DEUTSCHE
NATIONAL
BIBLIOTHEK

General outline and introduction of the future subject cataloguing procedure for publications at the German National Library

Preliminary remarks

The parallel dissemination of analogue and digital information have led to a steadily increasing number of new publications. The possibilities for evaluating digital content and web-based cooperation, as well as the development of technical procedures for interlinking content and establishing thematic relationships have paved the way for rethinking the library indexing methods. Cataloguing no longer has to be viewed as a one-off operation, but instead can be considered as a cyclical process in which cataloguing data are repeatedly changed and updated.

The Strategic Compass 2025 of the German National Library, which was published last year, outlines the reorientation of the subject cataloguing procedure towards automated methods (Strategic Compass 2025, p. 5). This strategic statement was preceded by technical discussions both internally and within the committees of the German National Library. The Cataloguing Concept 2015 (available only in German) briefly outlined this development. Repeated calls were made by external colleagues for the German National Library to make a greater contribution here. As a result, the Strategic Priorities 2017-2020 formulated corresponding objectives which will have an effect on the cataloguing of both digital and analogue publications.

So far, intellectual subject cataloguing has been restricted to a limited set of library acquisitions, in particular printed monographs and periodicals. The German National Library made a policy decision in 2010 to discontinue intellectual cataloguing of online publications, and instead to make use of the metadata provided by the depositors and to develop automated procedures to enrich such publications with subject cataloguing data.

This process has since been introduced. As a result of the enormous growth in digitally submitted publications, the proportion of intellectually catalogued publications in relation to automatically generated data has declined. This in turn has given rise to the problem of increasing heterogeneity, making the thematic accessing of data and publications more difficult. The German National Library is seeking to counteract this situation by switching to automatic subject cataloguing methods for all media works. Reflecting the changed understanding of cataloguing as a cyclical process (as mentioned above), automatically generated metadata can be expanded and thus enhanced at any time in the future. Metadata codes for the data record or the individual information elements will provide information about their status (a concept for the data record codes is currently being developed). Identifiers for the data record or for individual information elements, such as GND or WV identifiers, facilitate subsequent use.

Basic principles of the new subject cataloguing procedure

Subject cataloguing is currently performed using classificatory and verbal methods. In addition to full-text searches and the ability to access information via digitised tables of contents, this offers structured and standardised thematic access to large quantities of documents. One of the objectives of the strategic planning for the period of 2017 to 2020 is to use efficiently designed processes and targeted cataloguing strategies to index all publications in a way that does justice to the possibilities and requirements of modern information and retrieval systems, thereby facilitating precise thematic searches for different user groups. This can only be achieved through the use and expansion of automated procedures, as well as the transfer and matching of foreign data. The ultimate goal is to have a method for optimising cataloguing processes which includes all types of media and which is based on established and any relevant additional technical possibilities.

Specifically, this year the German National Library is introducing standard automatic processes for the subject cataloguing of printed publications alongside the automatic processing of digital publications.

DDC Subject Categories and subject headings from the GND are already being routinely issued automatically for digital publications. In addition, automated classificatory cataloguing using DDC Short Numbers that are currently being developed by the German National Library will follow. DDC segmentation marks will be used as the basis for shortening the numbers, initially based on the Library's literary warrant in the specific subject fields. The procedure can be extended to include literary warrant of other libraries; cooperative developments are expected – and actually desirable – here.

The previous deep classificatory cataloguing with full DDC numbers will, by contrast, be discontinued, meaning that only short numbers will be issued, even in the case of intellectual cataloguing. This is scheduled from the beginning of 2018.

In order to update and supplement the terminology used and to improve the results, automatic cataloguing processes require appropriate intellectual monitoring and management. Quality management procedures are being established for this. Intellectual subject cataloguing will then only be conducted if automated processes are either not available, cannot deliver adequate results, or if intellectually generated data are required for the further development of the automated processes.

In the case of physical publications, all digital information available for the media work is used as a basis for the automated generation of subject headings and numbers (for example, parallel online editions, digitised table of contents or abstracts, jacket and cover texts).

Introduction of the new subject cataloguing procedure

The evaluation of existing digital information has been tested on Series B and H publications in the last few months. From 1 September 2017 onwards, subject cataloguing of the media works listed in Series B and H will be performed by automatic processing. German and English publications will continue to be catalogued using DDC Subject Categories, but subject headings from the Integrated Authority File (GND) will also be included. The corresponding data are scheduled to be provided from mid-September, marked by a provenance code, indicating that they have been issued automatically. The previous system of classificatory cataloguing based on full numbers of the

Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) will be discontinued for Series B and H from 1 September 2017. It is to be replaced by DDC Short Numbers.

The subject cataloguing of fiction and poetry (DDC Subject Category B) and children's andjuvenile literature (DDC Subject Category K) will also change from 1 September 2017. These will be catalogued using DDC Subject Categories and genre terms. Subject cataloguing will form part of the information data provided by the publisher.

Outlook

The German National Library will continuously develop and expand the automated indexing methods and make use of the latest technical developments in order to facilitate uniform subject cataloguing for all publications. The processes will continuously be brought up to date in line with the latest technical advances and they will be managed intellectually. The German National Library will report comprehensively and timely on the individual developments, steps and measures. Changes to the cataloguing practice which impact upon the data services of the German National Library will be announced in good time via the usual channels.

The following persons can be contacted regarding the above concept:

- Dr. Volker Henze, Tel. 069-1525 1600
- Ulrike Junger, Tel. 069-1525 1500
- Elisabeth Mödden, Tel. 069-15251533