

# Symposium “Dewey goes Europe: on the use and development of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) in European libraries”

28 April 2009, Austrian National Library, Vienna

## Abstracts

### **Inside the DDC / Joan Mitchell**

The Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system is a general knowledge organization system in wide use throughout the world. The most familiar manifestation of the system is the DDC number, a series of digits providing a language-independent representation of a particular concept. This presentation addresses the question, what is the DDC? by examining the rich set of data behind DDC numbers. Topics include contents of DDC data files (English-language plus those associated with interoperable translations), mappings between the DDC and other terminologies, and formats for representing DDC data.

### **DDC in Germany: experiences and perspectives / Heidrun Alex**

The presentation "DDC in Germany: experiences and perspectives" focuses on two aspects. Firstly, a brief overview of the introduction of the DDC in Germany will be provided, starting from the first decision to use DDC roughly ten years ago and giving an impression of the work of the DDC German project group so far. Secondly, the current situation will be presented, concentrating on the experiences with using DDC in the German National Library. Current problems as well as new developments, such as the updating of the *WebService Melvil* and a new licence agreement for the German DDC data, will be taken into account.

### **The use of the DDC at the Swiss National Library / Patrice Landry**

The Swiss National Library (SNL) adopted the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) as its classification scheme for its open access stacks collections and for the organization of its national bibliography, *Das Schweizer Buch* in 1999. Now after 10 years it is appropriate to look back at that decision and evaluate the use of the DDC. The presentation will describe the different uses of the DDC at the library and how these uses have increased and diversified over the years. The presentation will then look at future perspectives of the DDC at the library.

### **On the use of Dewey in Iceland / Þórdís T. Þórarinsdóttir**

Some background information on Iceland and the library world in Iceland as well as a short overview of the recent status of library and information services in the country will be presented. Þórdís T. Þórarinsdóttir describes the introduction of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system in Icelandic libraries in the year 1900, its promulgation and usage. She reports on the translations of the DDC into Icelandic and traces the use of the DDC versions in different Icelandic libraries, e.g. for subject analysis and for shelving as well. The presentation concludes with a future vision of the use of the DDC in Iceland.

### **DDC in Scandinavia: exploring new translation models of the DDC / Ingebjørg Rype and Magdalena Svanberg**

The National Library of Sweden decided to switch to DDC in 2008, and the decision has been followed by decisions by other Swedish libraries. As a result of this, there is a need for a Swedish translation of Dewey.

In Norway, DDC has been used since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There is a need for a new Norwegian edition since the latest one is based on DDC 21. The idea of a mixed edition came up since it would speed the translation process up and make maintenance easier. In a

mixed translation, DDC data in the vernacular plus additional data from the English-language full edition is used to form a single mixed edition.

The presentation will explain why new translation models, i.e. the mixed model, are under consideration in Norway and Sweden. Rype and Svanberg will present results from two pilot studies and a workshop and how the feedback from these occasions has resulted in changes in the original model. Also differences between Norway and Sweden will be discussed, and how this might lead to different approaches to future translation models of DDC in the two countries.

### **DDC on the Semantic Web: publishing the German DDC 22 and the SWD as Linked Open Data in MelvilSearch / Lars Svensson**

The anticipated licensing of the German DDC 22 under a Creative Commons license will open new possibilities to publish that data on the web. *MelvilSearch* already publishes the DDC captions and can easily be enhanced not only to present the notations, too, but can also be used to present an RDF version of the CC-licensed DDC data, thus making the DDC data part of the Semantic Web. Further we can leverage on the DDC-SWD relations established in the *CrissCross* project and publish those crosswalks as part of the RDF graph in *MelvilSearch*. This way we can create a small semantic network for classification and indexing vocabularies which others can link to as well, thus making the DDC and SWD data part of *Tim Berner-Lees Giant Global Graph*.

### **Retrieval concepts and mapping strategies: the potential of CrissCross for improving access to DDC / Jessica Hubrich**

Functionality and efficiency of topical queries depend on the underlying retrieval concepts and the kind of subject data integrated within information retrieval systems. In heterogeneous information spaces access to information resources can be fundamentally improved by adding adequate connecting links between prevalent indexing languages. However, their practicality in respect to different search and exploration processes is influenced by the specific mapping strategies applied.

Taking common retrieval concepts as initial points, the interdependency between retrieval concepts and mapping strategies is described and the additional value of the mappings that are produced within the frame of the *CrissCross* project is pointed out.

### **Terminology services and the DDC: the High-Level Thesaurus and beyond / Gordon Dunsire**

The presentation will discuss the potential functionality of terminology services, with specific reference to the *High-Level Thesaurus* (HILT) project. HILT currently maps controlled subject vocabularies to DDC notation and uses DDC as a switching mechanism between separate subject schemes. The project started in 2000, and is now in its fourth phase which is investigating the embedding of pilot terminology services in existing information retrieval interfaces. The presentation will also discuss ways of complementing the HILT approach with other subject interoperability methods and mechanisms.