

At the conference – workshop “Three years application of DDC schedule in Vietnamese libraries” a number of opinions on application of DDC have been raised and achieved unanimity at the conference. Followings are orientations and key solutions for the application of DDC in the next 5 years of Vietnamese library sector.

1. General orientation

Based on the approved orientation of the library sector “Unification – Standardization – Integration” general direction for application of DDC in the next 5 years is that all libraries must be prompt to push up application of DDC and strive for the aim that in the next 5 years major libraries in Vietnam will apply only DDC in classification work, small and medium size libraries apply Vietnamese abridged DDC14 with updates of the next versions of the abridged DDC.

2. Solutions

To improve the quality and efficiency of classification work, from the practice of applying DDC in the whole Vietnamese library sector, it is learnt that the following solutions should be focused on:

2.1. Strengthening the state management role of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism

- Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (MoCST) should issue documents with high legal value regulating that all libraries and information centers must apply DDC schedule, and at the same time offering a clear roadmap for libraries to complete the conversion.

From the practice, it is seen that the Decision No.1598/BVHTT-TV on May 7, 2007 by Ministry of Culture and Information (now is Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism) has just encouraged libraries with good conditions in budget, facilities and staff to move to apply DDC, MARC21,

AACR2 from June 1st, 2007. This has led to the fact that there are libraries even though fully understanding the importance of “Unification – Standardization – Integration”, they did not put strong efforts in overcoming difficulties in budget, staff, mentality burden as well as responsibilities of both library leader and staff to find out methods to apply DDC in their classification works. Other opinions stated that libraries in our network can apply different classification schedules. If so, we are about returning to the time before having the Decision 1598 of MoCI and it means that there is no “unification”...

- Management bodies of library at ministry, sector and locality level as well as leader of each library need to invest time and money in building programs to support the creation (translate, compile) of materials about DDC (translate new versions of DDC schedule, compile instruction materials on using DDC to classify materials, etc.), train classifiers skills of using DDC, build target programs for using DDC to do retrospection of old materials,...

- Strengthening the inspection and supervision; praising the libraries that apply DDC effectively and reprimanding, reminding the libraries that delayed applying DDC.

These are necessary and efficient management measures. However, over the past time, management bodies of library at ministry, sector and locality level have not conducted this work or rarely conducted it. The inspection and supervision should be carried out regularly and concluded by necessary documents.

- MoCST should influence on other ministries behavior such as Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Health ... in order to urge these ministries to issue official documents that request libraries under their management to apply DDC 14 schedule.

2.2. Improving capacity and efficiency of offering instructions on DDC application

- Establishing a Committee for application of DDC in the whole Vietnamese library sector with the National Library of Vietnam (NLV) as the leader and some major libraries with experiences in applying DDC as members. This committee should have its own regular budget to implement the following tasks:

- To maintain DDC office, DDC web; regularly update changes of DDC schedule and create adaptations with the currently used version of the classification schedule.
- To compile instruction materials that provide general instructions and unified methods to classify materials using DDC schedule for libraries and information centers throughout the country;
- To offer professional advice, hold forums about using DDC to classify materials online;
- To organize advanced training classes on using DDC;
- To hold regular site survey trips to libraries to provide timely advice and assistances on the use of DDC.

This solution is scientific because at present, libraries in Vietnam are applying different versions of DDC schedule, such as DDC19, DDC20, DDC21, DDC22 while each version of DDC can have items and new rules that are different from the earlier versions. Therefore, inviting experienced libraries in DDC classification to participate in compiling instruction materials, offering advice on the versions that they have used for years will help not only ensure the scientific value and accuracy of professional decisions but also create a joint power of the whole sector in applying DDC to classify materials. The issue now is that how to establish this Committee and maintain its operation. As with our opinion, establishment of the DDC Committee for the whole Vietnamese library sector can follow the following steps:

- NLV sent dispatches to libraries with experiences in DDC classification encouraging them to nominate staff to participate in the committee as a contribution to the library community in Vietnam.
- Those nominated by libraries to participate in the Committee must be cut down some tasks at their libraries. Level of task reduction will be decided under a written agreement between NLV and the nominating library. These people will be involved in all works of the Committee such as offering professional advice (written or online) according to the versions of the DDC or certain areas of science; participating in the compilation, feedback, evaluation of instruction materials for DDC compiled by the Committee and joining in the site survey trips, DDC training classes organized by the Committee.
- To develop and promulgate an official document on the operation mechanism of the Committee after it is established.
- To establish an annual budget for the Committee. In addition to the fund for regular operation of the Committee, NLV should provide extra financial compensation for members of the committee.

Just looking at the above steps, we can see the complexity of the issue. However, if NLV has the determination to do it and other libraries support it, it is believed that we can really establish this committee. Conversely, NLV will still try to undertake this task and find appropriate collaboration methods to mobilize capabilities of other libraries to participate in the task of offering professional guidance for using DDC to classify materials.

- NLV coordinates with Publishing Department to conduct cataloguing at source to ensure maximum the consistency in cataloguing materials including assigning classification number.

We all know the great impact of cataloguing at source or "cataloguing in publications". In the last several years, many proposals for applying this method have been raised but not yet been put into practical work of publishing - library activity in our country. In recent years, General Sciences Library of Ho Chi Minh City has achieved agreements with one or two publishing houses in Ho Chi Minh City to pilot this work and the results are very good. Recently, NLV has received financial support from the Atlantic Philanthropies to conduct cataloguing in publication project. If the result is positive, it will be a good start for the collaboration between NLV and Publishing Department (Ministry of Information and Communications) in making this activity stable in the near future. Besides, the important thing is that at present, Publishing Department is the official agency that has the right to assign international standard book number (ISBN) for publications of Vietnam. This is extremely convenient for implementing "cataloguing in publication".

- NLV catalogues all materials published in Vietnam quickly and accurately and uploads those cataloguing data on its website for other libraries to be able to copy the data for their needs.

This centralized cataloguing function has been assigned to NLV by Ministry of Culture since 1962. Since the early years conducting this function until the period of computerizing library work, NLV has printed and sent fiches to about 600 libraries in the country. In the early years of IT application, on the one hand, NLV transferred its bibliographic data files of new materials received by legal deposit source to provincial libraries; on the other hand, NLV put its bibliographic databases online for libraries nation wide to exploit. Since 2002 when NLV implemented the project of building electronic library, the library no longer sent bibliographic data files to provincial libraries, but these libraries and many other libraries in Vietnam have harvested the records on the Internet. In recent years, NLV has done a lot of work to collect the most complete and fastest publications of Vietnam and improve its technical process in order to put its bibliographic data of legal deposit materials on line after 15 days of receiving publications. However, it should be noticed that the revised Publishing Law passed on September 3rd, 2004 by the 6th Session of XI National Assembly did not support NLV to implement this function. At the Clause 2, Article 27 of this Law Submission of legal deposit publications and submit publications to the National Library of Vietnam, it is said: After the release of publications, publishing houses, agencies and organizations that are allowed to publish materials must submit 5 copies of each publication to the National Library of Vietnam,... This provision of time is different from the one at 1993 Publishing Law. According to the 1993 Law, publishers must submit publications to NLV 7 days before the release of

publication. That it was not clearly defined "after release" is how many days in the 2004 Law has caused difficulties for NLV in acquiring materials timely, organizing information quickly (centralized cataloguing and compiling national bibliography monthly / annual) and in readers service task of NLV.

2.3. Enhancing responsibility of every library and information center

- To promote application of DDC in libraries by developing concrete plans for each part of the work.

- To build a concrete suitable process and plans for each phase of applying DDC to do retrospection of old materials (classification, storage organization, editing databases, etc.).

- To establish research groups of DDC at each library (including experienced classifiers). These groups must be sent to advanced training courses about DDC so that they can provide advice on using DDC to classify materials for their colleagues.

- To provide regular training classes for classifiers. At the same time, instruction materials and guidance documents also need to be provided timely to libraries in order to improve the quality and efficiency of classification work.

- Libraries and information centers must have annual fund for training and retraining of classifiers and doing retrospection of old materials when applying DDC.

- Libraries should regularly hold training classes and conference-workshops on classification skills in order to provide classifiers chances to discuss, exchange ideas and experiences in the application of DDC.

3. Making amendments to the Vietnamese abridged DDC14

- According to comments of many libraries, Editorial Board of DDC14 should continue writing recommendations to OCLC to open more expansions for some classes of the Vietnamese abridged DDC14 to make it more adaptable with the political and social political circumstance of Vietnam, especially for technical materials like History, Literature, Linguistics, Religion, Medicine, Local History, Military, etc. The Board should also edit some terminologies that are not translated accurately and some instructions that are not explained clearly in the Vietnamese abridged DDC14; republish the Vietnamese abridged DDC14 in a bigger letter size.

Although at the conference – workshop in Sapa, representative of the DDC14 translation team has given out explanations that each translation part of DDC14 has been adopted by the U.S site, mistake therefore may exist but not many and it is impossible to edit and republish DDC14. However, as DDC14 is the classification schedule that will be used by small and medium size libraries in our country in a long period in the future, it should be edited. Although printing a new edition (with amendments and supplements in written way) is a very difficult task but should be done even just in form of an erratum slip to the existing one. The problem is who will be responsible for doing that job and from where to get the fund for doing it. It is my suggestion that, this budget should be included in the project of the full DDC22/23 translation.

4. Organizing the translation of DDC22 with successful Vietnamizing classes involving Vietnamese issues and overcoming shortcomings of the Vietnamese abridged DDC14

Because we are not sure about the exact time when the version DDC23 is published, the current plan is to translate DDC22 and will continue translating updates of DDC23 when it is published. And by that way we will have the full Vietnamese DDC23. It is planned that in the next 3-4 years, the translation project of DDC22/23 will be accomplished. However, in order to have a qualified Vietnamese version of DDC for Vietnamese libraries, the Editorial Board should successfully Vietnamize classes involving Vietnamese issues and overcome writing shortcomings of the Vietnamese abridged DDC14.

Besides, we should research the process to correct, edit and complement the DDC22 (23), DDC14 in order to avoid translating DDC in chase of new versions. A proposed solution at the conference that we found very suitable is that just translate changes and updates of the next versions of DDC but not translate the whole copy of the new version so that we can save a lot of money. However, the problem is that how to identify copy right for the supplementation and after how many times of printing just the supplementation, a new full version will be republished, etc.

5. Opening more training classes on DDC. Institutions that offer training and fostering courses for librarians should allocate more time for teaching DDC.

Some participants argue that current teaching of DDC has not yet met the expectations for DDC. One of the reasons that some libraries have not applied DDC is because they have not received training. Thus, teaching of DDC should be enhanced in regular training institutions of library science as well as at professional fostering courses by libraries and professional training centers. Demand for participating in advanced DDC training courses has been raised. And this is also a task that NLV and other big libraries and professional training centers should focus on in the coming time.

Dr. Le Van Viet