Organizing Controversy:

Using Semantic Annotation to Develop a Culturally Hospitable Controlled Vocabulary of an Intangible Cultural Heritage

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Presentation Outline

1. Background

2. Analysis and Results

3. Questions and Implications

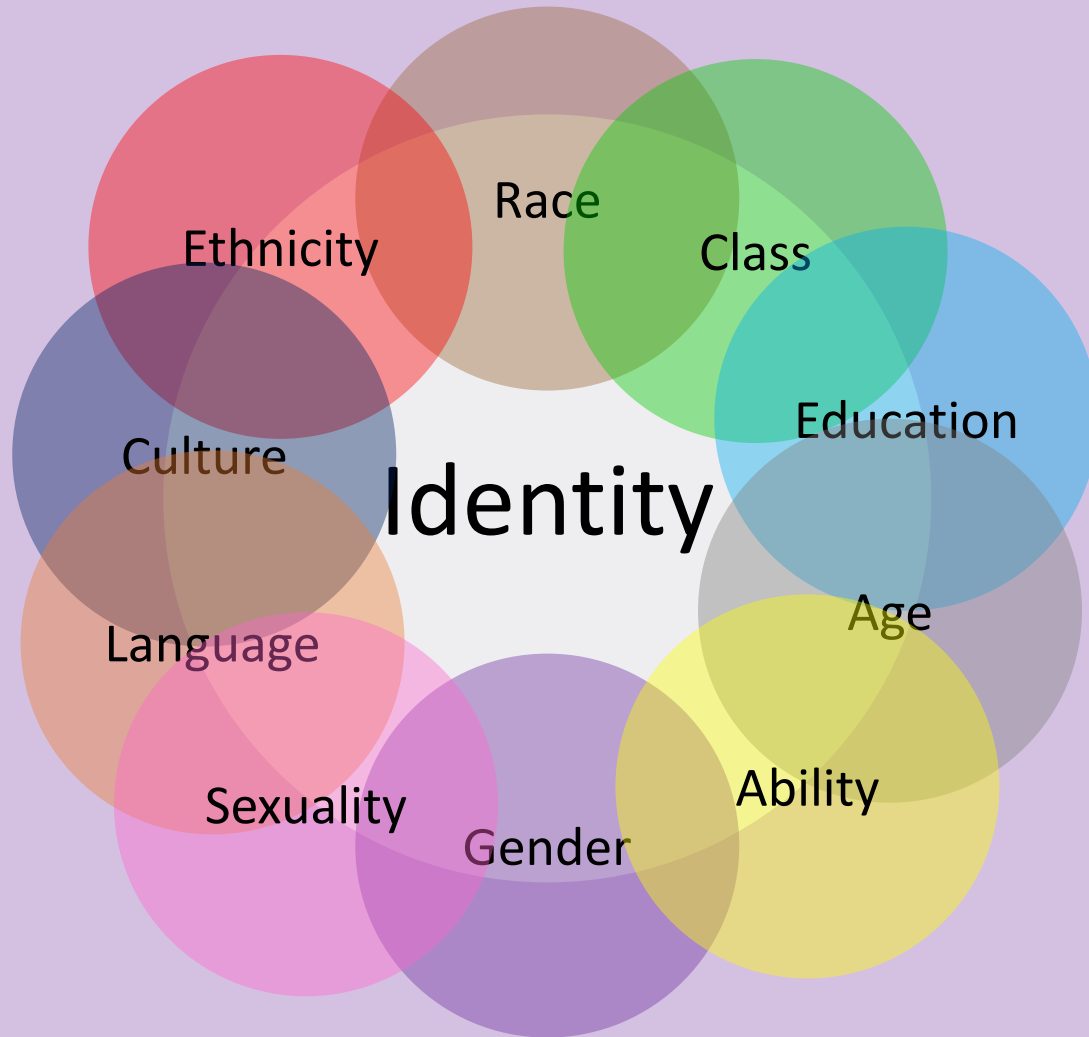# KOS development and use are discursive acts
(Dudley, 2019)

As a result, we need to be aware (and wary) of claims of universality (Olson, 1994) and the potentiality for harm (Adler & Tennis, 2013) in their effects as KOS can perpetuate historic or hegemonic bias, misrepresentation, or erasure against marginalized or vulnerable groups.

Examples of researched or suggested bias or lack of representation in controlled vocabularies (and remedial efforts)
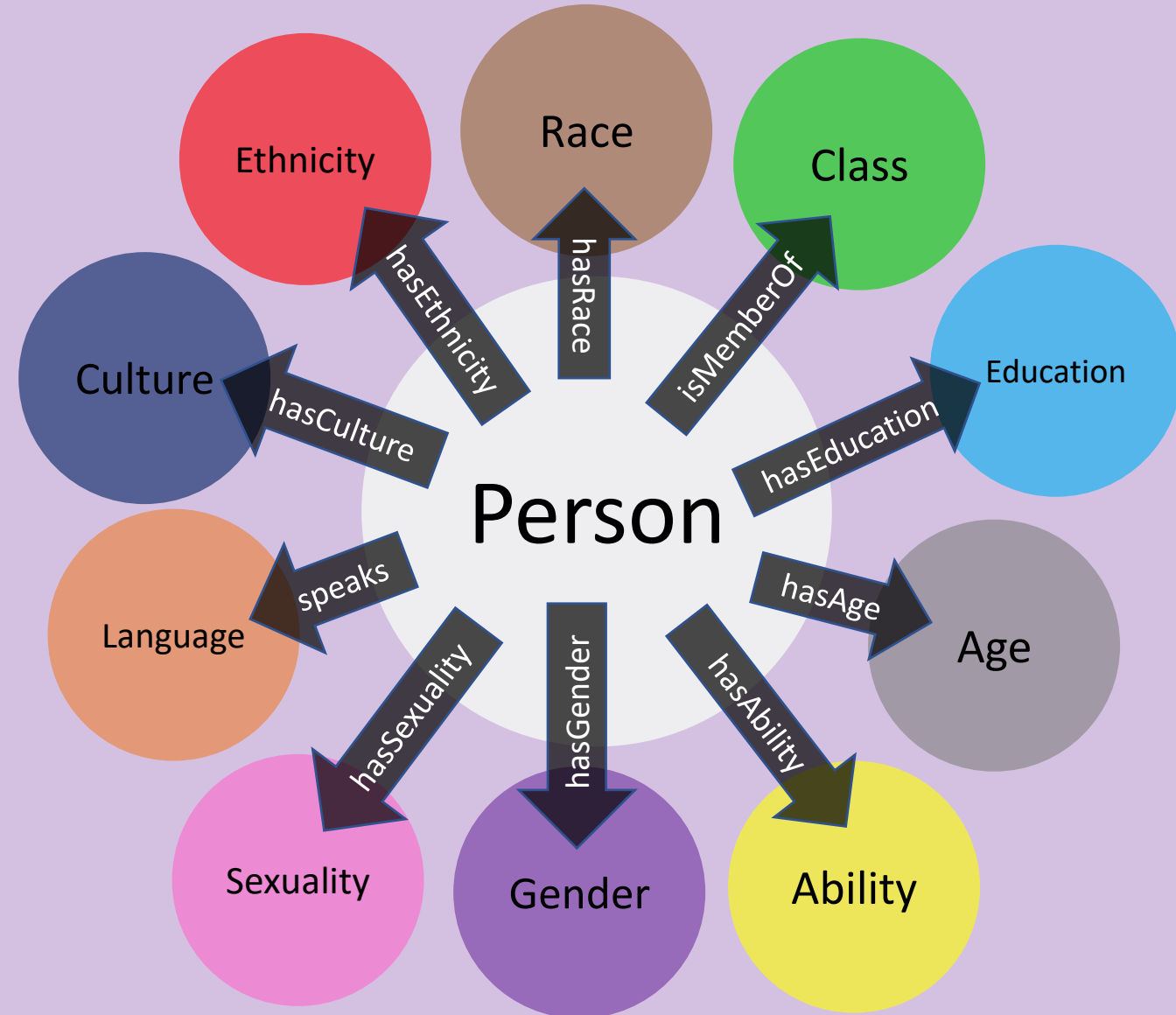
- Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) "illegal alien" controversy (Vaughan, 2018)
- Racialized library subject classifications in the U.S. (Adler, 2017)
- LCSH and topics related to Native American genocide (Dudley, 2017)
- Asian American representation in Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) (Higgins, 2016)
- Use of "East Indians" in LSCH (Biswas, 2018)
- Representation of Hawaiian Hula dance in Library of Congress Classification (LCC), DDC, LCSH, and Library of Congress and OCLC Authority Files (Hajibayova & Buente, 2017)
- Western systems (LCC, LCSH, DDC) and Indigenous knowledge (Moulaison Sandy & Bossaller, 2017)
- LCC and LCSH for African American and LGBTQIA studies (Howard & Knowlton, 2018)
- Use of systems from the U.S. in Canada and Latin America (McKennon, 2006)
- Classification schemes and organization of Islamic knowledge (Idrees, 2012)
- DCC and topics such as colonialism and unpaid labor, compared with their representation in *A Women's Thesaurus* (Olson, 1998)
- LCSH and DDC representation of feminist and women's topics (Olson, 2001)
- DDC categorization of religion (Shirky, 2005)
- LCC history sections (Shirky, 2005)

- Design of Indigenous KOS:
  - The Mashantucket Pequot Thesaurus of American Indian Terminology (Littletree & Metoyer, 2015)
  - Indigenized knowledge organization system for Xwi7xwa Library at the University of British Columbia, Canada (Doyle, Lawson, & Dupont, 2015)

Intersectionality

(and KOS: Fox, 2016)

Ontological Modeling

Moving from tools for indexers and catalogers to domain practitioners and user communities

- ## Transparency (Mai, 2015, 638-9)

  "any classification should make available to its users statements about the basis on which the system is designed"

  "appreciate the plurality of the epistemic and ontological statements their classifications make"

- ## Cultural Warrant (Beghtol, 1986)

  "**the means of inserting users' values into a KOS**, which will afterwards be accessed by the users themselves...bring[ing] the users closer to the information system, as it reflects values and predispositions on some of their assumptions" (Gomes & Guiomar da Cunha Frota, 2019, 642)

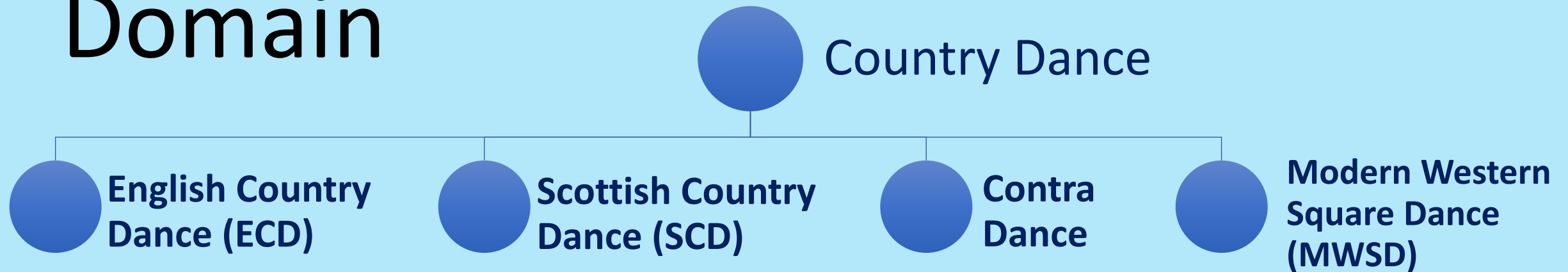 "the inclusion of cultural warrant would be a way to **reinforce semantic relations within KOSs**...[so that] at the end of a KOS creation, there would be **a relation of meanings closer to the users' knowledge**" (642)

Cultural Hospitality (Beghtol, 2002)

"we need to make each knowledge representation and/or organization system, which by definition is based on some cultural warrant, "permeable"...to other cultural warrants and to the specific levels and layers of individual choice within each culture" (518)

"user choice mechanisms as a theoretical foundation for establishing methods of developing culture-neutral systems and theories" (526)

Domain

Country Dance

English Country Dance (ECD)

Scottish Country Dance (SCD)

Contra Dance

Modern Western Square Dance (MWSD)

Discourse/Content

Meeting cultural warrant...looking beyond "official" sources

- Published dances: books, anthologies, articles
- Digital collections and databases
- Glossaries, calling manuals, handbooks, dance programs
- Blogs, listservs, online forums, social media discussions, meeting minutes
- Websites, About pages, personal essays, historical narratives and research
- Video and audio recordings
- Stories from callers and organizers, personal observations, and anecdotal accounts

Binary (Partnered) Role Terms

Country Dance

English Country Dance (ECD)

Gents / Ladies
Men / Ladies
Men / Women
Reds / Greens
Left File / Right File
Larks / Ravens

Scottish Country Dance (SCD)

Men / Ladies
Men / Women
Reds / Greens
Left File / Right File
Lions / Unicorns
Moles / Wombats
Larks / Ravens
Larks / Robins
Hearts / Flowers
Leaders / Followers
Stripes / Tartans

Contra Dance

Gents / Ladies
Men / Women
Leads / Follows
Larks / Ravens
Armbands / Barearms
Bands / Bares
Jets / Rubies
Ports / Starboards
Lions / Giraffes
Larks / Ravens
Larks / Robins
Stars / Moons
Elms / Maples
Gentlespoons / Ladles
Lefts / Rights

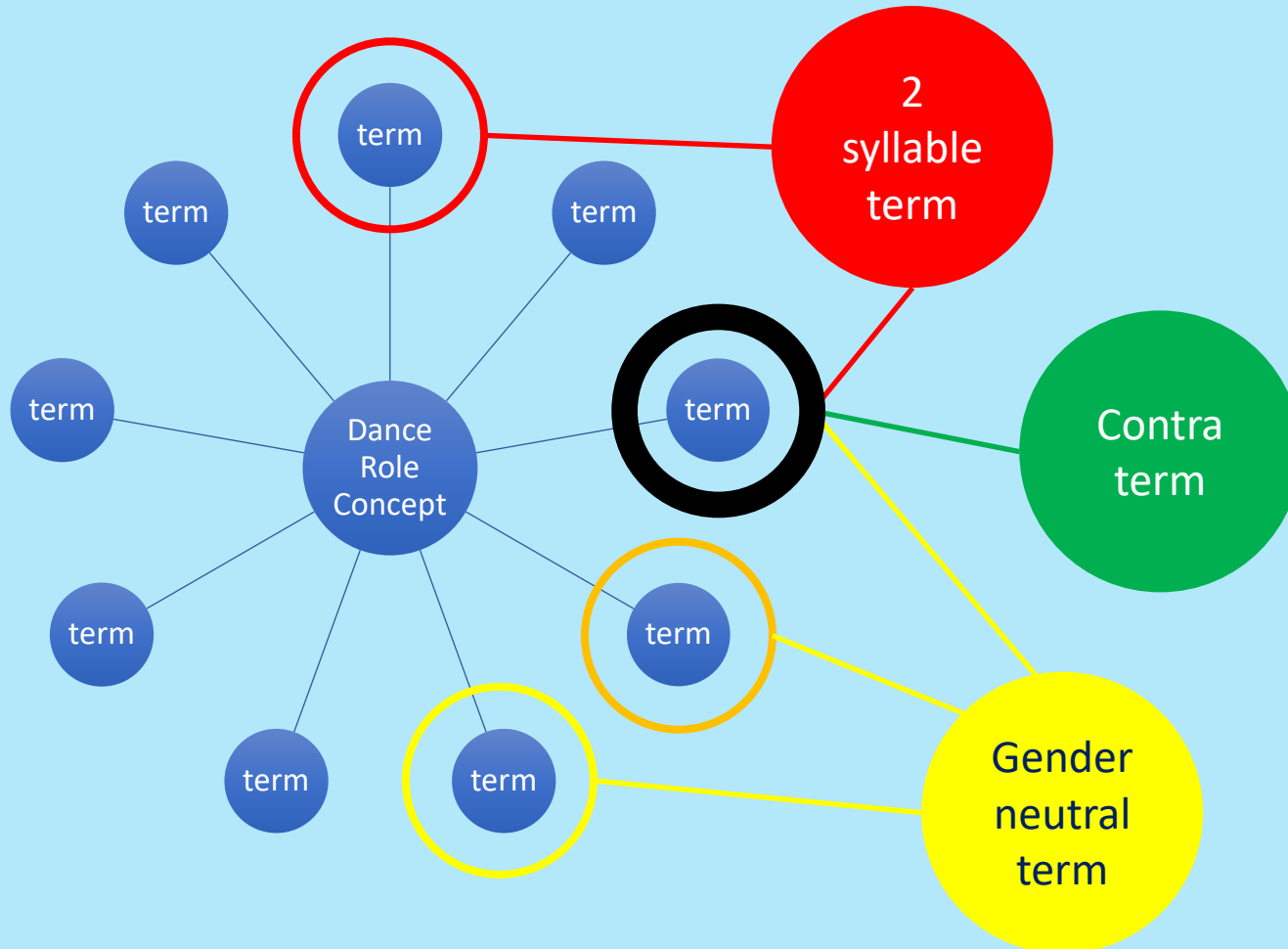### Modern Western Square Dance (MWSD)

Gents / Ladies
Men / Women
Boys / Girls
*Lead/Follow
*Beau/Belle

What were the important aspects/properties of dance role terms to be understood/modeled?

- Other half of the pair (Gent vs. Man / Lady; Lion / Giraffe vs. Unicorn)
- Which genre?
- Gendered? or Gender neutral?
- LGBTQ-friendly? (Band / Bare; Boy / Girl)
- Animal terms?
- Positional? (Left File / Right File; "global terminology")
- Power dynamic? (Lead / Follow; Lark / Raven vs. Robin)
- Number of syllables? (Gent, Lark / Lady, Raven)
- Starting consonant round? (Man, Mole / Woman, Wombat)
- Assonance? (Red, Gent; Lady, Raven)
- Where is it used? (Communities, Regions)
- Who uses it? (Callers, Communities)
- What is its source? (Documentation, Tracing heritage)

Semantic synonym rings

in which semantic relationships would determine the "preferred" term in each context

Terms have been annotated with values for relevant properties and contextual information

- Users choose which values are desired
- System returns or displays the term which accords with their intersecting preferences
- Similar to tags or labels in multilingual vocabularies

"Gypsy" Figure Controversy

Country Dance

English Country Dance (ECD)

gypsy
gipsy
whole-gip
"hop round one another"
"dance round each other"
"pass round each other"

Scottish Country Dance (SCD)

gypsy turn

gypsy poussette

"Gypsy Dreams"

Contra Dance

gypsy
shoulder round
gyre
spiral
two-eyed turn
walk around
face to face
vis-à-vis
...

gypsy star
gypsy meltdown
gypsy hey

"dance gypsy"

Modern Western Square Dance (MWSD)

walk around the corner

*all around the corner

What were the important aspects/properties of the names for the figure to be understood/modeled?

- Which genre?
- "Original" term? or Neutral term?
- Descriptive? (shoulder round; walk around; turn by the eyes; u turn)
- Eroticized? (flirt)
- Similarity to other terms for figures? (face to face; vis-à-vis)
- Starting consonant sound? (gyre, jedi)
- Number of syllables? (gyre; spiral; sparkle; whimsy; u turn)
- Clarity of sound? (spiral; rhapsody; sparkle)
- Assonance/Rhyming? (whimsy)
- Where is it used? (Communities, Regions)
- Who uses it? (Callers, Communities)
- What is its source? (Documentation, Tracing heritage)
- Date/time of use? (History)

Further Research Questions:

- How can semantic technologies support ethical KOS development?
- Where can existing linked data vocabularies be reused? *and...* How much is domain specific?

- Integrating with other folk and country dance genres
- Expanding accessibility with other dance concepts and vocabulary (e.g., physical and cognitive ability; beginners vs. advanced dancers)

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