Book Reviews

UNGVARY, Rudolf (Ed.): **OSZTAURUSZ. Periodika osztalyozási rendszerés tezaurusz.** ((A Universal "class-thesaurus" for Hungarian Periodical Literature). Budapest: Országos Széchényi Könyvtár 1990. 131p.

A new combined universal classification system and thesaurus came to light in Hungary, aimed at providing subject access to periodical publications. It is existing as a printed version (which is the object of this review) and as an online thesaurus as well, for the national information system, containing the Hungarian Periodical Literature.

The editor of this comprehensive work is Rudolf Ungvary, whose great knowledge and insight into the problems of classification and indexing has clearly contributed to the successful outcome of this tedious project. The OSZTAURUSZ has been under preparation since 1984 at the Hungarian National Library (Országos Széchényi Könyvtár) and the collection of terms was based on data available in the national database for periodical literature and the indexing vocabulary of the National Technical Information Centre and Library (OMIKK). The online thesaurus is running on CDS/ISIS software and its Micro version.

This new retrieval tool, named as OSZTAURUSZ in Hungarian, is an amalgamated combination of a universal classification system *and* a thesaurus. It provides multiple access points at two conceptual levels:
- descriptors (formulateld in natural language form)
- classification codes/notation (two alphabetical signs, combined with numerical ones).

In practical terms, this means that beside each descriptor the corresponding classification code (notation) is indicated. Thus, in spite of its universal scope, the system is simple; it contains relatively few classes, but at the same time, it is flexible enough to provide *specified* subject access to periodical literature, e.g., 1-5 classification codes can be used for one document. The degree of specificity in OSZTAURUSZ could be examined from many different points of view, but since it is designed to be used as a metathesaurus, its present size and structure is suited to its purpose. This standardized vocabulary system is aimed at serving as the basis for the development of other specialized thesauri, as well as at functioning as switching instrument between these thesauri.

The combined Hungarian "ClassThesaurus" (some prefer the term "Classaurus") contains 194 classes, 209 geographical names and some elements of facets. It has a hierarchical construction with a maximum of four levels which indicate the usual types of relationships between the terms such as generic, part-whole, causal, topical. The notation does not always reflect the hierarchical relationships, it is therefore of a rather enumerative nature. There is probably a good reason why the Hungarian

double consonants are not treated as single phonetical signs but are composed of two separate characters in the alphabetical list of terms. The fact that "csillagászat" is listed prior to "cukrászat" might cause confusion for many Hungarians in browsing and searching cases.

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Indexing Tradition and Innovation. Proceedings of the 22nd Annual Conference of the American Society of Indexers, June 27, 1990. Chicago, IL: American Society of Indexers 1991. 123p., ISBN 0-936547-13-8.

This book is a compilation of the papers read at the 1990 annual conference of the American Society of Indexers. "Indexing tradition" is the dominating theme among the contributions, with primary attention being given to experiences from the practice. Only one contribution, namely the final one, in the book deals with "innovation": it describes an attempt at an innovation in the field of automatic thesaurus compilation and indexing. The contributions preceding it present a vivid picture of the requirements imposed on indexing in actual practice outside the experimental lab. This is particularly true of the two quite voluminous contributions by Ann P. Bishop, Elizabeth D.Liddy and Barbara Settel. Closely interrelated as they are, they are discussed jointly below. The initial contribution deals with indexing standards and in so doing makes apparent the problems inherent in such standards.

Jessica MILSTEAD: *Indexing Standards.* In order to justify the use of standards in the information field, the authoress starts out with several examples from the field of crafts, where the usefulness of standards is particularly evident. In the information field, too, a few convincing examples are given to demonstrate that standardization makes good sense here. Next, a list of the most important British and American standards organizations, also including the International Standards Organization at Geneva, as well as a description of the standards-making process are given.

Five groups of standards of importance to the indexer are recognized, namely standards for:
- *Contents and structure of bibliographic records.*
- *Standard numbers and codes for books, serials, technical reports, book industry, serial issue, and article identifiers.*
- *Electronic information exchange: reducing the number of specific languages, record formats, etc.*
- *Romanization and transliteration: systems for converting writing systems and alphabets.*