

REVIEWS

edited by Philip Bradley

Indexing

Indexing specialties: history. Edited by Margie Towery. Medford, NJ: Information Today for American Society of Indexers, 1998. xi, 64 pp. 23 cm. Bibliog, index. ISBN 1-57387-055-2 (pbk): \$18.00.

This is the first in a series of publications from the American Society of Indexers which aims to develop skills in specialized subjects, and to contribute to continuing professional education.

There are six articles in all, each by a different contributor or contributors. The first of these is in the form of an introduction and is aimed more at the new indexer, or the non-indexer. It is followed by five more, each on a specific aspect of history indexing. Although there is a lot of information given, it is not intended to be a straight 'how-to' treatise but to promote discussion as well as to instruct. Neither is it meant to be a comprehensive work, topics having been selected, at least partly, on the basis of the authors' willingness to 'give freely of their time and energy'.

The article on 'Medieval History' starts off with general background on the subject. This is followed by advice on who should attempt to index it and how to set about it for the first time. The approach here is quite good, stressing the importance of background research for those wanting to break into a new field. Much of what is said would be applicable to any subject area and is also likely to have been covered by any trainee. There is a useful section on terminology, particularly names. The author suggests indexing children's books on medieval history (though there are not large numbers of them) as an entry into more advanced indexing. Children's indexing specialists are likely to be less happy with the proposal, preferring to see work in children's books as an entity in its own right.

The following article on Latin American history also provides background to the study. There is good practical advice on foreign-language words, including inconsistencies of accenting and a very useful section on naming in Spanish.

'Indexing History Textbooks' and 'Indexing Art and Art History Materials', as well as picking out specific indexing problems needing specialist attention both devote time to general topics and procedures of particular relevance to the beginner indexer. The subject of names, not unexpectedly, appears in both articles, as they are such a major feature of history indexes. Unfortunately, in her example of a sequence of people whose entry element is an identical forename (Frederick William) the author does not explain her method of arrangement, certainly only one of a number of options. The 'Textbooks' article includes two appendices — a project worksheet and a listing of general indexing procedure. Experienced indexers will all have their own established routines but those given here could still be useful as a check. There are two interesting additions to the 'Art History' piece: an appendix on thesauri deals not only with their application in art history but also their general usefulness to the indexer, and secondly the bibliography which includes a section on 'Web Resources'.

The final article on 'Gender and Sexual Orientation' in indexing history uses the topic to discuss terminology, choice of terms for the index and the problems of bias and balance and draws widely on the author's own experience.

All in all, this is a very readable and useful booklet and an interesting addition to the literature of indexing.

Anne McCarthy, *freelance indexer*

Inhaltsschliessung durch Indexieren: Prinzipien und Praxis

[Content retrieval through indexing: principles and practice]. Robert Fugmann. Frankfurt am Main: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Dokumentation, 1999. 225 pp. 23 cm. Bibliog, index. ISBN 3-925474-38-2 (pbk).

The author of this German indexing manual is well known to the community of American information scientists through his articles on principles of information retrieval, which appeared in the 1970s and 1980s in the *Journal of the American Society of Information Science*. In this work, probably the first of its kind in the German language, he explores first the problems of information retrieval systems based on natural language, and the various aspects of indexing languages, including thesauri and classification systems. Next, the practical aspects of indexing are covered, followed by an extensive treatment of back-of-the-book indexing and the special requirements of databank indexing. Throughout the book, the various fallacies of automatic indexing and its sometimes disastrous results are vigorously attacked and the necessity of human indexing for effective and efficient information retrieval is emphasized. The index to the book is somewhat idiosyncratic, but its unusual features are fully explained and it is at any rate quite exhaustive and well cross-referenced. In the chapters on the techniques of indexing, only cards are considered, while no mention is made of computer-assisted indexing, probably because such programs have not yet been developed for German practice, nor are there any professional indexing societies in German-speaking countries.

This book will contribute to the further development of indexers and indexing in those countries in order to reach the level of proficiency in the English-speaking world.

Hans H. Wellisch, *Professor emeritus,*
University of Maryland

Indexing aids: thesauri

ASIS thesaurus of information science and librarianship. 2nd edn.

Edited by Jessica L Milstead. Medford, NJ: Information Today for American Society of Indexers, 1998. xvi, 169 pp. 28 cm. ISBN 1-57387-050-1 (pbk): \$39.95 (\$31.85 to ASIS members). (ASIS monograph series.)

The scope of this second edition is unchanged: '... to cover the fields of information science and librarianship to a depth that will adequately support indexing in these fields'. The related fields covered include computer science, linguistics, behavioural and cognitive sciences, with limited coverage of education, economics, management, statistics and sociology, with terms included for the subjects being indexed, e.g. music, physical sciences. New, changed and deleted terms are listed. With the explosive growth of the Internet and World Wide Web, jargon is avoided as this might be superseded.

In the alphabetical display, in addition to the usual broader, narrower, related and used-for terms, there are scope notes that cover definitions and use of terms, and this can also be used as a glossary, e.g.

keywords

SN: Terms, frequently single words, used in uncontrolled indexing.

UF: keywords

natural language indexing
uncontrolled indexing

BT: index terms

RT: full text databases
keyword indexes
keyword searching
stoplists
subject headings

This display is well set out and easy to use. The hierarchical display shows *facets* based on the BT/NT relationships that are used to group related concepts but which are not authorized for use in indexing and are in parentheses. For example,

(activities and operations)

(information and library operations)

organization of information

indexing

automatic indexing

automatic categorization

book indexing

database indexing

machine aided indexing

manual indexing

name indexing

periodical indexing

subject indexing

(incl.) chain indexing

postcoordinate indexing

string indexing

This display is not so easy to use and the different levels are separated by only one point (full stop) in the left-hand indentation. This is probably best approached from the list of 36 facet indicators, which includes two levels of heading with 16 main headings.

The rotated (KWIC) display lists terms containing a particular word, and includes 39 terms for index/indexer/indexes/indexing, e.g.

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index terms
indexer consistency
indexes (information retrieval)
alphabeticoclassedindexes
author indexes
book indexes
indexing
abstracting and indexing services
links (between indexing terms
exhaustivity (indexing)

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This display is particularly useful for spotting ambiguity of vocabulary, e.g. architecture, computer architectures. It is also useful for searching for indexing keywords, but it would then be necessary to refer back to the alphabetical and hierarchical displays for cross-referencing ideas.

The thesaurus is comprehensive and user-friendly while necessarily including American spellings. There is a useful bibliography of 15 references relating to thesauri, terminology and standardization.

Caroline Barlow, *freelance information scientist*

Indexing aids: dictionaries and related sources

Cambridge international dictionary of idioms. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. xv, 587 pp. 20 cm. ISBN 0-521-62364-2 (cased): £25.95; ISBN 0-521-62567-X (pbk): £12.95.

Cassell dictionary of word and phrase origins. Nigel Rees. London: Cassell, 1998. ix, 273 pp. 20 cm. ISBN 0-304-34965-8 (pbk): £9.99. (Originally published 1996.)

What is an idiom? We all know the answer, but most of us would have difficulty in putting it into words. From Greek 'idios', 'one's own', an idiom is basically an expression peculiar to a language. The *Oxford English Dictionary* states it as 'a group of words established by usage and having meaning not deducible from those of the individual words'. Indeed, the meaning of the separate words may not help at all in the understanding of the phrase as a whole. Many idioms represent a metaphorical use of language – 'to put all your eggs in one basket', 'to leave no stone unturned'.

The Cambridge University Press book deals specifically with idioms, as its title indicates. It is a reference book, but is also directed particularly to students, and claims their 'language skills will increase rapidly if [they] can understand idioms and use them confidently and correctly'. It stresses that it is often impossible to guess the meaning of an idiom from the words it contains.

So far as students are concerned, the Theme Panels, drawing together groups of related idioms under such headings as Business, Health, Money, will be found useful, as also the Exercises (with their Answer Key) covering a variety of aspects of the idiom. These Exercises may be photocopied. In addition, certain idioms are highlighted in

the body of the book as being very common and useful to the learner of English.

A feature of the book is the example sentences which are added to each entry and further explain the meaning of the idiom and illustrate its use. It is almost essential to consult the back-of-the-book index before looking for a particular idiom in the book. For example, 'be your own worst enemy' is indexed under 'enemy', 'own' and 'worst', but appears in the book under 'own'. 'A voice in the wilderness' is indexed under 'voice' and 'wilderness' but in the book 'voice' is taken as the keyword. 'Sing from the same hymn-sheet' is indexed under 'hymn-sheet' and 'sing' but 'same' is the place where we find the idiom in the book. 'The greatest thing since sliced bread' is indexed under 'bread', 'greatest', 'sliced' and 'thing' but is shown in the book under 'thing'. The origins of idioms are always of interest (e.g. doldrums, fig-leaf, forbidden fruit) but a few idioms are not followed through to their sources, e.g. 'bread and circuses'. 'purple prose', 'Pyrrhic victory', 'your road to Damascus'.

At first sight there is a common element between the Cambridge University Press book and the Cassell book, as both are concerned with the idiom. There are differences, however, in the subject matter and treatment. The Cassell book, which is somewhat shorter, includes a guide to idiomatic phrases, as does the other book, but also, additional to phrases, includes explanation of many single words, e.g. berk, gap, twerp, yuppie. Whilst explaining the meaning of words and phrases, it seeks in every case to trace their origin. It deals also with some that appear to have been neglected hitherto in reference books. Where there are several explanations of an entry, these are tested and possible misconceptions pointed out, as also are time-honoured explanations of origins unsubstantiated by evidence. Where no hard-and-fast explanation seems possible, no solution is offered by the author. This book does not have a back-of-the-book index, but entries are themselves in alphabetical order with cross-references.

The Cambridge University Press book represents the work of a large number of lexicographers, consultants and other contributors. The author of the Cassell book is Nigel Rees, a broadcaster on news and current affairs programmes, and deviser and presenter of BBC Radio quizzes – and so an authority on idioms and quotations. Both books cover words and phrases from the English-speaking world and include those that have only recently entered the language, such as 'full monty' and 'loose cannons'. It is certain that neither book could ever be fully comprehensive, if only, of course, because language is constantly receiving new words and idioms.

Britton Goudie, *freelance indexer*

Information technology

The impact of information on society: an examination of its nature, value and usage. Michael W Hill. East Grinstead, W. Sussex: Bowker-Saur, 1999. xi, 292 pp. 22 cm. ISBN 1-85739-124-1 (cased): £45.00.

Michael Hill was the keeper of the Patent Office Library (now Science Reference Library) and served on, or was chair of, many important library committees, both national and international. Clearly aiming at library/information students, he discusses here every conceivable type of information used in the modern world (with a glance or two at the future). Chapters deal with the nature of information and knowledge; quality and reliability of information; comprehending; communicating; information management; and information ethics. Hill then goes on to discuss some social and cultural issues; economic factors; information and the environment; education now and in the next decade; and information in politics and government. The final chapter looks at where the information society is taking us.

To my mind the book has a rather naive flavour, though why this should be, given the eminence of the author, I cannot work out. It is almost magpie-packed with facts and observations, many of them pretty obvious; indeed the author's phrase about the world's 'gallimaufry of raw [information] materials' seems an uncomfortable echo of the content of his own book!

That could have been a positive advantage were it not that the index is so odd as to be quite unsearchable. (Why is it that books on information studies, of all disciplines, are almost without exception badly indexed?) Do not try to use this index to find anything, not even an

obvious term like 'information retrieval', because all we have is an ill-stocked brantub with entries seemingly plucked capriciously out of the text, and not even edited into some sort of structure. Just one example: dozens of authors are cited, but Susan Greenfield is one of very few who make it into the index. However, tracking the locators reveals no 'Greenfield' on the page, only a couple of square-bracketed numbers which lead, after initial puzzlement, to the chapter endnotes several pages later! The author seems to think throughout the book that information can be found merely by seeking it – there is scarcely a clue that retrieval is a difficult and tricky business which deserves close study in itself.

As Miss Jean Brodie did not quite say, for those who need this kind of book, this is the kind of book they will need. But they will have to mine out what they are looking for.

Cherry Lavell, *formerly Council for British Archaeology*

Visualizing subject access for 21st century information: papers presented at the 1997 Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing, 2–4 March 1997. Edited by Pauline Atherton Cochrane and Eric H Johnson. Urbana-Champaign, IL: Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1998. 176 pp. 24 cm. Index. ISBN 0-87845-103-X; ISSN 0069-4789 (cased); \$30.00. (Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing, 1997.)

The Proceedings of the 34th Annual Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing, 2–4 March, 1997 report research and development in the US and Europe. As large portions of some of the presentations were live connections to the Internet they were difficult to report, therefore URLs are given throughout the proceedings.

The growth of the Internet only foreshadows what will happen with globally distributed information resources in the coming century. Coping with current problems of organization and retrieval using present-day technological solutions will not be enough for tomorrow's users.

The questions posed included: What interface, browsing and navigation tools are on the drawing board or in prototype systems? Do the designers of digital library systems envisage a role for more traditional library classification schemes and thesauri? What new tools exist to create visual displays of vocabulary choices and term relationships for Internet, CD-ROM or OPAC (online public access cataloguing) browsing? How will the new systems handle the Interspace where switching vocabularies will be needed to access and search repositories of full-text information? Have cognitive research and user-modelling efforts produced results which could impact subject access tool design?

New vocabulary is used in describing the management of dynamic document collections. *Hypostatization* is the treatment of concepts, ideas, etc. as distinct substances or realities; *sensualization*, other than visual, encompasses the multimedia nature of electronically held information and virtual reality; *metadata* may not be as relevant as in static library catalogues and classified collections; *information filtering* is a method of coping with information overload when a model is made of users' interests.

The mode of use of thesauri is changing in the electronic environment and complements full-text access by establishing the relationships between terms and by using cross-references. Machine-aided indexing systems will rely on thesauri for term selection. It is hinted that the long-term value of indexing will depend on its integration with full-text searching and intelligent retrieval systems. There will be a continuing need for controlled vocabulary and preferred terms, but this will be incorporated into a more classified approach. At present web-engine searching is too shallow and only accesses collections. In the future repositories, e.g. Library of Congress Catalog, will be searched completely as in online searching, and colour and sound will be more frequently used.

As expected, it is considered that there is no time for indexing by humans and therefore it is necessary to develop tools to index. The computer IT community, alas, still does not know enough about indexing. Research is needed to find out more about users and to determine cognitive differences by matching cognitive style to information style.

Many speakers pointed to a future of computer-assisted indexing where experts choose the vocabulary from thesauri-based resources. 'However, if you try to solve the indexing problem for specialized communities by letting individual people from that community do indexing, you discover the value of using trained professionals.'

Thankfully, indexers are still valued for their expertise, and there is ample scope for indexers to be involved in the construction and use of specialized thesauri.

Although these proceedings are already over two years out of date they do give an indication of trends in Internet analysis and retrieval.

Caroline Barlow, *freelance information scientist*

Publications received and publications noted

Anglo-American cataloguing rules. 2nd edn. 1998 revision. Prepared by committee representing USA, Australia, UK and Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association; London: Library Association Publishing; Chicago: American Library Association, 1998. xli, 676 pp. 25 cm. Index. ISBN 1-85604-313-4 (LAP) (cased); £55.00; ISBN 1-85604-154-9 (pbk): £37.50. (Also separate ISBNs for ALA and CLA editions.)

Collection management in academic libraries. Clare Jenkins and Mary Morley. Aldershot, Hants and Brookfield, VT: Gower Publishing, 1999. xii, 302 pp. 24 cm. 24 cm. Illus, gloss, index. ISBN 0-566-08116-4 (cased): £50.00.

Effective library and information centre management. 2nd edn. Jo Bryson. Aldershot, Hants and Brookfield, VT: Gower Publishing, 1999. xix, 428 pp. 24 cm. Illus, tabs, index. ISBN 0-566-97691-8 (pbk): £25.00.

Encyclopedia of mineral names. William H. Blackburn and William H. Dennen. Nepean, Ontario: Mineralogical Association of Canada, 1997. iv, 360 pp. ISBN 0-921294-45-X (cased): \$40.00.

How classifications work: problems and challenges in an electronic age. Geoffrey C. Bowker and Susan Leigh Star. Champaign, IL: Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 1998. 23 cm. Pbk: single copies \$18.50. (*Library Trends*, Fall 1998, 47 (2), 185–340. ISSN 0024-2594.)

Organization of multimedia resources: principles and practice of information retrieval. Mary A. Burke. Aldershot, Hants and Brookfield, VT: Gower Publishing, 1999. xii, 224 pp. 25 cm. Illus, index. ISBN 0-566-08171-7 (cased): £45.00.

The principles and future of AACR: proceedings of the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR, Toronto, Ontario, Canada October 23–25, 1997. Edited by Jean Weihs. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association; London: Library Association Publishing; Chicago: American Library Association, 1998. xi, 272 pp. 28 cm. Indexes. ISBN 0-88802-287-5 (CLA); 1-85604-303-7 (LAP); 0-8389-3493-5 (ALA) (pbk): \$19.95.

The wordwatcher's guide to good grammar and word usage: authoritative answers to today's grammar and usage questions. Morton S Freeman. Medford, NJ: Medford Press, 1998. 296 pp. 23 cm. Index. ISBN 0-9666748-0-4 (pbk): \$19.95.

You have a point there: a guide to punctuation and its allies. Eric Partridge. London: Routledge, 1999. 240 pp. ISBN 0-415-05075-8 (pbk): £10.99. (A reissued edition of this well-known work.)