



Dewey goes Europe: International symposium  
on the use and development of the Dewey Decimal  
Classification (DDC) in European libraries



# On the use of Dewey in Iceland

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# Overview

- Background information on Iceland
- Overview of library and information services
- Introduction of Dewey in the year 1900
- Translations of Dewey into Icelandic
- Development of Dewey in Iceland
- Usage of Dewey in different library types
- Classification as subject analysis
- Future perspectives

# Iceland - Background

- Size of the country: 103.000 km<sup>2</sup> (39.756 mi<sup>2</sup>)
- Population: 322.000 – ca. 3 persons per km<sup>2</sup>
- 75% of the population in the capital area
- Infrastructur: complicated and costly
- National language: Icelandic
- For centuries Danish colony, 1944 Republic
- Big change after the Second World War
- October 2008 – Economic crisis – Impact?



# Libraries in Iceland

## Timeline 1



### **Not a longstanding library tradition**

1790 the first reading society

- 1937 law passed on their operation

1818 National Library

- 1886 Legal deposit copies

1911 University of Iceland in Reykjavík

- 1940 Faculty libraries merged – Dewey 1945

1923 Reykjavík City Library – Danish Dewey



# Libraries in Iceland

## Timeline 2



1955 the first public library law

- Directorate of Public and School Libraries

1956 Library Science, University of Iceland

Librarians Associations vs Library Associations

- 1960 Icelandic Librarians Association
- 1973 Association of Professional Librarians
- 1999 Merged: Library and Info. Science Ass.

1994 National and University Library merged

# Dewey comes to Iceland - timeline

1890s Jón Ólafsson works in libraries in USA

- Management of libraries, Class.: Dewey.

1900 introduces Dewey to the Nat. Library

1900-1913 Classifies and catalogues foreign material according to the Dewey system.

1902 the first writing in Icelandic on lib. sci.

- Guidelines: class., cat. and management
- First translation (outline) of Dewey in Icelandic



# Icelandic translations of Dewey



1902 Outline printed in a journal article.

1952 Abridged with an index: Book chapter.

1955 More abridged ed. for small public libraries

1970 Based on the 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> eds, but abridged.

– Book, the first licenced translation.

1987 Based on the 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> abr. ed.- Shorter.

2002 translation of the 13<sup>th</sup> abridged ed. 1997.

Icelandic translations for the most part voluntary work

# Icelandic options

- From the first Icelandic translation (1902) the local emphasis options used in language and literature and from 1952 shorter numbers for geographic areas.
- Historical periods and the geographic areas for Iceland have been expanded.
- Some other class numbers have also been adapted, e.g. for Nordic languages and for the Nordic countries.



# Icelandic options

## Example 1- 400

<b>Class</b>	<b>Icelandic edition</b>	<b>English full edition</b>
<b>400.1</b>	# Philosophy and theory	
<b>401</b>	# Linguistics	Philosophy and theory
<b>410</b>	# Icelandic	Linguistics
<b>436.6</b>	# Norwegian	439.85
<b>436.69</b>	# Faeroese	439.699
<b>439.8</b>	# Danish	439.81

# Icelandic options

## Example 2 - 800

<b>Class</b>	<b>Icelandic 2002 edition</b>	<b>English full edition</b>
<b>810</b>	# Icelandic literature	American literature in English
<b>819</b>	# Old Icelandic literature	(American literature in English not requiring local emphasis)
<b>820</b>	# American English and English literatures	English and Old English literatures
<b>839.6</b>	# Norwegian literature	839.82
<b>836.69</b>	# Faeroese literature	839.699
<b>839.79</b>	# Finnish-Swedish lit.	
<b>839.8</b>	# Danish literature	839.81

# Geographical area Expanded

Table 2: Icelandic edition –491 • English full edition –491 2

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An example of the geographic expansion  
according to Table 2 in the Icelandic edition

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- 491 Country number for Iceland from Table 2
- 491 3 Vesturland (the Western part of Iceland)
- 491 31 Mýra- og Borgarfjarðarsýsla (county)
- 491 311 Akranes (small town)

# Historical periods Icelandic Expansion

Class	Historical Periods
<b>949.101</b>	<b>Forsaga til 874; söguskeið til 1262; landnám, 874-930</b>
949.101 1	Þjóðveldisöld, 930-1262
<b>949.102</b>	<b>Miðaldir, 1262-1550</b>
<b>949.103</b>	<b>Siðaskipti til stjórnarskrár, 1550-1874</b>
<b>949.104</b>	<b>Landshöfðingjatímabilið, 1874-1904</b>
<b>949.105</b>	<b>20. öld</b>
949.105 1	Heimastjórn, 1904-1918
949.105 2	Fullveldistímabil, 1918-1940/1944
949.105 21	Hernám Breta/skeið aðskilnaðar frá Dönum, 1940-1944
949.105 3	Lýðveldi, 1944-
<b>949.106</b>	<b>2000-</b>

# Use of Dewey 1

- Elementary school libraries
  - Icelandic edition – broad classification
- Secondary school libraries
  - Full English edition & Icelandic edition combined
- Public Libraries
  - Reykjavík City Library – Danish version of Dewey
  - Other Public Libraries: Icelandic edition.
- Research and special libraries
  - In most cases the full English edition



# Danish Dewey

## Some examples



### English language edition

110 Metaphysics

130 Paranormal phenomena

140 Philosophical schools

150 Psychology

400 Language

890 Other literatures

910 Geography & travel

990 Other parts of world

### Danish edition

110 Logic

130 Psychology

140 Paranormal phen.

150 Ethics

400 Geography & travel

890 Language

910 Historical periods

990 Biography

# Use of Dewey 2

- The National and University Library.
  - Leading position among Icelandic libraries.
  - Full English ed. and Icelandic edition combined.
  - From 1994 Dewey in electronic form.
  - Dewey used in the National Bibliography .
- Union Catalogue of Libraries, [www.gegnir.is](http://www.gegnir.is)
  - No coordination in classification.
  - Main emphasis on subject indexing.
  - Classification by Command Code Language Search

# Classification vs. Indexing in Iceland

- Little cooperation regarding classification.
- Before the automation of libraries classification used for subject analysis.
  - Class numbers instead of subject headings.
- Together with the automation and the publication of an Icelandic thesaurus subject headings assigned.
  - Now main emphasis placed on subject indexing.
- Classification mainly used for shelving.



# Future perspectives

- Dewey used in Icelandic libraries in the future.
- A new translation is due since the latest one is based on the abridged 13<sup>th</sup> edition from 1997.
  - Mixed translation model possible?
- With subject indexing close classification not as important as before – classification for shelving.
  - No classification coordination in Icelandic libraries
- Classification important subject access tool.

# DDC: Icelandic translations (chronological order)

- Dewey, Melvil. (2002). *Flokkunarkerfi Deweys ásamt afstæðum efnislykli*. Stytt íslensk útgáfa. Ritstjóri: Guðrún Karlsdóttir. Reykjavík: Landsbókasafn Íslands – Háskólabókasafn. [Translation of the 13th abridged edition of DDC, published 1997 by Forest Press, Albany, NY, which is based on the 21st unabridged edition from 1996.]
- Dewey, Melvil. (1987) *Flokkunarkerfi*. Reykjavík: Samstarfsnefnd um upplýsingamál. [Based on the 11th abridged edition and on a draft of the 12th edition.]
- Dewey, Melvil. (1970) *Flokkunarkerfi fyrir íslensk bókasöfn*. Reykjavík: Bókafulltrúi ríkisins. [Based on the 16th and 17th (1965) unabridged editions of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) but abbreviated.]
- Guðmundur G. Hagalín (1955). *Leiðbeiningar um flokkun og skráningu bóka*. Reykjavík, Fræðslumálaskrifstofan. [Adapted translation of the first and second summary.]
- Björn Sigfússon, Ólafur F. Hjartar. (1952). *Bókasafnsrit 1. Myndunar- og skráningarstörf. Afgreiðsla. Bókaval*. Reykjavík: Menntamálaráðuneytið. 56-74. [Chapter in a book. The top three levels are shown and in some cases the fourth level as well.]
- Jón Ólafsson (1902). Smábókasöfn – ýmislegt um fyrirkomulag þeirra, einkum röðun og skrásetning. *Tímarit Hins íslenska bókmenntafélags*, 23, 84-110. [Discussion in a journal article, main classes and some more summaries.]