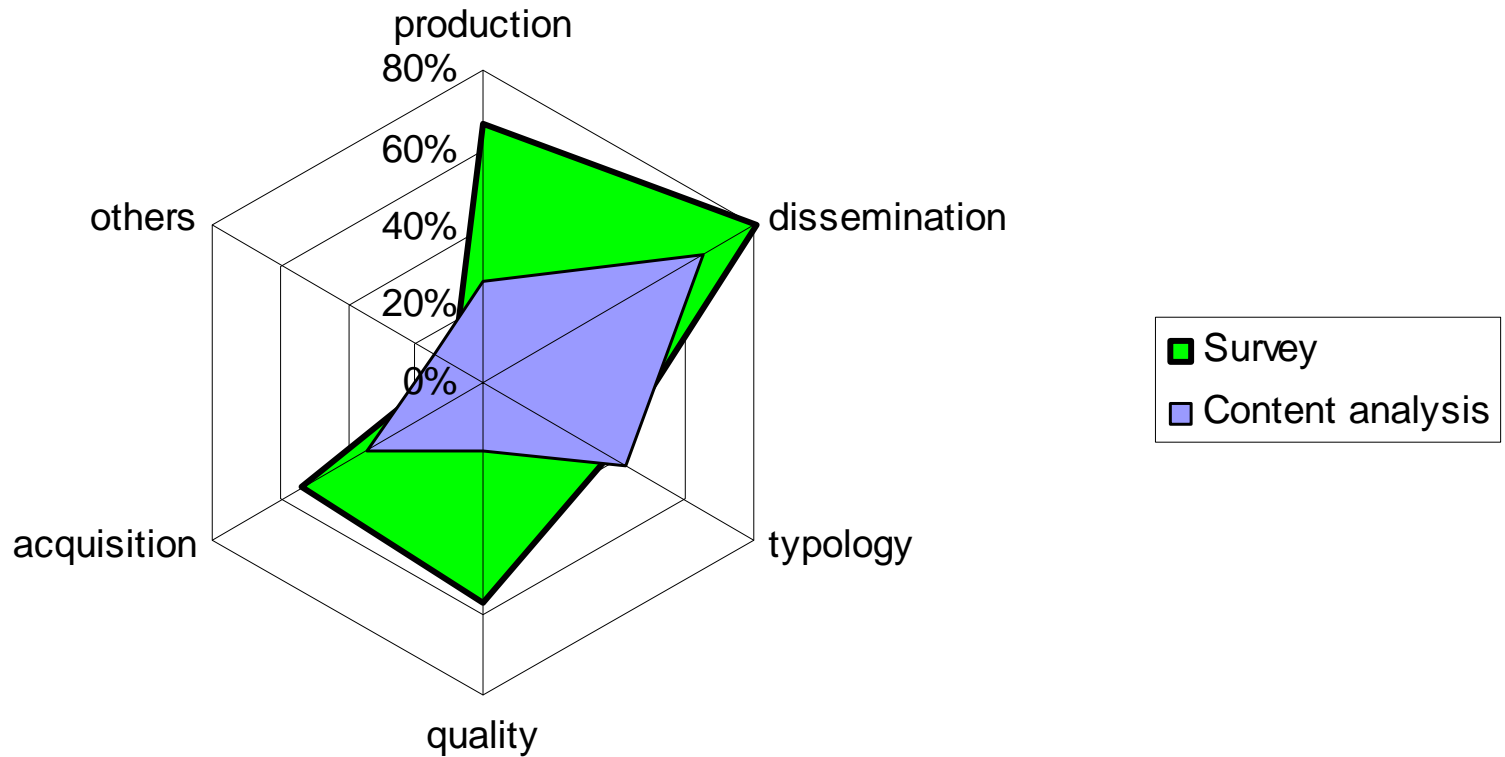
- Online survey with 1,390 GL experts
- October 2010
- Average response rate 7,8%

Common usage but...

The New York definition of grey literature...



△ between papers and survey



Fallacies of the NY definition

- Over-broad

Applies to items that are not part of the extension of the definition

- Lack of essential attributes

Document, intellectual property, quality, collection, preservation

- Risk of circularity

Grey is that which is not white (nor black)

- Risk of obscurity

Grey is fugitive, ephemeral etc.

Are digital objects grey?

“that which is produced (...) in (...) electronic formats”

Data?

Emails?

Technical copies?

Wikis?

Blogs?

Tweeds?

Websites?*

* *What about snapshot copies?*

RT @brandibuzzard: Not so thrilled about the lack of defense by the [#KCCchiefs](#) --- but the Raiders miss the field goal haha I [#football](#)

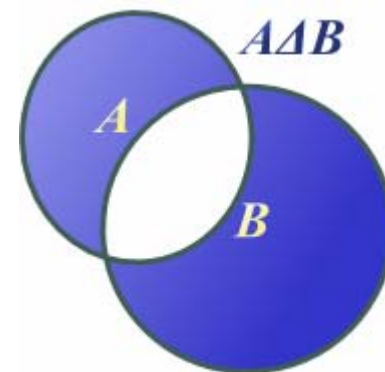
The Social Network, brilliantly analyzed. Generation Why? by **Zadie Smith** | The New York Review of Books:

<http://bit.ly/dyKZ7x> via @[addthis](#)

baker: Publish eBooks on the iPad using HTML5 - The Changelog - Open Source moves fast. Keep up. <http://bit.ly/9AIC0j>

Typology or quality?

- Are PhD theses grey?
- Are Master theses grey? And BA dissertations?
- (Where is the difference?)
- Some reports are grey, and some grey items are reports. What makes some reports turn grey?
- Is a working paper grey if nobody cares for it?
- GL beyond “works of the mind”?



GL without library?

- The problem with GL is a LIS problem
- Without collection and preservation, no GL
- GL is linked to (inter)mediation
- From library to institutional repositories: does it change anything?
- Does « grey » mean anything to the end user?

A new definition

Prague

“Grey literature stands for manifold document types produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats that are protected by intellectual property rights, of sufficient quality to be collected and preserved by library holdings or institutional repositories, but not controlled by commercial publishers i.e., where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body.”

Selected bibliography

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- J. Mackenzie Owen (1997). 'Expanding the Horizon of Grey Literature'. In *Third International Conference on Grey Literature: Perspectives on the Design and Transfer of Scientific and Technical Information, 13-14 November 1997*.
- J. Schöpfel & D. J. Farace (2010). 'Grey Literature'. In M. J. Bates & M. N. Maack (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences, Third Edition*, pp. 2029-2039. CRC Press, London.

Thank you!

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