

UDC handbook: its two consecutive editions came out respectively in 1993 and 1995) is devoted – in conformity with its title – to models of knowledge organization in information retrieval systems (IRS). The author confines herself, quite reasonably considering the bulk of the subject, to the presentation of documentary IRS, i.e. to such systems which refer to documents describing facts and not directly to the facts as such.

The book under review consists of three main parts. The first part, entitled “Public and private knowledge in a documentary information retrieval system,” presents the general conception of the interpretation of knowledge which participates in the interaction occurring between an IRS (and the representation of public knowledge that is contained in it) on the one hand, and the system’s user (and the cognitive structures of private knowledge which are typical of him or her) on the other hand.

The second part is essentially devoted to the user’s personal knowledge, and constitutes a review of selected hypotheses and theories relating to those mechanisms of the cognitive systems and structures of knowledge organization as they are described in the literature of psychology and cognitive science.

The third part of the book is the most extensive and important. It contains the analysis of principles shaping the organization of knowledge in documentary IRS. This part is divided into five chapters that deal respectively with the following problems:

- the kinds of knowledge projection in documentary IRS, and a tentative typology of these IRS;
- the categories of knowledge projection in a system;
- the structuring of knowledge in traditional documentary systems;
- the structuring of knowledge in intelligent documentary systems;
- the representation of knowledge uncertainty.

The reference list contains more than 500 items. Familiarization with the content of the book is facilitated by an index which combines the features of a name index with those of a subject one.

By publishing *Models of knowledge organization*, Sosińska-Kalata has significantly advanced the theory and methodology of designing information retrieval languages (IRL) and IRS (which can be considered a sub-discipline of science since it is a common part of formal linguistics and information science), especially at the point where this sub-discipline comes into contact with cognitive science and psychology. The author has formulated many important conclusions and introduced many valuable distinctions and definitions. She has distin-

guished four basic classes of knowledge structure projection used in documentary IRS, and two basic features of public and personal knowledge projection (its structuralization and uncertainty). Sosińska-Kalata proposes the following typology of documentary IRS:

- class of traditional systems
 - manual traditional systems
 - computer traditional systems
 - offline systems
 - online systems
- class of intelligent systems
 - non-adaptive intelligent systems
 - adaptive intelligent systems

Let us draw attention to the fact that Sosińska-Kalata has classed non-intelligent online systems among traditional ones!

The book under review is written in Polish: this will unfortunately constitute a major hindrance for many of its potential readers. A summary and a table of contents in English are, however, available.

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HARVEY, Ross. **Organising knowledge in Australia : Principles and policies in libraries and information centres.** Wagga Wagga, N.S.W. : Charles Sturt University ; Riverina : Centre for Information Studies, 1999. xiv, 317 p. (Topics in Australian Library and Information Studies; no. 15). ISBN 0949060860 (Pbk).

Australia, an early player in the field of library automation, has contributed a sizeable input to the development of international bibliographic standards. The recent appointment of Giles Martin as a Dewey Decimal Classification assistant editor, the first such appointment outside the United States, may confirm this assertion. This book records, describes, and evaluates local practices and issues in bibliographic organisation and information access in Australia, and it presents Australian solutions to some of the problems encountered in knowledge organisation. Bibliographic organisation is very broadly defined here as the process of making information and documents in libraries and information centres accessible. It subsumes nearly the

whole gamut of information processing and retrieval techniques, both in print and digital environments.

The document contains five parts. *Organising knowledge in Australia* begins with an overview of the entire process of information organisation and bibliographic access defined in a broader perspective, and concludes with a portrayal of the current scene and a description of cutting edge technologies. In between, systems and standards applicable to knowledge organisation and retrieval are described and evaluated. On the whole, the emphasis is more on the “why” than on the “how” of bibliographic organisation.

Part I (chapter 1) gives an overview of the entire document, thus setting the tone for the rest of the book. Basic concepts are defined and explained within the context of the broader area of knowledge organisation, with special reference to the digital environment. Part II (chapters 2-7) brings out the importance of standards for effective and economic resource sharing; the author shows how attempts at bibliographic exchange and cooperation remain futile without standards (physical, organisational, technological) for information communication and transfer. The standards described, both international and Australian, apply to bibliographic description, access points, authority control and MARC (Machine-readable cataloguing). Part III (chapters 8-11) dwells on information retrieval systems and bibliographic utilities such as OCLC, RLIN, ISM (UTLAS), the Australian Library Network, and ABN. Features of OPACs are explained clearly and concisely. Part IV (chapters 12-14) is devoted to subject analysis and its tools such as classification schemes, subject headings, and thesauri; local adaptations of international standards like the DDC, LCC, LCSH/Sears List are described. Part IV also emphasizes the Australian contribution to subject access theory and practice. Unfortunately, this part is riddled with several errors and misconceptions. For example, it confuses characteristics and facets (p. 202), and gives the misleading impression that hierarchical and enumerative classifications are mutually exclusive of one another: “... DDC [is] essentially a hierarchical scheme but with some elements of enumeration...” (p. 205). On the same page, the statement “UDC was inherently hierarchical” seems to infer that UDC is no longer so and has become strictly enumerative. Enumerative schemes have proven that they are usable over a long period of time and in many different countries and cultural contexts (p. 206). On the other

hand, the same chapter contains some pearls of crystallized wisdom: “A classification scheme without strong institutional support is doomed” (p. 208).

Part V (chapter 15) skilfully summarizes the work and clearly describes current trends and issues. It would be difficult to find elsewhere so clear and concise a picture of the present trends and current issues in the broader field of knowledge organisation.

This is a user-oriented text. Though emphasis is on Australian input and practices, this document helps to understand the basics of bibliographic organisation and the international scenario. The author portrays very competently the state-of-the-art in bibliographic organisation theory and practice; every line betrays his first hand experience and deep involvement in bibliographic organisation.

The book format and presentation are attractive, and the text is complemented by diagrams, figures, flowcharts and computer pages displays. Each chapter is divided into sections with appropriate feature headings, and each one of the five parts opens with a recapitulation of previous parts and an overview of what is to follow. The language is lucid and clear. The terminology used throughout the book and as given in Appendix II is current and up to date. Only a few typos remain in the text, e.g. Melvil Dewey is transcribed as Melvyl Dewey (p. 210), “will produce” is “will produced” (p. 248), both catalogues and catalogs have been used (p. 264). The author cites many print and Web sites references – the latter with complete URLs. The text is supplemented by a long but broadly classified list of further readings. Appendix II contains a list of most frequently used abbreviations in Australian information systems and organisations.

This is a model to be followed by other regions (such as Africa, South Asia, South East Asia) and countries (like UK, Canada) if they want to describe and evaluate their bibliographic organisation and techniques. This worthy contribution to the professional literature can fruitfully be read as a guide to an extensive body of experiences in creating, storing and using descriptive metadata.

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