Outline of today’s lecture

1. Some classification systems in action
   - LCSH
   - ISO
   - Email use in organisations

2. Further thoughts on business (ie functional) analysis

But first ...

‘[According to] a certain Chinese encyclopedia entitled Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge... animals are divided into (a) those that belong to the emperor, (b) embalmed ones, (c) those that are trained, (d) suckling pigs, (e) mermaids, (f) fabulous ones, (g) stray dogs, (h) those that are included in this classification, (i) those that tremble as if they were mad, (j) innumerable ones, (k) those drawn with a very fine camel’s-hair brush, (l) others, (m) those that have just broken a flower vase, (n) those that resemble flies from a distance’ (Borges 1981: 142).
1. Library of Congress Subject Headings

- Purpose
- Scope
- Principles
- Strengths
- Limitations
- Future

1a. LCSH Purpose

- To provide an authority list for subject headings
- First published in 1909, now in its 26th edition
- Widely used in the US, but also elsewhere in the English-speaking world

1b. LCSH scope

The 16th edition (1993) contained nearly 200,000 authority records, including:
- 11,000 family names
- 3,000 corporate headings
- 28,700 geographic subject headings

(LCSH 16 Vol.1: vii)
1c. LCSH principles

- Knowledge-based classification
- Use of controlled vocabulary in a thesaurus
- Headings listed alphabetically
- Subjects organised through facet analysis

1d. LCSH principles

Illich (1993) argues that alphabetical listing is a relatively recent innovation

1e. LCSH principles

- Thesaurus designates ('controls') which headings can be used in the system
- Elements indicate the relationship between headings
- Pointers indicate how to construct multiple concept headings - ie some postcoordinate classification allowed
1f. LCSH principles

- Authority listings printed in bold
- Elements explain relationships between terms:
  - Scope Notes specify the range of subject matter
  - USE designates approved heading
  - UF used for (designates synonym)
  - BT broader topic
  - NT narrower topic
  - RT related topic
  - SA see also
  - (May Subd Geog) one kind of ‘multiple concept’ heading

1g. LCSH principles – scope notes

Criminology (May Subd Geog)

Here are entered works on the discipline that studies the causes, detection and prevention of crime, and the treatment or punishment of criminals. Works on the occurrence of crime are entered under Crime. Works on the criminal justice system are entered under Criminal justice, Administration of.

1h. LCSH principles – other elements

Criminology (May Subd Geog)

UF Crime – Study and teaching
BT Social sciences
RT Crime
Criminals
- Sociological aspects
  USE Crime - Sociological aspects
- Statistical methods
  USE Crime - Statistical methods
1j. LCSH - controlled vocabulary

- Criminology ✓
- Crime – Study and teaching ×
- Criminology - Sociological aspects ×
- Crime - Sociological aspects ✓
- Criminology - Statistical methods ×
- Crime - Statistical methods ✓

1k. LCSH hierarchy and relations

Social problems

- Crime
- Alcoholism and crime
- Social ethics
- Criminology

Social problems hierarchy

- Social problems
- Crime
- Alcoholism and crime
- Social ethics
- Criminology

1l. LCSH strengths

- Ubiquitousness
- Not hampered by notational constraints
- Wide of use of subject specialists in development
- Frequent additions and changes (although selective)

(Chan 1994: 337)
1m. LCSH limitations

- Cultural bias
- 'no clear and predictable theoretical basis for subject analysis'
- 'alphabetical arrangements are often used in place of logical hierarchies'

(Chan 1994: 338)

1n. LCSH limitations

Sanford Berman (1971/1993) has provided a detailed account of curious approved terms in previous editions of LCSH:

- Napalm see Metallic Soaps
- Banks & Banking - Jews
- Yellow Peril
- Gipsies see Rogues and Vagabonds
- Homosexuality see Sexual perversion

1o. LCSH future

- Will continue to find wide use, above all in libraries with English-language holdings
- More and more libraries also provide LCSH as a means for online catalogue searching
1p. ISO

- Purpose
- Scope
- Principles

1q. ISO purpose

- To develop technical standards on a global basis
- Began operations in 1947, and now involves the national standards bodies of 147 countries
- Administered by an NGO that brings together public and private sector interests
- Compliance is voluntary

1r. ISO scope

- Nearly 14,000 International Standards published to date
- Most are very technical, concerning items such as screw threads and telephone cards
- Best known families of standards today are
  - ISO 9000 quality management
  - ISO 14000 environmental management
1s. ISO cataloguing principles

- Hierarchical structure using decimal notation
- Organised by subject
- Example of hierarchical analysis in a different context

1t. ISO and functional analysis

- ISO also provides standards concerning business organisation, with direct implications for document management in various environments
- The international standard for designing record keeping systems (ISO 15489) are based in part upon previous Australian frameworks

1u. Sorting e-mail at work

Maureen Mackenzie (2000, 2002) has looked at the use of e-mail by American business executives:

- not only to communicate, but also
- to organise and store information ‘for future use’
1v. Sorting e-mail at work

Mackenzie concluded that those she interviewed often organised their e-mail according to four broad criteria:

- Immediate need
- Task management
- Environmental scanning
- Perceived future need

Classifying business-related e-mail (based on Mackenzie 2000: 419)

A. 1st level of classification: immediate need

B. Task management: what I must do

C. Environmental scanning: what others must do

D. 2nd level of e-mail classification: future need

2. Comparing business & knowledge-based schemes

- Both business (also known as functional) classification and knowledge-based schemes can share certain techniques for document organisation, such as the identification of facets
- They also differ in important ways
2a. For business-based schema

- ‘The primary criterion for categorisation is activity/task-based’
- The starting point is ‘broad core functions and activities’, rather than existing records or staff user needs
- Documents need to be not only arranged and retrieved, but also assessed in terms of evidential purposes, retention periods, security levels …
- Document arrangement commonly mirrors organisational structure (Kennedy & Schauder 1998: 115)

1. Classification in organisations

According to Bruno & Richmond (2003: 45), most organisations display a:

- ‘lack of standardised procedures’
- ‘“stovepipe” approach to information process’
- ‘lack of an information-sharing culture’
- ‘proliferation of legacy systems’

2b. Other approaches

Bruno & Richmond (2003: 48) suggest a number of different possible ways of organising documents within an organisation:

- By function
- By department
- By subject
- By product/service
- By location
5. Further reading