EDITORIAL

Classification Planning

In late August a huge volume from India arrived on my desk – the proceedings of the Third International Study Conference on Classification Research, Bombay, 6–11 Jan. 1975![1] What a big job and accomplishment of our Indian friends – first of all: congratulations! We know that the unfortunate delay in publication was also due to the decision of the FID to have the papers reviewed again by non-attendants of the conference; however, the comparison with the program shows that this post-examination did not lead to any omissions; only those papers which have been published somewhere else in the meantime were replaced by their abstracts.

What many of us have been waiting for so many years has now become a reality and a basis for future activities. The proceedings of the 2nd FID/CR Study Conference in Elsinore 1964 published in Denmark 1965 had determined quite considerably the program of classification research in the years to follow, especially by its "Conclusions and Recommendations"[2]. At the 1975 Bombay Conference on the topic "Ordering Systems for Global Information Networks" recommendations were issued likewise[3]; they may now – as a part of the published proceedings – be related to the people and the 54 papers of this gathering and they may challenge us to reexamine the topics for further research in our field.

A reexamination of these recommendations – by no means outdated yet in our slowly advancing field of classification – seems also timely regarding the next international FID/CR Study Conference, planned for 1982. Research results in the forthcoming years can then be presented to a "global" international audience. In the meantime, however, national and regional activities and conferences will take place. Just recently, at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Information Science (ASIS) in Minneapolis, the Special Interest Group (SIG) on Classification Research layed down its topics for the next ASIS conferences in Pittsburgh, Anaheim, and Denver, and it was decided to hold then, in May 81 in Denver, a Joint ASIS/SIG/CR and FID/CR North-American Regional Group Conference. (See the report on this conference and decisions on p. 179 of this issue.)

Regional organization of classification may be the next step to a more frequent getting together for better understanding and closer co-operation, until perhaps some day – as proposed by P. N. Kaula (see the report on the 3rd Annual Conference of the Gesellschaft für Klassifikation, p. 177) – an international classification society will be established.

There could be a regional classification conference every year, say 1983 in South America, 1984 in Australia, 1985 in?

What should be the topics and the aims of these conferences? Let's look at the rich fountain displayed to us through the recommendations of the Bombay FID/CR Conference: there are so many partial problems needing solutions that well-organized conferences could become inspiring occasions for attempts at such solutions.

But there is more to do for us than looking back to 1975. Look for instance only into this issue of I.C.: the article by F. Riggs ("A new paradigm for social science terminology") shows a way to overcome the language problems, not by a control of terms but by a control of the concepts for which these terms play the role of an access point. It is through knowing our concepts, our knowledge units, that we can proceed in the organization of knowledge areas and knowledge systems. Doesn't this "new look" open up gateways to new research endeavors?

Or, take a look at H. Karlgren's article on Viewdata (pp. 172–176). The use of this presumably forthcoming information retrieval tool in our homes depends on the classification system going with it. To rely on terms becomes quite costly then – as it already is in our on-line searches. We need to rethink very soon. But if we do this we also find new and better ways to master those problems with which the articles by J. Perreault on the Library of Congress Subject Headings (p. 158–169) and by I. N. Sengupta (p. 170–172), well known for his research on citation indexing, but here concerned with the DDC 19 changes, are struggling.

Let us start *to plan* the future! Send us your reactions, your comments, your ideas, your proposals! We shall publish what you think should be done in order that our field may develop – not in the last place so that all other fields may develop too! Ingetraut Dahlberg

1 For bibliographical data see p. 190 (item 4780) of this issue
2 Atherton, P. (Ed.): Classification research. Proceedings of the Second International Study Conference, Elsinore, 14–18 Sept. 1964. Kopenhagen: Munksgaard 1965. 563 p.
3 See also International Classification 2 (1975) No. 1, p. 37–41

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am grateful to Helmut Knoll for his interesting comments[1] on a recent paper of mine.[2] However, he misses the main point of the paper: services such as INPADOC and WPI rely on theIPC's assigned by national patent offices for their subject indexes. It does not matter to these services whether the IPC's are assigned as a primary classification or as a secondary one. Thus, it *was* valid to compare the way the British Patent Office and the US Patent Office assign IPC's.

Knoll's point that differences in Patent Office procedures could lead to "equivalent" patents not being identical is valid, but could not explain the drastic discrepancies we reported.

Yours sincerely,

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1 Knoll, H. Letter to the Editor. In: Intern. Classificat. 6 (1979), p. 2
2 Carpenter, A. M., Jones, M., Oppenheim, C.: Consistency of use of the International Patent Classification. In: Intern. Classificat. 5 (1978), p. 30–32.