# GREY LITERATURE BETWEEN TRADITION AND INNOVATION: IS THERE A CONTINUUM?

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# Starting questions

❑ Why Social Media, now?

❑ Why Social Media for Grey, now?

❑ Why Grey Literature between tradition and innovation: is there a continuum?

# Why Social Media, now?

In January 2010, *The Economist* published a special report on social networking titled "A world of connections": on page 14 we read: "This democratization of technology is driving the socialisation of the web and fundamentally changing the way that people interact with one another, as well as with businesses and governments".

# … Why Social Media, now?

- The use of technology becomes democratic;
- Technology is available and easily accessible to most people regardless of age, culture, country and economic condition;
- This is the first time in history that a free system of communication increasingly becomes a flow of information through space and time;
- This process does not duplicate knowledge as it happened in the medieval 'scriptorium' nor store it: it is a simple transmission of news and events happened all over the world, a stream of thought which relates all those who are connected.

# Why Social Media for Grey, now?

Over the last decade both Grey Literature and traditional literature underwent the transformation of the communication channels of scientific information:

❑ the aim is to concentrate knowledge for then disclose, disseminate and share it with citizens: obviously the purpose is no longer to conserve and preserve knowledge for transmission to a niche of few users as it used to be in the Middle Ages;

❑ by means of the social networking sites system (SNSs) – the new added value to production and expansion of knowledge – Grey Literature is involved as well, but how? Groups of Grey Literature scholars with common interests and goals discuss, ponder and compare with new methodologies and new type of information for trying to retrieve/define new paradigm;

❑ the consequence has been a drastic change of the editorial look which became increasingly headed towards electronic publication on the web;

# Why Grey Literature between tradition and innovation: is there a continuum?

Internet has become a universal repository where users, by means of web-based interfaces, can extract information from documentation. But not only: the web makes available to users what is called "social networking", that is a tool of interactive approach, a collective voice and a new way of communicating. The interactive nature of this tool makes information expand and creates an added value which enlarges knowledge.

In this modern XVIIIth century-like literary salon, culture is created and spread around with the purpose of establishing clusterings of contents and objectives. For sure a new Grey generation is born and the answer to the question " why social media for Grey, now" is very simple: "It is just moving with the times"

## …Why Grey Literature between tradition and innovation: is there a continuum?

Discussion and shared interest for knowledge is the adhesive of the social network members: it is a sort of modern literary salon where the meetings have a "free" and spontaneous nature, participants have a common socio-cultural background and the participation itself is the intrinsic purpose. This said, the importance of social networks lies just in the richness of relations – human, cultural, scientific, economic - which can be developed.

Is the web – alongside with its new ways of social media communication - the modern form of medieval "scriptorium"? How do the social media applications relate to Grey Literature and how can they be employed for research on Grey?

# The use of Single Terms in Grey Literature (about Social Networking )

| ID | single terms | relevance | |
|----|--------------|-----------|---|
| 1 | knowledge | 100.0% | |
| 2 | networking | 95.1% | |
| 3 | content | 76.0% | |
| 4 | library | 75.5% | |
| 5 | web | 71.3% | |
| 6 | database | 71.3% | |
| 7 | literature | 71.2% | |
| 8 | user | 70.8% | |
| 9 | information | 68.8% | |
| 10 | tool | 68.6% | |
| 11 | communication | 67.0% | |
| 12 | access | 60.4% | |
| 13 | community | 58.5% | |
| 14 | environment | 51.9% | |
| 15 | research | 51.4% | |
| 16 | sharing | 50.7% | |
| 17 | site | 50.6% | |
| 18 | health | 49.1% | |
| 19 | representation | 45.4% | |
| 20 | technology | 42.9% | |

# The use of relevant multiple terms in Grey Literature (about Social Networking)

| ID | relevant multiple terms (general purpose relevance) | relevance |
|----|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | grey literature | 100.0% |
| 2 | ability of user | 60.4% |
| 3 | new searchable database | 60.4% |
| 4 | interest group | 52.4% |
| 5 | presence blending information product | 42.4% |
| 6 | community of grey literature | 40.2% |
| 7 | discoverability of grey literature | 39.2% |
| 8 | kind of grey literature | 38.6% |
| 9 | interactive communication | 38.1% |
| 10 | social networking | 38.1% |
| 11 | incremental approach | 38.1% |
| 12 | mode of knowledge sharing\creation | 38.1% |
| 13 | range of social networking | 38.1% |
| 14 | concept from large document | 38.1% |
| 15 | area of general medicine | 38.1% |
| 16 | many more specialized example | 38.1% |
| 17 | communication with much variation | 38.1% |
| 18 | tool for volatile knowledge | 38.1% |
| 19 | online research interest group | 38.1% |
| 20 | realm of human interactivity | 38.1% |

# The use of Domain-Specific Multiple Terms in Grey Literature (about Social Networking)

| ID | domain-specific multiple terms (text-dependent relevance) | relevance |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | grey literature | 100.0% |
| 2 | social networking | 100.0% |
| 3 | ability of user | 100.0% |
| 4 | new searchable database | 100.0% |
| 5 | interactive communication | 100.0% |
| 6 | incremental approach | 100.0% |
| 7 | interest group | 100.0% |

•GL13 Thirteenth International Conference on Grey Literature

To conclude, it might be asserted that finding continuity between the old traditional way of producing and sharing Grey Literature and the current technological methods is a difficult task; continuity is rather to be found at the level of contents because Grey Literature will always be Grey literature, over time and technology.

The tables - created by means of the linguistic tools developed within the "DylanLab: Lab for Computational Models of the Dynamics of Language and Cognition" of the Institute of Computational Linguistics - allowed a textual analysis of the abstracts and titles belonging to the 'Social Networking' session of this Thirteenth International Conference on Grey Literature.