

## FID/CR News 48

Nancy Williamson

FID/CR News Editor

### National Activities Reported at the 1998 IFLA Conference

During the 1998 IFLA Conference in Amsterdam members and attendees at the meetings of the IFLA Standing Committee on Classification and Indexing reported on classification and indexing activities in the countries of which they were representative. Highlights and excerpts from these reports follow. **Magda Heiner-Freiling** from the Deutsche Bibliothek reported on "Project MUSE – a Multilingual Thesaurus Project of European National Libraries". In the spring of 1997, the MUSE (Multilingual Subject Entry) project was established to investigate the linking of national subject authority files to create a multilingual thesaurus from the files of four European National Libraries. Its purpose is not "to translate terms from one language to another or establish a homogenous thesaurus with terms in different languages". Rather its "aim is the linkage between already existing national thesauri which remain in their own linguistic surroundings, but offer the opportunity of switching to the user of an OPAC or national bibliographic database." The project initiative originated with the Schweizerische Landesbibliothek Bern. After contacts with a number of European national libraries, a working group was formed which includes two members each from the British Library, the Schweizerische Landesbibliothek, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the Deutsche Bibliothek, under the roof of CoBRA the initiative of the Conference of European Libraries (CENL). Several working meetings have been held and additional information contacts have been made through IFLA conferences and e-mail. A working plan has been developed. As a pilot project, two very different specific fields (sports and theatre) were selected to extract all relevant subject headings from three authority files (LCSH, RAMEAU and SWD) and to establish links among the descriptors. The intention is to produce three trilingual lists starting from each of the three component lists. These lists will each present the correct links between the three subject indexing languages, including not only the equivalences (or best matches) between descriptors, but also between a descriptor in one system and a string in another system. The Working Group recognizes that it will encounter problems created by fun-

damental differences in the languages and by the variable structure of the lists. Also there will be problems in constructing the software for handling the thesaurus. An interim report, that will include the descriptor lists and two comparative studies, is planned for early 1999.

As reported by **Adriana Kiraly**, the principal event in Romania in 1998 was the publication of the first UDC International edition in Romanian. Published in two parts in 1997 and 1998, this publication was authorized by the UDC Consortium. Translation and publication was carried out by the National Library of Romania and is based on the UDC Master Reference File including amendments up to Extensions and Corrections no. 18, 1996. The advent of this publication will promote the use of the same edition of UDC in national, public and university libraries in Romania from January 1999. Romania has been progressing with modernizing its methods of subject indexing, moving from title keyword indexing to controlled vocabulary. In 1996, under the co-ordination of the Bucharest Central University Library, the university libraries of Romania initiated a national programme for the construction of a Romanian subject heading system based on UDC structure and the alphabetical subject index to UDC and using Library of Congress Subject Headings as a model. A Thesaurus for Science and Technology has also been prepared. For purposes of improving communication, in December 1997 a National Commission for UDC was created. A representative of the National Library of Russia reported that the first version of a Subject Authority File (NLR SAF) has been created. It includes more than a million headings from the various disciplines and fields of knowledge. The list can be used for subject indexing of various types including monographs, periodicals, and serials. It is planned to first use the NLR SAF in the Russian National Library. The list will be updated annually by about 12,000 records and will be distributed in the Russian communication format for authority data.

**Pia Leth** reported on classification and indexing activities in Sweden. She spoke briefly about the Royal Library and the Swedish national union catalogue – LIBRIS, which is presently undergoing a major transformation from a mainframe to a client-server envi-

ronment. The change over is expected to be realized during 1999. Brief reference was made to the Klassifikationsystem for svenska (SAB), a uniquely Swedish classification system which is used by most university libraries and all public libraries in Sweden. With the changes in LIBRIS there is increased concern about the quality of subject headings and while, until recently, many libraries have relied on classification codes for subject access, greater use of subject headings in conjunction with classification is seen as a means of improved searching for the end user in future. Among the problems to be faced is the fact that there is no common subject authority list for the country. In past years, the index to SAB has substituted for such a list. The SAB index has classification codes linked to the subject headings but there are no hierarchical relationships. In order to address the problem, a conference was held in February 1998 with the goal of encouraging the libraries to cooperate on subject headings. A "real authority list" with hierarchical structure is needed. The willingness is there but differing traditions and the lack of guidelines are problems which must be dealt with. Guidelines are to be prepared with the idea that first they will have to be acceptable to the Royal Library and then adopted by all LIBRIS libraries. Other systems, such as LCSH, and subject authority systems in other countries are being looked at for support. Also there is an interest in the development of multilingual lists.

A report from Norway by **Jon Anger** indicated that the main activities of 1998 were planning the new Norwegian abridged edition of the Dewey Decimal Classification based on DDC21 and the updating of the Norwegian guidelines for indexing. Work on the abridged DDC is expected to begin in late 1998 or early 1999. Work on the guidelines is also a hope for 1999. **Lois May Chan** reported on subject indexing and classification in the United States. The centennial of the first publication of the Library of Congress Subject Headings was celebrated on June 27 1998, during the ALA conference. Concurrent with the celebration, the 21st edition, published in June, was designated as the centennial edition of LCSH. Major changes in this edition are the implementation of form headings as distinguished from form subdivisions and the inclusion (in the electronic version) of not only records for main headings but also separate records for free-floating subdivisions. Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) continues to be published annually. A major change in MeSH took place recently when the geographic form divisions were taken out of the subject strings and assigned to separate fields. "This signifies a move of MeSH towards a more faceted, postcoordinate system." The Metathesaurus, a database of information on concepts that appear in one or more controlled vocabularies and classifications in the

field of biomedicine continues to expand. It now contains more than one million different concepts from more than forty systems. With respect to the Library of Congress Classification, the most important recent development is its conversion to machine readable form using the MARC Classification format. The machine readable version is used within LC and is available to other libraries in a CD-ROM product called "Classification Plus", which contains both LC classification and LC subject headings with links between them. From its inception, the LC Classification has been an incomplete scheme because the law schedules had not been developed. With the publication of Subclass KZ (Law of Nations) in 1997 the scheme is now complete. In another US project the Subject Analysis Committee of the American Library Association is studying the application of subject data, including classification, free-text and controlled vocabularies, in meta data records, particularly Dublin Core records. Two committees have been struck charged with "recommending the most effective methods of supplying subject data for the representation of the contents of world wide web resources." In another report on classification research in the United States, **Marcia Zeng** reported on the metadata project and a number of other developments. Among these were the REACH project (Record Export for Art and Cultural Heritage) being launched by the Getty Information Institute. The project is designed to address the museum community's need for an efficient and robust information network that facilitates access to information that museums wish to share with researchers and the public. Related projects include the Art Information Task Force (AITF), sponsored by the Getty Institute and the College Art Association, which has developed "The Categories for the Description of Works of Art" which articulate an intellectual structure for the content of object and image descriptions. A similar project under the Visual Resources Association has developed "The Core Categories for Visual Resources", intended to be a guideline for the development of local databases and catalogue records.

FID/CR Preconference Seminar An FID/CR preconference seminar on "Classification Research in the Information Era" was held on October 13, 1998 at Jaipur, India in conjunction with the 49th FID Conference in New Delhi. Professor P.N. **Kaula** was the local coordinator and Dr. M.P. Satija served as the rapporteur. In his introductory remarks, Professor Kaula traced the history of FID/CR which had been established through the efforts of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan. He provided vivid details of the eleven reports on research and development in classification submitted by Ranganathan from 1950 to 1961, published in the FID journal *Revue de la Documentation* and mentioned in the memorandum submitted by Ranga-

than to FID at the seminar held in Warsaw, Poland in 1959. Referring to the work of various chairpersons of FID/CR, **Hansen Molgaard**, **A. Neelemeghan**, **Ingetraut Dahlberg** and **Nancy Williamson**, he outlined the priorities of the present chair, **Ia McIlwaine**. He also traced the history and themes of the six International Study Conferences on Classification Research from the Dorking conference in 1957 to the London conference in 1997. In doing so, Kaula highlighted the contributions made by India to FID/CR. Finally, explaining the importance of the theme and subthemes of this seminar, Kaula gave a brief account of the 14 papers to be presented in the two sessions of the one day seminar. The seminar was formally opened by **Mr. T.R. Verma**, Director General, National Institute of Agricultural Marketing, Jaipur, who stressed the organization, dissemination and use of information for the all-round development of society.

In the first technical session six papers were presented. The session was chaired by Prof. Kaula and the papers presented focused on knowledge structure, subject indexing and comparative classification. In the first paper, **A. Y. Asundi** (India) presented an exploratory study on "Re-orienting Library Classification in the Electronic Information Environment". Depicting the growth of knowledge, he applied Ranganathan's apupa pattern to the arrangement of the literature in Physics Abstracts, emphasizing the need to discover some new modes in the growth of knowledge. **M.P. Satija** (India), in his paper on "Structural Relations in Ranganathan's Colon Classification", explained the structure of knowledge as portrayed by Ranganathan and listed the kinds of relations postulated in his system. Absolute sequence can still be the key to the general and grandmotherly order of facets yet to be discovered. Ranganathan's order of categories and facets in his facet formula is based on sound and crystallised principles. Satija also identified a need to discover new modes for the formation of subjects in an information age with intricate and highly involved interrelationships in the turbulent growth of knowledge. **Susanne Ornager** (Denmark), in her paper on "Images and Concepts: Indexing and Retrieval of Documentary Photos", described methods devised for retrieval of digitized images and pictures through effective indexing. Teamwork is required among art historians, semiologists and cataloguers to depict the factual and expressional description of a picture for its effective retrieval. It may help to develop a user interface for newspaper archives and for storage and retrieval of photos, paintings and other icons. In an innovative paper on "Web Access: a Subject Indexing Perspective", **S.M. Shafi** (India) said that the World Wide Web has seen the development and utilization of many tools and techniques for navigating and surfing for information through the indexing of websites us-

ing distributed subject trees or web catalogues and indices such as BUBL, Excite and Galaxy. The author reviewed some of these content analysis techniques with particularly reference to post-coordinate indexing. Foreseeing a role for subject indexing techniques in the development of innovative software for web access, he made a plea for the re-engineering of websites to supplant the unorganized order of the web. **Rosa San Segundo Manuel** (Spain), in her paper "Innovations in the organization of Electronic Information", described her experiments in designing an automatic indexing language using OCLC data. For this study, a group of 15 bibliographic elements identified and named as the Dublin Core were used to improve the effectiveness of a search engine. For the twenty first century, a paradigm shift in classification is envisaged by this author. The final paper in the session was a paper on comparative classification prepared in the late 1950s by D.J. Foskett. It highlighted the work of S.R. Ranganathan, Eric de Grolier and B.C. Vickery with special reference to the status of coding, classification, retrieval and machine translation at that time. Professor Kaula described that period as the golden era in the history of classification.

The second session of the afternoon, chaired by **Anna Maria Prat** (Chile), included six papers. In her introductory remarks the Chairperson described her own initiation into classification and reflected on the state of classification in Chile today. The first paper of the session was "Bridging Between Cognitive Paradigms for Developments: Relevant Classification" by **Anthony Judge** (Belgium). The author is editor of the Yearbook of International Organizations and the Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potentials. On the basis of his experience using online systems for the development of these two monumental works, Judge highlighted the problems of using conventional classification in an electronic environment. In doing so, he identified some of the challenges for the immediate future that must be faced in applying available technology and know-how to knowledge organization issues in a developing global society. In a paper on "Growth of Hypermedia and Challenges for the Organization of Knowledge", **I.V. Mallhan** (India) discussed the problems posed by the growing use of hypermedia for the organization of knowledge. Beside traditional methods of organizing knowledge according to subject, hypermedia offers many possibilities and opportunities for organizing knowledge to meet both immediate and long term institutional needs and to satisfy the diversity of users' interests at a particular time.

The field has vast potential for further research. A paper prepared jointly by **S. Kumar** and **Leena Shah** (India) discussed "Uniform Common Space and Time Isolates for Pure and Mixed Notation Schemes for Li-

brary Classification". The authors had designed a schedule of geographic entities with special reference to India and Madhya Pradesh. The scheme of isolate numbers could be used with any system whether using pure or mixed notation. Also the paper suggested a method of cooperative classification by creating common or uniform schedules. The fourth paper was one which had been prepared at an earlier time by **M.A.Gopinath** on a "Lexicographic Approach to Classification and Thesaurus Construction". It was presented by Professor Kaula. The paper described the common features of classification and thesauri and common methods for their construction. It further discussed various kinds of thesauri and step by step methods for their construction based on Ranganathan's approach and techniques. For thesauri the approach is essentially classificatory; the difference is only in the notational plane.

A paper by **Paris Arnopolos** (Canada) was entitled "A SUM of Science". Using the taxonomy and methodology of sociophysics a System Unification Model (SUM) had been developed. The model attempts to relate elements of scientific theory in a taxonomic order. Sociophysics integrates the basic principles of the natural and social sciences and aids in enhancing and understanding the global picture of human reality. The final paper in the session by **Amitabh Chatterjee** was on the "Treatment of Complex Subjects in Documentary Classification With Special Reference to CC and BC". It was a thorough historical study of phase analysis in the Colon Classification. The treatment of phase analysis in CC was then compared with the tackling of complex classes in the Bliss Bibliographic Classification, second edition. The author concluded that there is still scope for future research in order to identify new kinds of relationships among components of subjects. This one day seminar was a mixture of old and new issues in classification research pertaining to both basic research and practical problems encountered through the use of new media and the electronic environment.

Summing up the proceedings of the seminar, Professor Kaula visualized the trends and elucidated recommendations as follows: Classification is quite relevant and useful for the organization of electronic information. It provides more effective and innovative methods for storage and retrieval of data in online and networked information. Web indexes, hypertext and subject trees all inherently employ classificatory methods. Hypermedia lends itself to long term as well as to immediately required user-oriented classification. There is a need to discover new modes of handling the growth of knowledge, as well as dealing with the relationships among components in complex subjects. There is also a need for renewed research on Ranganathan's idea of the "absolute syntax" of facets.

In conclusion it was resolved that FID be requested to direct and sponsor research in the following areas:

1. Evaluation and use of current terms in classification schedules, and at the same time the identification and removal of obsolete terms;
2. Fixation of norms to identify basic subjects;
3. Design of elaborated and micro-level schedules of common isolates;
4. Further research in phase and facet analysis techniques;
5. Further research in the theoretical principles of knowledge organization in the electronic environment;
6. Research in the design of methodologies for comparative study of classification systems;
7. Augmentation and simplification of notational techniques;
8. Examination and debate on the possibility of a new general system of classification;
9. Encouragement of cooperation in classification organizations and systems.

The seminar assembly was convinced that Ranganathan's classificatory principles, as given in his *Prolegomena to Library Classification* (1967), still find full application in the organization of electronic media. Yet there is a timely need for working out new dimensions of his theories to adapt to the new environment. Edited from the original report prepared by M.P. Satija.

#### ASIS SIG/CR and the 1998 Annual Meeting

The major programme of SIG/CR at the 1998 ASIS Annual Meeting was the 9th ASIS SIG/CR Classification Research Workshop, held on October 25, 1998 in Pittsburgh USA. Eight papers were presented. A paper on "Generalized Software Requirements to Access Thesauri and Classification Schemes for User-Based Image Collections", presented by **Barbara Barnes, Eric Johnson, Jennifer Young, and Pauline Cochrane**, described proposed schemes for describing and indexing two image collections and the requirements for the software that would give end-users access to thesaurus terms and a graphic display of faceted classification structures of indexing records. One collection consisted of editorial cartoons; the other dance videos. The research recognizes the problems of interpretation of meaning and subjective judgement of these media by indexers and suggests that faceted classification schemes can be used to assist indexers in determining the "aboutness" of these materials. In doing so the paper sets out the facets of data needed to index each of the media types. Guidelines are proposed for each media and it is assumed that the indexer may need to use several sources for thesaurus terms or create a new thesaurus. Guidelines for indexing are also