60

Knowl. Org. 34(2007)No.1
Book Reviews

across the world) with the equally widespread technique of subject-string construction, which is to say: the rational and predictable combination of the terms used. The appearance of this original, unparalleled working model may well be a great occasion in the international development of indexing, as, on one hand, the *Nuovo soggettario* uses a recognized tool (the thesaurus) and, on the other, by permitting both pre-coordination and post-coordination, it attempts to overcome the fragmentation of increasingly complex and specialized subjects into isolated, single-term descriptors. This is a serious proposition that merits consideration from both theoretical and practical points of view – and outside Italy, too.

References

Guida all'indicizzazione per soggetto. 1997. Roma: AIB. http://www.aib.it/aib/gris/i.htm (accessed June 26, 2007).

Lucarelli, Anna. 2005. Work in progress on the new *Soggettario*. *Knowledge organization* 32: 137.

Per un nuovo Soggettario: studio di fattibilità sul rinnovamento del Soggettario per i cataloghi delle biblioteche italiane. 2002. Milano: Bibliografica.

Pino Buizza, Biblioteca Queriniana, Via Mazzini 1, Brescia, 25121, Italy.
E-mail: gbuizza@comune.brescia.it.

FUGMANN, Robert. *Das Buchregister: Methodische Grundlagen und praktische Anwendungen* (The Book Index: Methodological Foundations and Practical Applications). Frankfurt: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Informationswissenschaft und Informationspraxis e.V., 2006. 136 p. ISBN: 3-925474-59-5

Except for a slim volume (Kunze 1964) there has not as yet been published in German a textbook on book indexing so far. Therefore this book by Dr. Fugmann fills indeed a much deplored gap in our professional literature. Although there have been many articles and books by Robert Fugmann himself on indexing, in German as well as in English, he decided this time to take care of this gap and at the same time he tried to upgrade the art of book indexing by combining it with the science of indexing as used for the extraction of the essence of documents in information science.

Having read this very carefully written, edited and of course also indexed book – which caused me much trouble, I must confess, because the typography is so small that I needed a magnifying glass to read the footnotes on each page – I must, however, state that the result of his endeavor should be regarded as an outstanding textbook not only for German book indexers but also, in translations, for book indexers on a world-wide scale. So far, book indexing has not been taught at Library and Information Science Schools. With this book by Fugmann one could consider making it a subject to be taught at such Schools. By this, one would also contribute to the recognition of the great cultural value which is contained in the knowledge embedded in textbooks or in similar publications. If indexes present this knowledge in the most concise way, one will be able to utilize such an index, even if one had not studied the source book beforehand. With Fugmann's volume one will learn how to establish the most adequate form of optimal knowledge representation in a really clear, accurate and pertinent form.

Fugmann presents his text very logically, numbering each paragraph so that the index entries would relate directly to the appropriate place. He sets out with a theoretical part in which he shows the difference between word and concept, the search by memory (Bernier 1960: "question of recall") and the search by discovery ("question of discovery") and tackled also the problematic issues caused by natural language in the searching process. Furthermore he shows the opposition between assignment indexing and extraction indexing and explains also what is understood by indicative and informative indexing. The latter is characterized by its richness in informative subentries. For all cases he gives a maximum of pertinent examples. The book concludes with an informative alphabetical index and an informative systematic index. For such a systematic index one needs of course a well-structured categorization. With respect to this kind of index in Fugmann's book, however, I must state that the divisions in the first four areas are much too broad (he uses for the entire mass of entries only Information philosophy, Content analysis, Search, Information technology, Persons, Institutions and Subject fields.). This could have been improved by introducing subcategorization, so that relevant entries could be scanned much easier and faster. The alphabetical informative index of this book is however a masterpiece and very convincing indeed.

A very essential help of the book is also the necessary agreement which need to be settled between in-

Knowl. Org. 34(2007)No.1
Book Reviews

61

dexer and publisher. They include decisions about the kind of index (indicative or informative), its size, time needed, etc. There is no word about the price, except for indicating that informative indexes demand of course more time than indicative ones. One would have to follow the conventions which generally are established by the professional communities. Fugmann mentions all of them existing in the different countries.

The list of his cited literature comprises almost 100 sources, of which the majority is in English, only 23 are in German, these, however, relate only in two cases to book indexing. This shows again the deplorable gap in recognizing the value of professional book indexing in this country!

In his concluding Epilogue, Fugmann turns among others also to the treacherous opinion of many newcomers to the field of information science, who think, one would only need a computer and thus one could very easily establish indexes. The results however, are then no real indexes but concordances, mostly consisting only of one word without expressive power which will refer to a great number of pages, which nobody will take the trouble to consult. Such "indexes" amount to garbage and are a shame for the producer. In a society interested in producing values such a practice should be stigmatized.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate Robert Fugmann for having written this book in such a short time and – may I disclose it too? – just before his 80th birthday. And I know it is his desire to show that by improving the science of book indexing in the way demonstrated in this book, the readers will be offered an instrument for making book indexing and index reading a joy for the index readers and an adventure in an enticing world thus entered into via an intelligent presentation of knowledge!

Kunze, Hort. *Über das Registermachen*. München-Pullach: Verlag Dokumentation 1964.

Ingetraut Dahlberg, Am Hirtenberg 13, 64732 Bad König, Germany,
E-mail: IDahlberg@t-online.de.