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2. Brief biographical footnotes
3. Geographical identifications
4. Object descriptions
5. Expanded information about secondary topics
6. Glosses for unusual words or expressions
7. Documentation of contrasting views
8. Side-remarks and commentaries
9. Suggested relationships and associations
10. Translations of quoted material
11. Cross references to other locations in the text
12. Expressions of acknowledgement and gratitude.

The authors provide ample examples and very helpful comments on how to construct footnotes of these various types. After reading their book I felt that my supervisor might well have been wrong and that I need to question my own habit of using only parenthetical notes for bibliographical information.

Helpful in this connection is a comparison made by Noel Coward and mentioned by Grafton in his essay[4]. According to Noel Coward, looking up a footnote is like interrupting a game of love in order to go downstairs to answer the door bell. I think elaborating on this example could help us better to understand the contrasting attitudes towards footnotes. Some people go down to open the door, because they feel obliged to do so and thus do not dare to ignore it; other people go down, because they expect at the door something which might enhance their pleasure upstairs; still others will go downstairs, because they expect at the door something more interesting than the action in which they are presently engaged and lastly, some, of course, decide simply to ignore the door bell altogether.

Having this in mind, in my opinion a good writer should be cautious about ringing the door bell: Is it really necessary to ring the bell? Is it the right moment? Is the way of ringing annoying? On the other hand, a good reader should ask oneself: What do I really want? Do I need to go downstairs? Can I use my prospective experience downstairs for the action I am engaged in upstairs? To answer these questions, the reader needs to have a considerable amount of competence and self-confidence; otherwise he must always go downstairs every time the bell rings. Finally, a good footnote should leave it to the reader as to how she or he should react to the ringing bell. In other words: a footnote should not impose itself upon the reader in such a way that ignoring it would impede understanding of the main text.

Notes:

1 He illustrates one of his arguments by extensively quoting from Hinkmar von Repkow's dissertation "Noten ohne Text" (Notes without text). In this dissertation, published in 1743 by Rabener, Repkow argues that a writer will become famous only through his footnotes, not by his main text. Consequently, Rebkow's dissertation almost entirely consisted of notes.

2 I dare to be sexistic in using only the male pronoun, but in Ranke's time there were no female historians. It was men who were supposed to make history and men who were supposed to write history.

3 Although these functions do not serve scientific purposes I have to admit that I occasionally like to see at least one of the first four functions to be fulfilled in some footnotes. Sometimes this is the only reason why a text is worthwhile to read.

4 The following passage shows that, despite my change of mind, I have not yet joined the ranks of the footnote-freaks. I considered relegating this illustration to the footnotes, but decided instead to incorporate it into my text after all.

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BUDER, MARIANNE, REHFELD, WERNER, SEEGER, THOMAS, & STRAUCH, DIETMAR (Eds.), (1997). **Grundlagen der praktischen Information und Dokumentation: Ein Handbuch zur Einführung in die fachliche Informationsarbeit.** [Fundamentals of Practical Information and Documentation. A Manual Serving as an Introduction to Professional Information Work]. Initiated by Klaus Laisiepen, Ernst Lutterbeck and Karl-Heinrich Meyer-Uhlenried. (4th entirely revised ed.). München/New Providence/London/Paris: Saur. XLIII, 1069 p., 3-598-11310-2.

Only five years after its 3rd edition, the "Fundamentals of Practical Information and Documentation" is now presented in a substantially revised version, a fact furnishing convincing proof of the importance of this standard work.

In all, 50 editors and authors (some two thirds of whom also contributed to the aforegoing edition) once again present the current state of the art not only in its manifold forms of expression and function, but also in its entire breadth, ranging from time-tested procedures like punched cards (still good for 6 pages) to various forms of automated procedures, e.g. for abstracting. The overall concept and thematic structure of the preceding edition being found meaningful and valid, they were left intact. By the same token, the overall arrangement of the work was retained, without adverse effects on the presentation of current developments. However: "Only a few contributions could, with minimal updating, be taken over 'as is' into the 4th edition. Most had to be completely revised and rewritten as well as updated." (Foreword, VIII-IX)

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Nevertheless, the new edition reflects a number of shifts in emphasis, of which only a few can be mentioned here. Thus, the section "Dokumentationssprachen" (Documentation Languages) by M. Burkart has now been subdivided into "Classification" by H.-J. Manecke – who, in general, presents the Universal Decimal Classification, but above all the Colon Classification in greater detail than the preceding edition (though by no means in such detail as in the 2nd edition) - and "Thesaurus" by M. Burkart. It should be noted here that the term "Documentation language" is used much more sparingly in the new edition.

Attention is called also to examples of minor changes of headings (signifying terminological changes?). Thus, J. L. Staud entitled his two sections in the preceding edition "Statistische Information" (Statistical Information, p.402-427) and "Wirtschaftsinformationen" (Economic Data, p.559-592), whereas in the new edition the same author uses the terms "Statistische Informationen" (Statistical Data, p.327-340, hence shortened) and "Wirtschaftsinformation" (Economic Information, p.556-571, hence likewise shortened). Deleted, by the way, in the new edition is Chapter G: "Informationswissenschaft an Hochschulen" (Information Science at Institutes of Higher Learning) – whose contents, tightly condensed, have been transferred to the part dealing with profession and training as well as the "Reprography" section, which in 1991 still comprised pages 716-731. The subject "Hypertext", hardly treated at all in the preceding edition, is now introductorily presented by R. Kuhlen (p.355-369). Librarians and other readers interested in the ongoing discussion will be pleased with the section on "Bibliothekswissenschaft" (Library Science). Surprisingly perhaps, in contrast to the 3rd edition (S. Büttner), the new edition speaks quite matter-of-factly about "Archivwissenschaft" (Archive science, A. Menne-Haritz, p.468). Helpful, furthermore, is the section on "Entwicklung der Institutionen der Information und Dokumentation" (Development of Information and Documentation Institutions" (H.-J. Manecke and Th. Seeger, p.31-49), containing, among other things, an instructive outline of developments in the former East Germany, the GDR (p.39-48). Among the Information and Documentation Institutions, the "Gesellschaft für Klassifikation" (Classification Society) is regrettably listed under its old, no longer correct address. Deserving of mention here is also the "International Society for Knowledge Organization" (ISKO), leading a rather hidden existence on p.159. To complete the record here: the journal "International Classification" (p.159), rightly called recommendable, but incorrectly termed "mainly German-language", was renamed into "Knowledge Organization" as of Vol. 20 (1993).

The alphabetic index, whose importance is stressed already in the foreword (p.IX), turns out to be too short and indeed incomplete in this edition as well. Thus, in a number of index entries tested, the index fails to list all locations where the given term occurs. A few examples: "Compuserve", add p.55, "Gleichordnendes Indexieren" (Coordinate indexing), add. p.125, "Informationskanal" (Information channel), add p.18, "Informationsvermittlung" (Online information service), add p.24 and 447, "Klassifikation" (Classification), add p.124, "P. Otlet", add. p.148, "Thesaurus", add. p.486. In addition, various terms playing an important part in the text do not appear in the index at all, e. g. "Informationswirtschaft" (Information economy), p.11, "Papier" (Paper), p.21, "Standortkatalog" (Shelf catalogue), p.486, "Systematischer Katalog" (Classified catalogue), p.486.

Also regrettable is the fact that the entries in the list of abbreviations on occasion diverge from those in the subject index. Thus "Btx" is the abbreviation for "Bildschirmtext" (viewdata, p.XXXIX), but the index lists it as "Btx s. T-Online" (p.1057). From a formal point of view, different manners of citation strike the eye. Thus, the 3rd edition is repeatedly cited as a source document for chapters in the new edition, but the manner of citation frequently differs. Of importance, finally, are the detailed reflections on the current state, development and prognosis of information and documentation, including worthwhile reflections on "Ethics in Cyberspace" (R. Capurro, p.1000-1007).

The small number of remarks to be made underlines the importance and value of the fundamental work briefly reviewed here, which – particularly in view of its polymorphous character – is both informative and invites to further study. The "Fundamentals of Practical Information and Documentation" remains required reading for all interested in subject indexing and questions of information and documentation.

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