

Classification Research Issues

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Universal Decimal Classification

Extensions and Corrections to the UDC (E&C) is published in November of each year by the UDC Consortium in The Hague. It documents the additions and changes to the system between printed editions. Changes which have been fully approved are applied immediately to the Master Reference file (MRF). For this reason it is essential that UDC users have access to the changes as they take place. Licensed and Consortium users will become aware of the changes as they use MRF. However, for those who rely on the printed volumes, *E&C* is an essential tool in the application of UDC. Each issue contains three sections:

1. Comments & Communications, consisting of a collection of articles and notes on research, developments and applications of the UDC system across the world. Also included is a bibliography of recent publications on UDC for the year;
2. Revised UDC Tables, i.e. extensions and corrections to the system, fully approved for use and applied in the MRF; and,
3. Proposals, i.e. preliminary drafts of tables in the process of revision, on which UDC users are encouraged to comment and make suggestions that could affect the final result.

Since *E&C* is celebrating its 10th year of publication, it is interesting to look at the recent changes taking place in comparison with the tables in the International Medium Edition, 2nd Edition, English Text, the last printed edition published in 1993. Indeed in 2004 UDC is a very different system than it was in 1993. A sample of revisions carried out since the year 2000 bear this out and exemplify a number of important trends. In general, there has been much greater use of faceted structure signifying a definite move in the direction of a fully faceted system. Particularly significant is the completely revised and restructured class "2 Religion. Theology" (*E&C* 2000, 21-116) in which faceting has been used to eliminate the previous bias toward the Christian religion. In a number

of cases, whole classes and disciplines are being replaced. In other situations, while the structure remains the same, there is detailed editing and massive expansion. A case in point is the major overhaul of the Auxiliary Table 1e Common Auxiliaries of Place. Begun in 1999, this is a work still in progress. Expansion includes much subdivision into various political divisions and the use of lengthy "including" notes to spell out subdivisions where individual class numbers are deemed unnecessary. In other instances there is the deletion of some tables and classes and their replacement by new structures. Noteworthy is the cancellation of Table 1i Common Auxiliaries of Point of View (*E&C* 2001, 134-138) and the relocation of those topics in Table 1k-02 Common Auxiliaries of Properties (*E&C* 1999, 133-141) and the development of Table 1k-04 Systematic Auxiliaries of Relations Processes and Operations (*E&C* 2002 Proposal, 32-35). The introduction of new and updated terminology and the inclusion of new topics is particularly evident. For example in Class 5 (*E&C* 2002, 120) one can find such new topics as: 574.1 Biodiversity, 575.11 The Genome. Genomics and 575.112 Bioinformatics. In Class 6, particularly noteworthy is the addition of the new multidisciplinary topic 60 Biotechnology (*E&C* 2002, 120-124) that "embraces aspects of many other disciplines and demands a synthetic style of classification". Several definitions and a detailed explanation, together with supporting sources are given. Included are such topics as 602.6 Genetic engineering, 602.7 Cloning, and 608.1 Bioethics. An example of complete relocation of a topic can be found in Class 65 Management and organization of industry, trade and communication (*E&C* 2002, 126-129) has been removed and its contents relocated, chiefly in 005. Many more examples could be given but these are sufficient to indicate that UDC is gradually becoming a completely new system.

With each issue of *E&C* another step takes place in the modernization of the system. The year 2004 is no exception. The Editorial Committee has been marking its 10th anniversary with a "proper spring-cleaning and tidying up of the many textual inconsi-

stencies and typographical mistakes that were inherited and have crept in over that period." (*E&C* 2004, 5). These corrections will not appear in *E&C* but were to be reflected in the files to be released to Consortium members and licence holders in January 2005. With *E&C 2004* the work on Table 1e Common Auxiliaries of Place continued, with Slovakia and Slovenia in Eastern Europe and many of the countries in Africa. Each country is introduced with an editorial note (EN) explaining its origin and the nature of its internal division. The work on the Auxiliaries of Place is expected to be completed in 2005. "This will then mean that all the parts of the world previously designated by alphabetical extensions have now been listed properly and it is possible to use the classification for gazetteer information as well as a means of arranging data" (*E&C* 2004, 5). Also in this edition, there is a complete revision of 37 Education "so as to incorporate more up-to-date concepts than was previously the case and to eliminate the enumeration of compound concepts by a single notation symbol" (*E&C* 2004, 5). Major changes have been made to the History of Scotland and the History of Ireland. In 2004, under "Proposed UDC Tables" the work on Class 61 Medical Sciences continues with proposals for the Nervous system and the Sense organs and special senses. The hope is that this phase of the work – the conversion of the tables to structure used in the *Bliss Bibliographic Classification* – will be completed early in 2006 and final editing of Class 61 can begin. An "Annex" to the 2004 volume contains "(The first part of) An extended place table." This annex recognizes the fact that the Auxiliaries of Place, as currently being developed, are related to the "medium" (now "standard") edition of the English Text, while some UDC users continue to work with versions of the old "full edition" level of detail. It addresses the need to bridge the gap between the two, in lieu of a needed "authoritative standard version" (*E&C* 2004, 176) which, one hopes will be published at a future date. This extended version of Table 1e "derives from the old "full editions" but is updated in accordance with *E&C*. The author recognizes that it may contain inconsistencies, but deems it useful to have this table as a statement of all that is valid in Table 1e including details of older editions that have not been cancelled. As indicated by the words "part of," space did not permit the publication of the whole table in *E&C 2004*. It is intended that the remainder will be published in *E&C 2005*.

E&C 2004 has a generous collection of articles on UDC drawn from the proceedings of the Eighth International ISKO Conference (McIlwaine, 2004), held in London in July 2004. Four of the articles from the conference are republished here with the authors' consent. A fifth article by a conference attendee appears to be a reworking of his conference paper. Two of these articles focus on the development and extension of the UDC system. "A question of place" by I.C. McIlwaine, Editor of UDC, is a product of her research carried out in conjunction with the overhaul of UDC auxiliary Table 1e. It discusses problems and solutions related to developing and maintaining an area table in the face of a number of factors – history, politics, administration, colonialism, regions political and non-political, as well grammar, language and scripts. "Complementary and alternative medicine: Its place in the reorganized medical sciences in the Universal Decimal Classification," by Nancy J. Williamson addresses the question of how to deal with topics in the field of alternative medicine and their location and organization in the proposed revision of UDC Class 61. This is a volatile and growing field that exists, partially but not fully, outside what has in the past been deemed to be "traditional" medicine. Whatever classification system is used, the lines of division in the discipline are unclear and constantly changing, demanding a system that is flexible and responsive enough to handle the volatility involved. Two of the articles deal with specific applications of UDC. "Knowledge organization of the Universal Decimal Classification – New solutions and user friendly methods from Hungary," by Agnes Hajdu Barát concentrates on the optimization of searching using UDC codes and structure. Victoria Frâncu, in her article "UDC-based thesauri and multiple access to information" compares the performance to two UDC structures in retrieval from an experimental database. Also related to UDC and retrieval is the article by Woulter Schallier "What a subject search interface can do." In this research, carried out at the K.U. Leuven University Library in Belgium, an experimental interface was developed for subject searching by UDC in an OPAC. The user searches by subject terms and obtains retrieval in which he/she can browse the terms displayed in a hierarchy of terms. Two of the papers are in languages other than English. "Summary of the activities of VINITI in the field of UDC," by Professor Y Arskiy is in Russian and "AENOR y la offerta de productos CDU," by Ana López is in Spanish. The latter describes several

products of AENOR which are supportive of the application of the Spanish version of UDC. An article by Barbara Holder of the Forintek Canada Corporation, discusses "Updating the Global Forest Decimal Classification (GFDC)." This system is described as a sister classification to UDC designed to handle materials on forestry-related information resources. It can be used in conjunction with UDC to provide for non-forestry related materials. In addition there is a bibliography of UDC publications for the year prepared by Aida Slavić, who has also prepared a paper entitled "UDC translations: A 2004 survey report and bibliography" This discussion paper, accompanied by a table summarizes data on 38 translations, all but seven of which were published since the last survey of UDC translations carried out in 1982. Her article updates the previous work and brings together important information about the history and development of the various versions of UDC.

Classification Research Group (CRG)

While the CRG was saddened by the loss of Douglas Foskett, a keen mind and stalwart friend, in May 2004, the work on the *Bliss Bibliographic Classification (BC2)* continues. The group meets on a fairly regular basis on the development of the tables, and meetings often include interesting discussions of the theory of classification in general and as understood in the context of CRG philosophy. At its 339th meeting in February, discussion focused on the tables for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, and on Veterinary Science. Among the details discussed were the possibility of parallels between human medicine and veterinary medicine and the acknowledgment of small animal practice. Specializations such as "zoo medicine" and "hedgehog hospitals" were identified. The logical place for "poaching" was discussed and conservation was deemed to go with ecology because of the intervention of humans. Discussions at the 340th meeting continued with these same topics in more detail, concentrating on the details of the schedules on "livestock, domestic animals, farm animals." Later, the discussion moved on to "forestry, ecology,

and environment." A need was identified to give some consideration to detailed classes that were in an advanced state and which would be coming up for finalization in the near future. Thus the 341st meeting focused on "Developmental biology." Progress on BC2 as reported in *The Bliss Classification Bulletin*, no 46, 2004 indicates that the publication of the revision Class C (Chemistry) was imminent. Work was also underway on Architecture in Class W (The Arts), which the Group considered to be the most time consuming class to date. With respect to Class W2 (Music) the Bliss Classification Association has decided to investigate the possibility of producing a music thesaurus to appear alongside the classification scheme for Music. A subcommittee chaired by Jean Aitchison was to be set up. It was further reported that Dr. David Johnson, Librarian at St. Peter's College Oxford, has persuaded his committee to adopt BC2 for its library. This is the first Oxford library to adopt BC2, although BC1 is used by three colleges and the Pitt Rivers Museum. They would like to reclassify to BC2, but presently do not have the money to do so. *The Bliss Classification Bulletin* is published once a year and contains useful news notes and articles on the application of BC2. In 2004 there are two articles related to the application of Bliss in thesaurus construction. "Bliss-based information management at the Department of Health," by Philip Defriez describes ways in which Bliss is used in the U.K. Department of Health. "Thesauri from BC2: problems and possibilities" by Jean Aitchison discusses an experimental thesaurus derived from the Bliss music schedule.

References

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