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Ihre Zeichen
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DDC in the German National Library and in the DACH countries

In the 1980s verbal indexing became a standard procedure in libraries of the so-called DACH countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) while classificatory indexing was still characterized by the simultaneous use of different classification schemes. At the end of the century, decision was made to make use of the great potential of the DDC also in the DACH countries. Using the DDC in the German National Bibliography meets the requirements of IFLA saying that national bibliographic institutions should apply an internationally used classification system to facilitate international data exchange and end-user search options for the retrieval of international resources. Main arguments in favor of the DDC were the system's worldwide use, its benefits for online environments, the organizational support and maintenance including a high degree of current relevance of the contents due to regular updates.

The first translation of the DDC, in German named DDC Deutsch, was completed in 2005 in the frame of a DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft)-funded cooperative 3-year project conducted by the German National Library (DNB) and the Cologne University of Applied Sciences. The translation was processed in a software application developed for this special purpose by the Pansoft Company. Since that time, this software has become the number-one application for the translation and maintenance of DDC data worldwide. In 2005, the German version of the DDC 22nd edition was published in print by K. G. Saur (today De Gruyter Saur) as well as in electronic version by the German National Library in the form of the web application MelvilClass (for classification) and the DDC browsing tool MelvilSearch (for catalog searching via DDC content). Both MelvilClass and MelvilSearch were replaced in 2012 by WebDewey Deutsch and WebDewey Search Deutsch. DDC Deutsch data is continuously being updated according to changes deliveries by OCLC. The updates are recorded during the translation process and the documentation is provided for the users.

Since 2006, the DNB has been assigning DDC subject categories, which constitute broad groupings of roughly 100 DDC classes, to all titles, and most titles are provided with full DDC numbers. DDC-classified data is supplied to the library networks (Verbünde) and individual libraries in the DACH countries. In the years from 2007 to 2014, the number of titles provided with full DDC numbers was 85.000 up to 120.000 a year, leading to a total of approx. 900.000 DDC-classified titles so far. It is important to note that our use cases for the DDC are focused on retrieval purposes more than on shelving aspects, as only few libraries are using the system for physical shelf location.

It was, among others, the focus on retrieval aspects that gave reason for the DFG-funded project CrissCross (2006-2010), which aimed at mapping the subject headings of the Schlagwortnormdatei SWD (today Gemeinsame Normdatei GND) to DDC numbers. To date, a total of more than 275.000 mappings have been created manually. Another mapping project named "coli-conc", conducted by the Verbundzentrale GBV, is currently underway to developing a web based mapping tool to support the mapping of multiple classification systems. The widely used Regensburger Verbundklassifikation RVK and the Basisklassifikation BK serve as the project's mapping vocabularies to be mapped to the DDC.

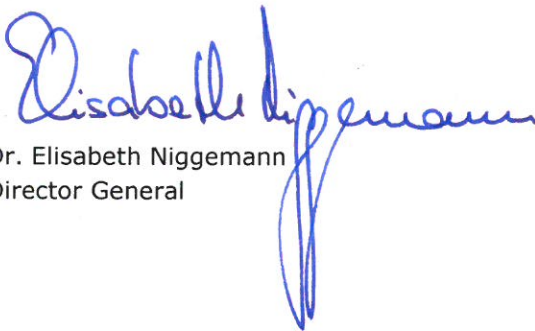
The DDC is therefore not only beneficial for cataloging itself; it offers the possibility to serve as a connector for frequently used local verbal indexing and classification systems.

- As DDC translator and provider of WebDewey Deutsch
 - we are reliant on regular deliveries of high quality DDC content, so that the German translation is able to represent content that is in line with the latest developments in subject fields. Therefore, a strong editorial team is required.
 - it is necessary to work together with the Dewey editors and the EPC, so that requirements, in particular regarding individual European topics, are considered in DDC expansions, also in order to help expanding the Anglo-American point of view towards a more and more international shape.
 - we need changes in the DDC to be documented and notified within WebDewey Deutsch at a detailed level, so that users can track updates, which is a precondition for the updating of CrissCross mappings.
- As DDC translator, we need an OCLC Dewey editor in charge of the coordination of translations so that we are ensured better and more consistent communication with OCLC and other translation teams regarding translation issues.
- As large-scale DDC classifiers, we need the DDC to be continuously updated, and this includes also current European topical issues, so that titles on up-to-date subjects may be classified adequately.

- As provider and user of WebDewey Deutsch
 - we are reliant on the application to be further developed functionally and technically according to customers' needs, so that we and our customers can work efficiently in modern environments.
 - we are reliant on the application to be further developed technically, so that we and our customers can work efficiently in modern environments.
 - we are reliant on properly maintained DDC data, so that they can be evaluated and deployed for beneficial functionalities like the Number building tool or the automatic takeover of DDC numbers to the local WinIBW cataloging environment.
- As provider and user of WebDewey Deutsch Search, we want to further develop the application (in cooperation with other European providers of WebDewey Search), because in the DACH countries, special emphasis is placed on DDC searching and hierarchical browsing.
- As supplier of DDC numbers to library networks (Verbünde) and individual libraries in the DACH countries,
 - we want to use the Relative Index terms, in order to enhance verbal catalog retrieval options for DDC-indexed titles. Therefore, a continuous maintenance of the Relative Index is required.
 - we want to continue using the number components for single assignment and supply, in order to elaborate optimized search options in both WebDewey Search Deutsch and online library catalogs. For this purpose, we are reliant on the maintenance of the data according to our local data field requirements (in particular field 765). Furthermore, we are interested in a separation of DDC numbers contained in imported external data, this being a research objective of the project Colibri/DDC conducted in the Verbundzentrale GBV.
- As supplier of Linked Data Services for our national bibliographic data, we want DDC data which is free according to license CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 to be available on dewey.info. Data offered in the linked data section on dewey.info have a double benefit: First, dewey.info URIs are regarded as canonical identifiers enabling machines to analyze classification system data. Second, the internal link structure of dewey.info constitutes relationships between versions of DDC classes and between language variants, being a prerequisite for high-quality machine-assisted indexing.
- As an institution promoting the linking of bibliographic data, we need a more fine-grained URI structure for dewey.info, so that direct linking to specific versions of a DDC class is possible. This also includes the linking between translations of classes and classes of the source language version.
- As contact partner for the application and the distribution of the DDC in the DACH countries, we want the full German DDC data to be available for research purposes when requested by other institutions, in order to promote DDC research, e. g. in the field of automatic classification, and to make use of research results.

- As DDC training provider we have a need for an updated version of the DDC "Dewey Decimal Classification. Principles and Application" work book, so that we can recommend it to our course participants as valid exercise material.
- As contact partner for the DDC in the DACH countries we are reliant on DDC experts at OCLC, so that we can get help with difficult DDC issues or that we can refer to them for further discussion.

In the past 15 years, considerable investments of financial and human resources have been made to introduce and promote DDC Deutsch in the DACH countries. To keep and to enhance the high level of importance that DDC Deutsch has gained so far, we are reliant on a DDC that is lead, maintained in terms of content and format, technically improved and represented by an expert Dewey team at OCLC.



Dr. Elisabeth Niggemann
Director General