

MARCH OF CLASSIFICATORY TERMINOLOGY*

A NEELAMEGHAN

1 Need for a Standard Glossary of Classification Terms

Classification is now a rapidly developing discipline. Research in classification is being carried on by different groups in several countries. The development of a discipline depends largely on its cultivation by the intellectuals

* INDIAN STANDARD INSTITUTION: *Glossary of classification terms*. 1964 (IS : 2550-1963). Rs 10. 110 P.

through mutual communication. The most widely used medium for their communication is the verbal plane. The intellectual cannot help diving deeper and deeper into his speciality. Contact with specialists in other disciplines is also essential for mutual enrichment. The communication among peers will be most efficient if there is one-to-one correspondence between the idea and its expression in the verbal plane. There should be no noise introduced in the communication. For, noise may lead to wastage of intellectual potential, through misunderstanding and wrong interpretation of the expression of a thought in the verbal plane. When there are several schools of thought in a discipline—as there are in classification—the chances for such faulty communication are greater. A fault in the verbal plane can even distort thinking. When we are laying the foundations of a discipline such aberrations would be a serious handicap in team research. Therefore, it is imperative that each school of thought standardises the special terms used in the discipline.

2 The Indian Standard Glossary

The seed for the Indian Standard *Glossary* was perhaps sown nearly three decades ago when the first edition of the *Prolegomena to library classification* was published in 1937. In a paper presented to the Tenth All-India Library Conference (Hyderabad, 1953), B C Vickery drew up a glossary of the then current terminology in classification, giving full representation to the terminology developed in India [6]. At the World Congress of Librarians and Documentalists (Brussels, 1955), it was felt that some schools of thought had already developed a terminology in classification in a casual way and that there was a need for unification. The FID, which has always interested itself in promoting standards in documentation, recommended that a glossary of terms should be published by each school of thought such that at a later stage the Federation might collate them to draw up a multilingual international glossary. The Indian School of Thought was perhaps the first to respond with a fairly exhaustive glossary of classification term in 1958 [4]. The Documentation Sectional Committee of the Indian Standards Institution, has based its present *Glossary* on the 1958 version.

3 Structure of the Glossary

31 GENERAL

Considerable thought appears to have been given by the Committee.

- 1 In the selection of the terms so as to obtain full representation and comprehensiveness ;
- 2 In the definition of the terms such that precision and compactness are ensured ;
- 3 In the provision of helpful examples ;
- 4 In the organization of the chapters, and the sections ;
- 5 In the naming and numbering of the sections ; and
- 6 Even in the captioning of the pages, to facilitate the use of the *Glossary* to the fullest extent and in the most economical way.

32 VALUE OF THE GLOSSARY

321 CLASSIFIED ARRANGEMENT

Perhaps the most prominent feature of the *Glossary* is its classified structure—that is, the grouping of the terms. Although this is not altogether a novel idea in the compilation of glossaries, it is only in recent years that the usefulness of classified arrangement of terms is being increasingly realised.

The British Standards Institution has for example, produced several glossaries of technical terms in which related terms are grouped. In the Indian Standards *Glossary* the classification is not only more detailed but each term is numbered by an expressive mnemonic digit.

To the user of the glossary—whether he be a new entrant to the profession or he is an experienced specialist—the classified arrangement provides a compact picture of the discipline, with a facility in the flow of thought from one term to the next. The terms get pin-pointedly defined in their respective contexts. This minimises the chances of any misinterpretation of a term out of its context, and the fault of homonym. The relation between the concepts connoted by each term is more helpfully delineated. The problem areas in terminology needing further classification and the less developed areas in the discipline itself get better demarcated in the classified arrangement.

322 ASSUMED TERMS

Another interesting feature of the *Glossary* is the introduction of a number of undefined assumed terms. This is in conformity with scientific method as well as with the Indian tradition. An assumed term is a term bringing an experience—sensory or intellectual—within apprehension by reflex action in the majority among the specialists in the discipline concerned. Such assumed terms are necessary to make a start and to cut the vicious circle caused by the need to define each and every term if assumed terms are not introduced.

323 PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

The *Glossary* will go a long way in promoting international co-operation in research in classification, and in a better understanding of the Indian School of Thought. It will be of considerable value as an authoritative guide for the technical staff engaged in classification work in libraries. It will also be an authoritative and helpful hand book for the growing number of teachers and students of library science.

324 PROMOTION OF STANDARDIZATION

If the features of the *Glossary* mentioned in the preceding sections prove more helpful to its users, then the publication will mark a milestone in the promotion of a standard for the presentation of a glossary of technical terms.

4 Cost

One might point out that cost of production of a classified glossary will be higher. For, it required in addition to the classified part an alphabetical index

of the terms. In the preceding sections we have already indicated some of the benefits of the classified arrangement to the user of the *Glossary*. These in themselves should far outweigh the considerations of increased cost in preparing an alphabetical index. Further, the definition of each term in a classified glossary can be made shorter than in a glossary arranged in a single alphabetical sequence. For, in the classified glossary the words explaining the context in which a term is assigned a particular meaning can be omitted. The definition of a term can be conveniently based upon the definition of terms defined earlier in the glossary—that is, we take the help of the Canon of Context. In an alphabetical sequence such advantage will not be there and each term will have to be explained in its context. Again, if the advantages of a classified arrangement are also to be strained into the alphabetical arrangement, cross references to related terms and from synonyms have to be provided extensively, and classified pockets have to be created. There fore, it is even doubtful whether the cost of production of a classified glossary will be substantially higher than that of a glossary of terms arranged in a single alphabetical sequence.

5 Points for Future Revision of the Glossary

In Sec 1 it was indicated that the discipline of classification has been developing rapidly in recent years. Even in the two years since the compilation of the *Glossary* was completed, certain concepts have changed. For example, the Bond Theory (Sec G 94) has been more fully developed and explained recently [1]; Among the Principles for Facet Sequence (Sec N2) the Wall Picture Principle is now considered the basic one and should be applied first; the other principles being derivations from it; Zone analysis and Sector Notation (Chap S) needs re-presentation in the light of current developments [5]; 'Faceted Classification' is not merely an alternative name for Analytico-Synthetic Classification (Sec T3). There are substantial differences between the two concepts [2]; the levels and orders of semantic richness of digits (Sec U64) is at variance with an earlier publication on the subject [3]; this needs attention. In respect of Chain Procedure, it has been found necessary to drop the idea of Fuse Link (Sec X22 and its subdivisions). On Machine Search (Chap Y) new glossaries are now available which may be used to bring up this chapter up-to-date and more comprehensive.

51 INDEX

In the preparation of the index advantage could have been taken of the classified arrangement of terms in the main part of the *Glossary*. There was no need to create classified pockets in the index parallel to the classified sequence. For example, under the heading 'Postulate for notational plane M3' we have enumeration of the three postulates in the same sequence as in the classified part in Sec M3. The postulates are also enumerated by their respective names in the alphabetical sequence. The utility of such repetition and classified pockets

is doubtful in a glossary giving classified arrangement of terms. The index could have been thinned down without any loss.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1 Sec 5 RANGANATHAN S R : Bond strength. (In author's *Colon Classification*. Descriptive account. 1964. Chapter V). (Rutgers Seminar on systems for the intellectual organization of information. Ed by Susan Ariandi. 4).
 - 2 Sec 5 — General and special classification. (International Study Conference on Classification Research 2 (Elsinore) (1964). Special report 17).
 - 3 Sec 5 — Level and orders of semantic richness. (In author's *Notational Plane ; Interpolation and extrapolation*. (*An lib sr* 10;1963; Sec A27).
 - 4 Sec 3 — Library classification glossary. (*An lib sr*, 5;1958; 76-112).
 - 5 Sec 5 — Notational plane. (In author's *Design of depth classification*. *Lib sr* 1;1964; Sec A47).
 - 6 Sec 3 VICKERY B C. Glossary of current terminology. (In Ranganathan S R, Ed. *Depth classification, and reference service and reference material*. 1953. Paper 1.2).
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