

Switching to DDC. What are the implications? Study 3 of the Catalogue survey

Summary and conclusions part 2.

What measures need to be taken if Swedish libraries switch to DDC?

If Swedish libraries make the switch to DDC we need to decide whether to commit to a translation or suffice with the English language edition. Summarising the issue it becomes apparent that a translation is by far the most advantageous despite initial costs. The solution of using an abridged edition, either translating the English abridged edition or producing our own abridged edition has its limitations. Codes from the abridged edition are not interoperable with the codes from the full edition making it more difficult to utilise DDC codes in foreign-language bibliographic records. The English language abridged edition would be too short to accommodate the needs of the LIBRIS libraries, and producing our own abridged edition would involve too much work in deciding on the degree of abridgement. The main alternatives are therefore a translation of the complete DDC alternatively a mixed English/Swedish edition. From a quality point of view a translation of the complete edition would be the preferable solution. Furthermore, a web version which need not necessarily be printed, appears to be the more desirable alternative.

The DDC do not permit countries to produce their own adaptations involving the change of content to the original DDC codes. However, we can adapt terminology and examples to Swedish conditions. We can also suggest changes to the English language edition of the DDC. Certain extensions, e.g. Swedish geography, need to be effectuated. It is recommended that we have a few translators supported by an expert group. The software developed for the German translation should be applied to facilitate the translation. The continuing maintenance of the Swedish DDC needs to be supported by an editorial office. This DDC editorial office would also assume responsibility in providing for educational courses.

Mappings between the DDC and the SAB scheme would occupy a central position following a switch to DDC. It would function as an aid when classifying, constitute a foundation for joint search tools and be utilised when generating codes for shelf marks. The current conversion table DDC-SAB would need to be revised to maintain a high standard and also functions for automated translations between the classification schemes. Mappings between Svenska ämnesord and DDC would be good tools for cataloguers and users to find the correct DDC code. There are mappings between Svenska ämnesord and LCSH and also between LCSH and DDC. As a result much of the mapping for Svenska ämnesord – DDC could to an extent be automated.

85% of the LIBRIS libraries foreign-language acquisitions are published in countries where DDC is implemented. Ca 80% of the records originate from national bibliographies or is available via z.3950. The necessary prerequisites to use DDC codes in foreign-language bibliographic records are in other words advantageous, but the technical solutions enabling easy access and the import of records need to be developed. The book distributors and publishers who sell catalogue records gather, as a rule, their records from LC or the British Library and therefore DDC codes are generally present. The records for e-books downloaded into LIBRIS also contain DDC codes, which records for e-periodicals seldom have.

Following a switch to DDC there would only remain a small part of foreign-language literature in

need of classification by Swedish libraries. To be able to extend and maintain DDC competence it would be appropriate to expect libraries to consider focusing their classification work to fewer persons. A switch would necessitate training Swedish librarians. Those reference librarians and cataloguers not offered to construct DDC codes should be given the opportunity to partake in a full day's introductory training course. Those librarians expected to create DDC codes should be offered a course of a longer duration, i.e. a week.

Swedish search tools using DDC codes need to be developed, but as there are at present several satisfactory tools for DDC this work can be extended. Swedish interfaces and tools are needed for integration with LIBRIS and other library catalogues.

As parts of library collections will be classified using the SAB scheme and other parts using the DDC scheme, there is the need to coordinate user-searches. One alternative is to complement present records in LIBRIS that lack DDC codes with those gathered from i.e. WorldCat. Such an approach would provide for manually produced DDC codes of a high standard, yet only encompass parts of the records. We can also gain access to DDC codes to some of the literature held at Swedish libraries by subscribing to WorldCat. Another alternative, which is needed as a complement even if some of the previous alternatives were to be instigated, is through the aid of a conversion table SAB-DDC accomplish a joint search tool. This would enable the majority of LIBRIS records to be tagged with DDC codes, even if they would be produced on an automated basis and therefore of an inferior standard. The tool for joint searches should be flexible and adaptable and when the need arises, be able to distinguish between manual and automated classification. Yet another alternative is to utilise co-occurrence and cluster of SAB and DDC for joint searches.

Shelving and classification have so far concurred at Swedish libraries and most libraries have shelved their holdings in a similar fashion. Following a switch to DDC a divided situation is very likely to appear. Certain libraries will carry on shelving books according to SAB, others will use DDC and a third group will combine SAB and DDC, through for instance, a mixed shelving policy where literature using either SAB or DDC codes are placed together using plain language. The mapping between SAB and DDC is crucial to enable the different solutions.

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