

Report on the Issues between GIF Participants (the US-Japan Case)

I. American perspectives

What follows are the problems identified thus far and the analyses for them. Please note that the issues are raised mostly from the perspective of the lending process in the U.S. and may appear less attentive to different contexts.

- **The communication device to be connected**

Effective communication is vital for the ILL service. If needs be, librarians in the U.S. can resort to the OCLC ILL function called “Lending Notes,” a common function to send queries and information requests to the borrowing library. However, this function is not available on the Japanese ILL system; Japanese libraries do not seem even know about the function. Thus, while US libraries keep sending questions to Japanese libraries through “Lending Notes,” Japanese libraries never receive those questions. Accordingly, the messages from both sides are often lost as the time limitation for an OCLC ILL request is four days.

Notes: “Lending Notes” is frequently used within US ILL service organizations and between US and other national ILL service organizations: e.g., the U.S. and European countries or South Korea. A sample note is: "Bad citation. We found the author's work in this journal but the title is different. Do you want us to send the copy?"; "This title consists of 16 volumes. Our ILL book lending policy is to lend only 5 volumes per request. Would you like us to send the first 5 books?" Unless Japanese ILL services accept the function, it is necessary to inform US libraries that a message through “Lending Notes” will not reach Japanese libraries.

- **The difficulty of extending the four-day limitation**

The Japanese ILL request system does not have the function of placing an OCLC symbol in more than once. In case, a US lending library owns a requested item in its storage facility, it often needs more days than the four-day limitation (one symbol) to get it. If “Lending Notes” is a viable option for requesting an extension of the working day limitation, there would not be a problem. As pointed out above, however, the “Lending Notes” function is not available for Japanese libraries, and US libraries have to find another way of contacting their partner in Japan. Certainly e-mail serves as a good alternative. Yet, Japanese libraries rarely include their e-mail addresses on ILL requests. It would be very helpful to facilitate ILL services if Japanese libraries provide their contact information in their requests at least until the “Lending Notes” function is established between US and Japanese libraries.

- **Problems in the list of GIF Participants in Japan**

<<http://wwwsoc.nii.ac.jp/gif/statistics/us/gif-japan-library.html>>

The list was created for users in the U.S., yet, it is not so friendly to American ILL service workers in terms of both the content and design.

1. Library names on the list sometime do not match with those in the database of the OCLC Policies Directory: e.g., “Aichi Prefectural University Library and Academic Information Center” on the list vs. “Aichi Prefectural Univ” in the OCLC database. Besides, some of OCLC symbols on the Japanese list have typos: e.g., “JAOUUID” for Ochanomizu University Library on the list should be “JAOUUL.” For the typos, see Attachment 1 “GIFList(Japanese).pdf”
2. The list is not organized in alphabetical order, which makes it very difficult for American ILL service workers to identify a target organization on the list. The list also includes information of no or little use to American users: e.g., “NACSIS-ILL ID” and “Abbreviation.”
3. Each title on the Japanese list is clickable and linked to the CiNii Japanese library database. They provide English language pages. However, oftentimes, the majority of the contents on the English language pages are yet to be translated into English. In addition, the CiNii pages are configured in different formats; some are well organized and more informative, but many of them are still poorly organized and lacking in some important information such as ILL-OCLC symbols. They also have links to online catalogues and library webpages, but the links are all still in Japanese and of no use to American ILL service workers.

- **The OCLC Policy Directory of Japanese libraries to be updated**

To contact Japanese libraries, US libraries rely on the OCLC Policy Directory of Japanese libraries. Yet the directory is old and less informative than it used to be. This is mainly because Japanese libraries have no access to the OCLC Policy Directory. Unless they can be allowed to access the OCLC Policy Directory and update their profile information on their own, a viable solution to this issue could be that Japanese libraries become properly informed of how they are profiled on the OCLC Policy Directory (institution names, institution symbols, contact information, lending policies, and so on). This will help Japanese libraries to better communicate with their US partners.

II. Other Potential Problems

- **The List of GIF Participating Libraries in North America to be updated**

<http://guides.nccjapan.org/content.php?pid=190477&sid=1970290>

1. It is not friendly to Japanese ILL service workers; especially, it does not provide a Japanese version.
2. It also includes data incorrect or unnecessary to Japanese ILL service workers, or lacks necessary information: broken URL links, old contact information, incorrect price, the name of library director, mechanical information such as Z39.50 Access and so on.

Note: Feedbacks from Japanese participants is encouraged to identify problems; it is fundamental for making the GIF project mutually beneficial, which is the ultimate goal of the project, not an assimilation of one system to the other.