

Citation Codes in Classification and Terminology

Proposal for an International Standard

Dahlberg, I.: Citation codes in classification and terminology. Proposal for an international standard.

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In order to facilitate and unify the citation of and reference to classification systems, thesauri and dictionaries a standard form of codes for their publications seem to be of great help. Such citation codes are necessary in the application of references to these systems in information networks, information systems and services, in all sorts of reference works and other literature and in processing of bibliographic as well as concept data in a formatted way. The proposal contains rules for the formation of such codes in a very simple and mnemonic way. Their possible extension to include information on special editions, on editions in different languages and on numbers of editions is also considered. Comments are invited before an authority file according to these rules may be established. (Author)

1. Purpose

In present-day literature, specific classification systems and thesauri are referred to in a wide variety of ways, differing especially as to the length and type of the abbreviations used on the one hand and as to the underlying language employed on the other hand. Thus, for the Universal Decimal Classification the following forms are in current use: "UDC" in English, "CDU" in French and in the other Romance languages, "UDK" in Russian, "DK" in German and so on. Thesauri are either given a specific abbreviation right from the start, such as TEST, standing for "Thesaurus of Engineering and Scientific Terms" (of the Engineers Joint Council and the Defense Documentation Center), or they are simply called ...-Thesaurus, with the abbreviation of an institution (e.g. ISO) or of a system (e.g. INIS) taking the place of the dots. For dictionaries, abbreviations or acronyms are used only rarely and then mostly on a private basis; however, citation codes are very urgently needed in their case, too, e.g. for proper source-indication whenever definitions are cited from these dictionaries.

It would obviously be convenient to have a general rule at one's disposal for the abbreviation of such systems, or else a common authority file in which to look

them up in all citation cases arising when specific classification systems or thesauri need to be referred to or compared, especially e.g. in correlating the elements of classification systems in correlation tables. Such citation codes would also be very useful for indicating the source of a term, notation or definition in any kind of format entered for computer processing of concept data.

It is therefore suggested that the following rules be introduced for the standardization of codes for universal and special classification systems, for universal and special thesauri as well as for frequently-used universal and special-field dictionaries. Such citation codes for the systems themselves might be supplemented by standardized codes indicating their different editions in different languages, or their different printings.

If the following rules presented for consideration should be found acceptable, an authority file of citation codes should then be established soon for all the systems existing, and some authority should be requested to regularly update this list as necessary.

2. Citation codes for universal classification systems

(The following rule incorporates and amplifies such use of abbreviations as is already practiced now.)

A universal classification system should always be abbreviated by a code of three capital letters ending in "C" (for Classification) and preferably beginning by the first letter of the author's name. Some unavoidable exceptions to this rule are dictated by standard current practice, which this proposal is not intended to abolish.

Examples:

DDC = Dewey Decimal Classification
UDC = Universal Decimal Classification
LCC = Library of Congress Classification
BSC = Brown Subject Classification
BBC = Bliss Bibliographic Classification
RCC = Ranganathan Colon Classification
LBC = Library Bibliographical Classification
IPC = International Patent Classification

Regardless of the accompanying text such citation codes should always be in the above form as based on the English language.

3. Citation codes for special classification systems

While a 3-letter code ending in a "C" characterizes a universal classification system, a special classification system is indicated by a 5-letter code ending in SC (for "Special Classification"). The first three positions in such a code may either be taken from existing abbreviations of the given system, or they may refer to the name of the publishing institution, e.g.

ICDSC = International Classification of Diseases
PHBSC = Classification Systems of Physikalische Berichte

4. Citation codes for universal thesauri

Universal thesauri do not yet exist in very great numbers; however, work for developing such systems is under way, and one should be prepared for them. Thus, in the same way as the codes for universal classification systems, those for universal thesauri should have a 3-letter code, ending in a "T".

Examples:

BNT for the British Library Thesaurus (if, when and as it is developed)
SPT for the SPINES Thesaurus of the Unesco, and
UNT for the Unesco Thesaurus

5. Citation codes for special thesauri

Special documentation thesauri should have a 5-letter code ending in ST (for "Special Thesaurus"). The first three positions may be either an abbreviation of the name of the publishing institution, or the name of an information system, e.g.:

INIST for the Thesaurus of the International Nuclear Information System,
ERIST for the Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors,
IBEST for the International Bureau of Education Thesaurus
IEEST for the Thesaurus of the Institution of Electrical Engineers

6. Citation codes for universal and special dictionaries

Codes for dictionaries can be constructed in a similar way, but only for dictionaries supplying accompanying definitions. Such dictionaries exist as universal dictionaries only in a few countries, but as special-field dictionaries, usually named glossaries, in many countries and in a great many fields. A rule analogous to the previous ones may be used here, too, with the 3-letter code ending in D (for "Dictionary") and the 5-letter code in SD (for "Special Dictionary").

Examples:

WCD = Webster's Collegiate Dictionary
COD = Concise Oxford Dictionary
WDD = Wahrig Deutsches Wörterbuch
PLD = Petit Larousse
MPLSD = Meyers Physik Lexikon
ELISD = Elsevier's Dictionary of Library Science, Information and Documentation

7. Citation codes for special editions

Universal classification systems are often published in four different editions, namely as

full, medium, abridged, and special editions.

In order to find a uniform way of coding these editions, the following supplements to the code of each system may be used:

Full Edition: Com.Ed. (for Complete Edition)
Medium Edition: Med.Ed.
Abridged Edition: Abr.Ed.
Special Edition: Spc.Ed.

Remark: "Com. Ed." need not be added if there is no doubt that the Full Edition is meant.

8. Citation codes for editions in different languages

Universal and special classification systems or thesauri are frequently published in several languages. When citing from a specific edition, the standardized language symbol should be added to the code for the given edition, e.g.:

UDC Med.Ed.DE = German Medium Edition of the UDC

LBC Com.Ed.RU = Russian Full Edition of the LBC.
In the case of multilingual editions, all languages covered should be coded in the order of their appearance in the system itself, separated from each other by commas, e.g. as follows:

UDC Abr.Ed.DE,EG,FG = Trilingual Abridged Edition of the UDC in German, English and French.

9. Citation codes supplemented by edition numbers

If it seems necessary to mention the edition number of a classification system, thesaurus or dictionary, this may be accomplished by means of variable supplements added to the code concerned, e.g. as in:

DDC18 = 18th edition of the full edition of the DDC
UDC Med.Ed.FG2 = Second edition of the French medium edition of the UDC
INIST7 = 7th edition of the INIS Thesaurus
WDD2 = Second edition of Wahrig's Deutsches Wörterbuch

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Comments to these proposals are invited from all interested and concerned.

Soeben erschienen — just published:

PRINZIPIEN DER KLASSIFIKATION

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Beiträge zu folgenden Einzelthemen: Sprachwissenschaftliche, gegenstandstheoretische und begriffstheoretische Grundlagen der Klassifikation; Begriffe und Definitionen; Begriffsrelationen; Grundlagen d. numerischen Taxonomie; Probleme der Seriation; Prinzipien der Bibliotheksklassifikation. Im Anhang: Bibliographie klassifikationswiss. Monographien u. a.

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