

Summaries

ARTICLES:

Niels D. Lund: Faglitteraturen - den oversete storebror i bogsystemet (Non-fiction - the Ignored Big Brother in the Book System).

Page: 5-16

It is a paradox, that non-fiction amounts to the bigger part of the book production, but at the same time is very rarely discussed in the public cultural debate about the book. It is fiction which often has been identified with the crisis of the book, the problem of the book as a media etc. From a point of view, which is taken from the empirical literary sociology (Escarpit) this article discusses, why it is the state of things within the fiction area that attracts most of the energy in the debate and the discussion of book politics.

Comparisons between fiction and non-fiction are made in regard to production, distribution, consumption, book statistics, trade conditions, library matters, cultural patterns, public intervention etc. - all only on a sketchy level. My main point is that a much more careful investigation of the place of non-fiction in society is needed, an overall view is urgently desirable; we also need a centre for comparative book sociology.

The last passages deal with ten proposals for further investigation concerning non-fiction: 1. The question of terminology, 2. The encyclopaedian dispersal of the non-fiction pattern, 3. The geographic origin of non-fiction (sc. cultural import), 4. The historical development of non-fiction, 5. Analysis of non-fiction based on the sociology of knowledge, 6. The improvement and the development of production of the non-fiction book, 7. Quality criteria for analysis and evaluation of non-fiction, 8. The evaluation institutions and rules of procedures for non-fiction, 9. Market economical and marketing analysis of non-fiction; 10 Social and economical conditions for the non-fiction writers.

Birger Hjørland: BDI-faget "faglitteratur": fortid, nutid og fremtid (The Library and Information Science Discipline "Subject Literature Studies": Its past, present and future)

Page: 17-38

In the Royal School of Librarianship in Copenhagen, the discipline "subject literature" has existed since the foundation of formalized library education. Originally, "Subject Literature Studies" was organized in four departments: "Arts and Humanities Information Studies"; "Social Sciences Information Studies", "Science Information Studies" and "Technology Information Studies". Today the number of departments are reduced to two: "Humanities and Social Sciences Information Studies" and "Science and Technology Information Studies". The author of this article is Head of Department of the first mentioned of these two departments.

The article discusses trends and problems in the perception and development of "Subject Literature Studies". The authors main interest is to make this discipline a more active element in Information Science through a theoretical approach to Information Science labeled "Domain Analysis" (presented elsewhere).

The subdisciplines of Information Science (or Information Studies, as some prefer) could be analytically divided into two main groups: *More system oriented disciplines* and the *disciplines more oriented towards "knowledge organization"*. Most subdisciplines, e.g. classification and bibliography have important elements from both groups. "Subject Literature Studies" is especially oriented toward knowledge organization.

Different tendencies and approaches in research and teaching in "Subject Literature Studies" are compared and evaluated. Among these approaches are the history of subject literatures (not identical to the history of scientific disciplines), the sociology of subject literature, aspects of theory of science and theory of knowledge, "the moensterliste approach", "special bibliography" (with e.g. subject thesauri), the teaching of concrete subject knowledge etc.

Also the problems associated with subject specialization among librarians and the relationships to subject specialists including the role of "subject bibliographers" are treated.

The article concludes that the end-user-perspective in Information Science is extremely important, and that especially "Subject Literature Studies" and the Domain-analytic approach in Information Science are very important elements in constructing a theoretical body of knowledge, which will be experienced as relevant by end-users.

Vibeke Horsten: Introduktion til BDI-arbejdet med science-fagene (Introduction til the Library, Documentation and Information Work with the Disciplines of Science).

Page: 39-58

Among the departments of The Royal School of Librarianship, Denmark, there are 2 departments dealing with subject literature. One of these covers the social sciences and the humanities. The other one covers the various disciplines of science. The article presents on the one hand the aims and the content of the science courses (within the frame of the 4 years curriculum). Connected to the presentation of the science courses the article gives a systematic and general view over the manifold theoretic aspects of the library, documentation and information work with science, for instance: Theory of knowledge, science institutions and scientific communication; knowledge organization, information structures, material (book) selection, user groups and user needs, typology of science documents, the structure of and textual analysis of science documents, especially analysis of their levels of accessibility. The article has one of its main focuses on how to analyse science documents and it presents a model for analysing the professional level of a science document.

Hjejl Resen Steenstrup: Udenlandsk Litteratur Service (Foreign Book Service)

Page: 59-64

For a period of nineteen years many Danish public libraries used as a general reference book a Foreign Book Service Section published by the former Danish Library Bureau (Bibliotekscentralen).

When the Danish Library Bureau went bankrupt in October 1991, its successor the Danish Library Center (DBC) decided to discontinue this service as a sound economic foundation was lacking. In the spring of 1993 DBC along with the Copenhagen Public Libraries tested

the interest in reviving the scheme. However, the libraries did not show enough interest and this is as matters stand today.

The Foreign Book Service Section began 1972. Originally it included 8000 titles per year, but in the course of time the number of titles was reduced to about 3000. Small libraries were offered a section of these, usually about 1200 titles; catalogued and classified.

To get a more detailed assessment of the situation the State Directory of Library Service wanted to make an inquiry into the procedures used by the libraries in selecting and acquiring foreign literature, fiction as well non-fiction. This resulted in a report "Project Foreign Book Service Section" drawn up with the support from "Centrale Organisationens løsning af fælles opgaver" and "Stipendiefonden". The inquiry included fiction and non-fiction literature for grown-ups in the following languages, English, American English, German, French, Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Spanish and Finnish.

The purpose of the inquiry is to make sure whether a new joint Foreign Book Service Section was needed.

Questionnaires were sent to about 210 libraries.

The answers proved a keen interest in reconstruction the service as long as the economic involvement was minimal. A very large number of libraries were only willing to pay a few thousand kroner for a new service. Especially the libraries serving small communities (i.e. less than 10.000 inhabitants) were not interested in getting a new qualified service. Yet, the libraries serving communities with more than 10.000 inhabitants would rather prefer a discount-model of this service to no service at all.

The report has a few weak points as some libraries did not answer all questions, and some did not give exact figures for the amount of kroners spent on the acquisition of foreign fiction and non-fiction books during the period of 1990-92.

REVIEW

Helge Høivik reviews "Emnerepræsentation og informationsøgning" (Subject Representation and Information Retrieval).

Page: 65-68

The dissertation "Emnerepræsentation og informationsøgning" by Birger Hjørland suggests a new approach to subject classification. Knowledge domains are not stable structures, but continuously evolving processes of collective reflection, experiments and linguistic acts. Valid classification requires understanding of such flows, i.e. a sociology of scientific thought. The delimitation of subject areas for a given text is to make a multicontextual interpretation of its meaning. Hjørland describes the conscious application of this principle as a scientific contribution in its own right, enhancing the potential of a document to generate new knowledge. One consequence of his analysis (for this reviewer) in the field of knowledge organization would be a shift of attention from documents as the primary object of study and description towards mediated scientific discourse as such.

Ole Jensen: At sætte brugerne i centrum (Putting the Users in Focus)

Page: 69-71

This review of Birger Hjørland's book: "Emnerepræsentation og informationsøgning" ("Subject Representation and Information Retrieval") focusses on what is seen as the two main advantages of Hjørlands approach: first the advancement of a request-oriented approach as primary to a content-oriented approach and secondly the recognition that a user-oriented approach must be based on a knowledge of "the scientific situation in a given area". The user-oriented approach accordingly must have as its methodological principle what Hjørland calls a "methodological collectivism", studies of knowledge-domains, and not a "methodological-individualism".

Whatever document-representation is based on the document-approach, that is by using keywords taken from the document itself, or by a individualistic users' approach, the fundamental problem will be that concepts means different things in different contexts and in different knowledge-domains. The atomistic studies of

information retrieval in terms of the "matching" between the representation of a document and the representation of the query ignore the problem, that all document-representation involves an interpretation. Subjects can not according to Hjørland be reduced to ahistorical inherent characteristics of knowledge and neither to user's or authors' subjective perception. On the contrary the subject of a document is determined as "the epistemological potentials of that document", which are to be determined in relation to the above mentioned scientific situation determining the need of the users in question. Accordingly that situation may be a specific scientific situation, which means that the value of import of document representations could be doubtful.

The book is being considered as an important contribution to a transgression of the unhappy split between on the one side positivistic and mechanical approaches and on the other side subjectivistic and psychologistic approaches to information seeking. Hjørland demonstrates the often neglected importance of relating research in subject representation and information retrieval to advances in the philosophy of science.

The book should be of value to anybody with an interest in the area of subject representation and information seeking. The philosophical vocabulary may seem inaccessible, but in fact the concepts are thoroughly explained in their contexts.

Claus Aarslev: Kort og præcis gør-det-selv guide til biblioteksvideo (Short and Precise Do it Yourself Guide to Library Videogrammes).

Page: 72-74

The article is a review of the book "De nye udlånsmedier: Guide 1994 : Video og elektroniske bøger på biblioteket" (The new Circulation Medias : Guide 1994 : Videogrammes and Electronic Books in the Library).

The book deals briefly with the practical and technical aspects concerning library circulation and mediation of videogrammes, electronic books on CD-rom and other data medias. Besides there is a discussion of the restrictive legal provisions in the Danish Copyright Act which till now has made library circulation of these medias difficult.

Furthermore the book contains an extensive directory of Danish distributors of videogrammes cleared for use in libraries and a list of Danish distributors of CD-roms and laserdiscs.

The book is evaluated as a useful practical guide to the handling of videogrammes in a library context and as an excellent introduction to the concept: "electronic books".

Jan B. Steffensen: Hvad vi læser (The Books we Read)

Page: 75-76

The article is a review of the book "Lånernes bogvalg" (Borrower's Book Selection).

The lending of fiction at the county library in Roskilde has been investigated by Henrik Christoffersen og Torben Sørensen, and they have shown that popular fiction is more often borrowed than serious and aesthetically more advanced literature. To which extent the libraries will buy the popular titles is not solely depending on the intensity of circulation but also on how librarians and politicians conceive the role of the public libraries in the presentation of Danish and foreign fiction.