A World of Disappearing Boundaries: Traditional Organization of Information in an Electronic Environment

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We are faced with changing boundaries for:

- what is to be included in a catalog
- what is to be included in a catalog record
- international coding of records
- new concepts in authority control internationally
- challenges of multiple-language subject approaches
- use of classification schemes

What is Included in Catalogs

- Traditionally - what is owned in a particular local library
- Union catalogs - what is owned by at least one of the cooperating libraries
- Boundaries are disappearing
  - items owned at the institution but not under library control
  - archives have records for items not owned
  - subscriptions to electronic journals
  - Internet documents

Catalog use

- Boundaries have been disappearing for some time
  - telephone and modem access
  - telnet to libraries nationally, then internationally
  - Z39.50 protocol supports not having to learn different search commands for each system
  - Web interfaces

What is Included in Catalog Records

- Traditionally (in the U.S.) - LC copy
- Technology allowed sharing
  - National Union Catalog - photocopying
  - Online systems
- Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2nd ed. (AACR2)
  - Technology has allowed creation of records with more than or less than called for in AACR2
  - Core level records (PCC standard)
  - International Conference on AACR in October 1997
- Dublin Core

Coding of Catalog Records

- USMARC
- Reconciliation of USMARC, UKMARC, CAN/MARC
- UNIMARC
- SGML and HTML
- MARC to SGML DTD
Authority Control

- Access control
- USNAF + BLNAL = AAAF
- International access control requires standard sets of data elements
- ISADN
- UNIMARC for Authorities

Multiple Language Subject Control

- U.S. academic libraries seem to be ignoring this issue
- Many online systems require removal of headings in languages other than English
- Logical display not yet dealt with in U.S.
- Few multiple language interfaces in U.S.

Multiple Thesaurus Subject Control

- LC Subject Headings (LCSH) and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)
  - with card catalogs one or the other was chosen
  - with online catalogs displaying both is easy
- Logical and clear presentation to users is not easy
  - the abbreviations LC, MeSH, etc. may not be comprehensible to users
  - two lists for the same topic may cause users to miss some resources
- Combined thesauri (e.g., UMLS)

Example Variations between LCSH and MeSH

MeSH: Nursing--dictionaries
LCSH: Nursing--Dictionaries

MeSH: Education, Nursing
LCSH: Nursing--Study and teaching

MeSH: Schools, Nursing
LCSH: Nursing schools
Classification

- Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC)
  - Abridged DDC linked to Sears List of Subject Headings
  - Full DDC linked to LCSH
  - Translations into a number of languages
- Library of Congress Classification (LCC)
- Universal Decimal Classification (UDC)

Disappearing Boundaries

- Changes are occurring at different paces
- Internationally agreed-upon standards are needed for:
  - contents of catalog records
  - coding scheme
  - access control for names
  - display of multiple-language subjects
- We should explore classification for switching devices among verbal systems