

The Experiences of National Library of Iran in Developing of the Indigenous Tools of Cataloguing and Classification

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Abstract:

One of the most important functions of National Library of Iran is to develop key Indigenous tools for subject access e.g. thesauri, list of subject headings and adaptations of classification schemes, to enable indigenous peoples to retrieve information and to facilitate education of cataloguing and classification for indigenous students of library and information science in Iran.

In this paper, indigenous tools of cataloguing and classification have introduced in subject access area. These tools have categorized in two sections: "Subject indexing" and "Classification schemes"; Next, the methodology of developing indigenous means and tools are presented in detail. This may help developing national libraries to come familiar with our innovative methods. The experience of National Library of Iran has shown that this is difficult but possible and useful.

Keywords: National Library of Iran, Indigenous Tools, Cataloguing, Classification.

Introduction

National library of Iran (hereinafter referred to as NLI) is one of the few national libraries that has not been only a consumer of tools of cataloguing and classification. NLI always produces compatible tools with the international ones based on local needs and characteristics of Persian language and script. This important activity was founded by the pioneer librarians of Iran like Pouri Soltani, Zahra Shadman, Shirin Taavoni, Mandana Sedigh-Behzadi, Zohreh Alavi, Kamran Fani, who had the deep insight into library and information fields. As the infrastructure of indigenous tools in NLI was built upon world standards, therefore this indigenous action has continued for over the forty years professionally.

One of the most important functions of NLI is to develop key indigenous tools for subject access e.g. thesauri, list of subject headings and adaptations of classification schemes, to

enable indigenous peoples to retrieve information and to facilitate education of cataloguing and classification for indigenous students of library and information science in Iran.

In this paper, indigenous tools of cataloguing and classification will be introduced in subject access area. These tools will be categorized in two sections: "Subject indexing" and "Classification schemes"; Next, the methodology of developing indigenous means and tools will be presented in detail. This may help developing national libraries to come familiar with our innovative methods.

Why do we need to develop indigenous tools of cataloguing and classification in subject access field?

Subject access results from subject indexing and classification activities. According to IFLA Working Group on Guidelines for Subject Access by National Bibliographic Agencies (2011), "Best practice of subject access is a method and process that depends on particular conditions of an individual National Bibliographic Agencies in subject analysis area that may have to be modified or adapted for similar circumstances in other information institutions"¹ .

Regarding the Library of Congress Classification (hereinafter referred to as LCC) and Dewey Decimal Classification (hereinafter referred to as DDC), it can be positively stated that these systems are developed to meet the needs of the U.S. and western countries. Therefore, several orientations in these classifications are results of their primary objective and nature. Nonetheless, many believe that there are many orientations in these global classification systems and this issue is highly tangible in subjects related to Islam and Orient.

If the countries whose indigenous and national needs are not considered in these systems use them, having access to indigenous information and data will be disturbed, especially for local users. Domestication of these systems leads to useful access to resources and problems due to prejudices of these classification systems will be overcome to a great extent². Therefore, countries that believe their requirements are neglected in the global classification systems should demonstrate their culture and civilization by fundamental domestication and based on the principles and philosophy of global systems and this task is well accomplished by NLI librarians.

1. Indigenous tools in NLI in the field of subject indexing

As the script of cataloguing of National Bibliography of Iran is Persian, so Library of Congress Subject Heading (hereinafter referred to as LCSH) is not suitable for this bibliography, in addition to this, LCSH does not cover detailed historical and cultural aspects of Iranian and Islamic subject areas. Therefore, it has been years that "Persian Subject Headings" and "Children's Persian Subject Headings" have been developed in the NLI and it is dynamically in progress. In addition, Thesauri developed and maintained by the NLI include "Cultural Persian Thesaurus", "Trilingual Cultural Thesaurus, Persian - English – Arabic" and "Persian Medical Thesaurus: tree index/ alphabetic index/ permuted index/ English - Persian index".

The characteristics and the history of indigenous tools developed in NLI in subject indexing are presented in Table 1 and the methodologies used in each one are described in the following. The information on these tools is accessible at the moment in <http://opac.nlai.ir>.

Table 1. Characteristics of indigenous tools of NLI in subject indexing field

Row	Category	Title	First edition	Intervening editions	Last edition	Number of entries ¹
1	Subject Headings List	List of Persian Subject Headings	1983 ³	1986 ⁴ , 1990 ⁵ , 1994 ⁶ , 1996 ⁷ , 1997 ⁸ , 2002 ⁹ , 2003 ¹⁰ , 2006 ¹¹	2017 “under publication”	175389
2		Persian Subject Headings for Children	2004 ¹²	Online access	Online access	4204
3	Thesauri	Cultural Persian Thesaurus	1995 ¹³	-	2001 ¹⁴	-
4		Trilingual Cultural Thesaurus, Persian-English, Arabic	2006 ¹⁵	2013 ¹⁶	2018 “under development”	10975
5		Persian Medical Thesaurus: Tree Index/ Alphabetical Index/ Permuted Index/ English-Persian Index	1997 ¹⁷	2005 ¹⁸	Online access	8300

1.1 List of Persian Subject Headings (LPSH)

It is more than forty years that studies are being conducted on developing Persian subject headings in NLI. LPSH covers all subject areas, and the pre-coordinated indexing enables the cataloguers to express complex subjects. Since any subject heading is baseless if based on mere translations, LPSH is developed based on the following principles:

- Each subject heading should be based on literary warrant.
- Subject headings should be applicable for common users and experts.
- Persian subject headings should be according to the natural Persian language grammar as far as possible.
- Persian subject headings should be logically specific.
- Persian subject headings should be selected from among the most common and used terms.
- In technical subjects, the common terms used among the experts in any science should be used and any kind of word formations should be prevented.

¹ According to the statistics of NLI’s OPAC on 28th of May 2017 (<http://opac.nlai.ir>)

- While using the philosophy, form and methodology of LCSH, any mere translations should be prevented from.
- The English equivalent of each subject heading should be inserted in front of the Persian term of the heading as far as possible. These equivalents are in the first place extracted from LCSH and if there are no equivalents in LCSH for the target subject, other references in English will be the criteria for action.
- Subjects whose equivalents do not exist in LCSH will be shown by a star (*).
- The number of LCC and DDC of each subject should be inserted in front of it as far as possible.
- All necessary references that include synonyms and similarities should be inserted under each subject.
- Necessary explanations are added under each subject in cases where the inclusions and limitations are not clear by themselves.
- Broader, narrower and related subjects are used to relate various subjects.

1.2 Persian Subject headings for children

Persian subject headings for children are developed according to the principles and rules of Persian subject headings but with some differences and specific characteristics including:

- Having determined the subject of the resource, first the cataloguers should refer to the Library of Congress Children's Subject Headings to create new subject headings. In case of existence of an appropriate subject heading equivalent to its Persian term, it is created with an eye on the special characteristics of Persian language.
- If the Library of Congress Children's Subject Headings are not appropriate, Persian subject headings and LCSH are referred to and an appropriate subject heading is created according to the above mentioned steps.
- Simple and common terms used among children should be used in the formation of children's subject headings so that the audience's (children's) access to the resources will be easier and more practical.

1.3 Cultural Persian Thesaurus

This thesaurus is developed in 18 fields. The summary of methodology of developing this thesaurus is presented in the following:

- Writing the policies and guides for developing the thesaurus (objectives, end users, determining the extent and depth of subject categories, determining the thesaurus structure;
- Determining the sources of collecting the terms;
- Determining the dos and don'ts in collecting terms and word choices;

- forming a thesaurus council including librarian and information experts and subject specialists;
- Using both deductive and inductive methods in the branches and sub-branches of the thesaurus, respectively.

This thesaurus was monolingual until 2001 but it became trilingual since then.

1.4 Trilingual Cultural Thesaurus, Persian-English, Arabic

The procedure in developing the trilingual thesaurus continued as in the monolingual one. Here, the English and Arabic language experts were added to the previous groups, that is, the librarian experts and subject specialists. The equivalents of the terms were first suggested by experts and then the suggested equivalents were confirmed over some sessions.

The edition that will be published in 2018 includes Russian language and Tajik dialect and includes Persian terms in Cyrillic script as well.

1.5 Persian Medical Thesaurus: Tree Index/ Alphabetical Index/ Permuted Index/ English-Persian Index

Methodology of Persian Medical Thesaurus was a developmental research. This project was aimed to meet the educational and information needs of knowledge organization specialists and researchers of medical science. This thesaurus is based on literary warrant of Iran and Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). It contains the terms in medical and associated sciences.

2. Indigenous Tools in NLI in Classification schemes

NLI as the National Bibliographic Agency uses various tools such as schemes of DDC and LCC to provide subject access in NLI's bibliographic database². National Bibliography of Iran is a mirror that reflects the culture of Iran. DDC and LCC schemes have not been able to meet the needs of Iranian- Islamic culture. Therefore, NLI began developing adaptations of DDC and LCC schemes. The adaptations of DDC and LCC were developed and maintained by the NLI.

This section consists of three parts: the first part includes adaptations of DDC, the second part includes adaptations of LCC and the third part includes rewriting and rearrangement of some LCC classifications.

Apart from adaptations on subjects such as Islam, history and geography of Iran, etc., at some points it is necessary to rewrite and rearrange the numbers of Library of Congress. These will be explained in part three.

² Opac.nlai.ir

2.1 Adaptations of DDC

The important point in designing adaptations of NLI is that the applied methodology is based on adaptation and not destroying the discipline and reconstructing DDC. Table 2 shows the characteristics and the history of adaptations of DDC in NLI.

Table 2. Characteristics of indigenous tools of NLI in DDC

Row	Title	First edition	Intervening editions	last edition	Number dedicated to DDC	Number dedicated to adaptations of DDC by NLI
1	Dewey Decimal Classification: Islam	1974 ¹⁹	1984 ²⁰ , 1993 ²¹ , 2002 ²²	2004 ²³	297	297
2	Dewey Decimal Classification: History of Iran	1983 ²⁴	1984 ²⁵ , 1995 ²⁶ , 1999 ²⁷	2010 ²⁸	915.5, 935, 955	955
3	Dewey Decimal Classification: Geography of Iran	1982 ²⁹	1984 ³⁰ , 1993 ³¹ , 2000 ³²	2016 ³³	915.5	915.5
4	Dewey Decimal Classification: Iranian literature	1972 ³⁴	1984 ³⁵ , 1993 ³⁶ , 1998 ³⁷	2003 ³⁸	491.5	840
5	Dewey Decimal Classification: Iranian language	1971 ³⁹	1987 ⁴⁰	1998 ⁴¹	491.5	440

2.1.1 Dewey Decimal Classification: Islam

In DDC, the number 297 is dedicated to Islam. A summary classification scheme in DDC is presented in the following:

- 297.01-09 Standard subdivision
 - .1 Sources of Islam
 - .2 Islamic doctrinal theology; Islam and secular disciplines; Islam and other systems of belief

- .3 Islamic worship
- .4 Sufism (Islamic mysticism)
- .5 Islamic ethics and religious experiences, life ,practice
- .6 Islamic leaders and organization
- .7 Protection and propagation of Islam
- .8 Islamic sects and reform movement
- .9 Babism and Bahai faith

A summary classification scheme of adaptation of Islam by NLI is presented in the following⁴²:

- 297.01-09 Standard subdivision
 - .1 Quran
 - .2 Hadith
 - .3 Islamic law
 - .4 Theology (Doctrines)
 - .5 Islamic sects
 - .6 Islamic ethics
 - .7 Muslims' customs
 - .8 Sufism and Mysticism
 - .87-88 Mystic manners
 - .9 History and geography of Islam
 - .92-99 Biographies
 - .992-9949 Sunni
 - .996-998 Shia

As it can be seen in the scheme, in “DDC: Islam” case, NLI has not just merely adapted number 297, but also it has reviewed the contents in DDC and in fact it is a totally new development of what was previously in DDC. Otherwise, it is based on the divisions in Islamic sciences. The common point between this adaptation and DDC is in maintenance of philosophy and fundamental principles of DDC system and the number that was dedicated to Islam in DDC.

2.1.2 Dewey Decimal Classification: History of Iran

In DDC, class 900 is dedicated to history and geography. Meanwhile, numbers 915.5, 935, 955 are related to Iran. The right objection that is on DDC is that it separates the history of civilization and the ancient and modern history of a country and a specific region and puts them in different class numbers. In this adaptation, number 935 which is related to ancient Iran and is blended with the history of Babel, Assyria and Seleucia is eliminated and the history of ancient Iran is in 955. In addition, classification of the history of Iran in DDC is not easily adaptable while being considerably short and wrong. Therefore, the new divisions and scheme is inevitably provided in accordance to the historiography traditions and Iran's history books.

2.1.3 Dewey Decimal Classification: Geography of Iran

Like other adaptations, different methods were studied in geography adaptation. 1) Using DDC and selecting the same numbers; 2) Omitting DDC divisions and using the new

divisions method. The second method with more freedom which allowed using the most recent Iran decisions was approved. The main number -55 was maintained for Iran and classifications after it were reviewed.

2.1.4 Dewey Decimal Classification: Iranian literature

According to the recommendation in DDC that was repeatedly referred to clearly used letters to prevent from a long list of numbers. Consequently, instead of the number 891.5513 in DDC for Persian poetry of the twentieth century, letters 8^ف 1.62 are replaced which are a lot shorter.

2.1.5 Dewey Decimal Classification: Iranian language

According to the recommendation by DDC that were mentioned above, two letters “ف” which are the first two letters in Farsi (Persian) are used instead of 9155 which referred to Iran. That is, 4^ف0 is used instead of 491.55.

2.2 Adaptations of the LCC

Adaptations of the LCC in NLI are like LCC is based on literary warrant of Iran. What is sensible in dedication of numbers to Islam, history of Iran, Iranian language and literature, educational institutes, Islamic philosophy and Arabic literature is the limited numbers that are dedicated to these issues (compare columns 6 and 7 in table 3). For example, 75 numbers is dedicated to the history and civilization of Iran which dates back to 3200 years BC. And/or the Islamic philosophy and its adaptations that date back to the eighth and ninth centuries AD and 13 numbers are dedicated to that. Therefore, there were two methods to expand these issues:

1. Using decimals entailed long lists of numbers and considering the fact that necessary predictions were not made in the interval of numbers dedicated to classes in LCC, using this method could lead to a dead end.
2. Therefore, consulting with the Library of Congress, another notation was decided to be used for subjects of Iran, except for Islam.

Table 3. Characteristics of adaptations of LCC in NLI

Row	Title	First edition	Intervening editions	Last edition	Notation and Number dedicated to LCC	Notation and Number dedicated to adaptations of LCC
1	Class BP: Islam	1979 ⁴³	1997 ⁴⁴	2015 ⁴⁵	BP1-253	BP1-295
2	Class DSR: History of IRAN	1980 ⁴⁶	1986 ⁴⁷ , 2000 ⁴⁸	2012 ⁴⁹	DS251-326	DSR1-2155
3	Class PIR: Iranian languages and Literature	1992 ⁵⁰	1997 ⁵¹ , 2006 ⁵²	2014 ⁵³	PK6001-6996	PIR1-9647
4	Class BBR: Islamic philosophy	2003 ⁵⁴	-	2007 ⁵⁵	B740-753	BBR1-1498
5	Class LGR: Educational institutions	1971 ⁵⁶	1998 ⁵⁷	2003 ⁵⁸	LG291	LGR1-2157
6	Class PJA: Arabic Literature	1995 ⁵⁹	-	2011 ⁶⁰	PJ7501-8518	PJA2001-4998

2.2.1 Class BP: Islam

Although the same notation used in LCC, that is, BP is used in adaptations of Islam class, classification of Islamic sciences are totally reviewed in this adaptation. The development of classification of Islam is basically and fundamentally based on the elderly classification of Islamic sciences. The accuracy and details are taken seriously so that this scheme is in accordance with the principles and scientific rules of the classification such as observing the relationship and ratio of subjects and contents and also differentiating between parts and the whole and dominance of the whole over the parts and presenting comprehensive definitions for each class and notation. Moreover, great attempts have been made to provide sufficient references and explanations to guide cataloguers and users of the classifications. The summary of the classification scheme of Islam adaptation is provided in the following:

BP

1-19	Generalities
21-57	Biographies
58-89	Quran and Quranic sciences
90-104	Interpretations
106-145	Hadith

147-198	Jurisprudence
200-233	Words and beliefs
244-235	Islamic sects
246-254	Islamic ethics
256-272	Customs
274-295	Sufism and Mysticism

2.2.2 Class DSR: History of IRAN

Basically, despite the adaptations of Islam, adaptations of the history of Iran can be the same as subject divisions of LCC and its order and arrangements and do not have any contradictions with its principles; while modifications might be inevitable. These changes and adaptations are done considering the vicissitudinous history of Iran on one hand and studying the historical classes of other countries, especially Greece, France and England that include more comprehensive expansions on the other hand. The summary of the classification scheme of the history of Iran is provided in the following:

DSR

1-15	Generalities
18-40	Geography. Travel literature
41-61	Archeology
62-65	Civilization and Culture
68-72	Ethnology. Ethnic and religious minorities
76-98	Political history. Historiography. Biography of historians
99-104	Textbooks
106-113	General history before and after Islam
115-137	Military history. Maritime and diplomacy Historical periods and dynasties
139-149	Before Islam. Generalities
150-200	Until the Medes
201-214	Medes
217-321	Achaemenian
322-398	Parthian
401-501	Sassanid
510-513	after Islam. Generalities
514-515	until 13 th century AD. Generalities
516-596	7 and 8 centuries AD, Umayyad and Abbasid governments and national movements
597-685	9 and 10 centuries AD, Tahirids, Saffarids, Samanids, etc.
686-801	10 and 11 centuries AD, Ziyarids, Bowies, Ghaznavids, etc.
804-945	11 and 12 centuries AD, Seljuk, Kharazmshahian, Atabegs, etc.
946-1166	13-16 centuries AD, Mongols, Ilkhanids and Timurids
1167-1474	16-20 centuries AD, Safavids, Afsharian, Zandis and Qajars
1475-1716	20 century AD, Pahlavid. Islamic Republic
	Local history
2001-2061	Provinces
2071-2129	Cities and villages
2131-2152	Persian Gulf and Oman Sea
2155-2192	Lakes, swamps and rivers

2.2.3 Class PIR: Iranian languages and Literature

The general classification of the languages and literature of all countries are the same and similar in LCC. However, the details of the historical, literary and lingual characteristics and available works are considered. Therefore, LCC in this general framework maintains the history and criticism, collections, individual authors, local and foreign literature. Meanwhile, details have been taken into consideration so as to be in accordance with the scientific principles such as observing the relationship and ratio of subjects and also the hierarchy between parts and the whole as well as presenting sufficient references and explanations for users of this classification.

Although attempts have been made to make use of literary warrant, observing this principle in all items was not possible due to lack of access to all the published resources inside and outside the country.

The summary of the classification scheme is presented in the following:

PIR

1-50	Iranian languages and literature
52-2583	Iranian languages and literature before Islam
2583-2584.8	Persian language and literature
2585-2593	Modern Iranian languages
2595-3024	Persian language
3027-3191	Exterritorial Persian
3205-3288	Other Iranian languages and dialects
3302-8332	Persian literature
8400-8869	Regional and local literature
8880-9182	Exterritorial Persian literature
9192-9647	Persian literature in foreign countries

2.2.4 Class BBR: Islamic philosophy

The significant part in LCC is the section related to the philosophy of Greece where no point is left out of sight. However, the Islamic philosophy section has not received enough attention. The whole Islamic philosophy from the general points on specific issues along with the works and articles are placed under the title of Arabic philosophers, Moore and Islamic philosophers in 13 numbers .

BBR classification scheme begins with general works of references and the history of philosophy and then reaches the philosophy of specific ages after special aspects and philosophical issues that are in alphabetical order and adaptable. This section is divided based on the centuries and starts from the 8th century and respectively continues to the present century. In each age, first the collection of general works and special aspects and issues are places and then we have to make name authority for philosophers are documented records and their date of birth and death are mentioned as far as possible.

BBR

1- 20	General works
21-55	Special aspects
56-60	Regional divisions

61-141	8 and 9 centuries AD, Age of translation
142-790	12 century AD, Age of experts
791-1016	16 century AD, Age of interpreters
1017-1170	17 century AD, Age of resurgence
1171-1498	20 century AD, Age of teachers

2.2.5 Class LGR: Educational institutions

To start this task, first the name of the higher education institutions and centers had to be collected which was very difficult and time-consuming.

In order to arrange the scheme, first the L class related to individual institutes – that is, from LD to LG – were studied. It is obvious that sections related to the USA, UK and France were studied and compared more carefully. Attempts have been made in all steps so that the scheme related to the educational institutions in Iran do not have any contradictions with the discipline of the Library of Congress while including the characteristics of Iran.

An overview of the scheme is provided in the following. It should be noted that the whole scheme is not in alphabetical order from beginning to the end and each section is alphabetical separately in itself.

LGR

1-1823	Universities
1825-2045	Other higher education institutions
2046-2148	Teacher training centers
2150-2157	Non-higher education institutions

2.2.6 Class PJA: Arabic Literature

Although it was better that such an adaptation be done in an Arabic country, considering the fact that no Arab country has ever thought of doing so and also the significance of organizing Arabic literary books in Iran led to this adaptation.

Dividing authors' names according to the historical periods in Arabic literature and arranging them in each historical juncture in alphabetical order as well as divisions of centuries in longer intervals have been conducted considering the LCC and all the books on the history of literature.

The letters “الف” and “ل” are totally eliminated from the beginning of the names except where these letters are the major components of the names. Considering the fact that this adaptation is prepared in Iran and for Iranian users, the letters “الف” and “ل” are also eliminated from the middle of the names to follow the Persian structures and grammar. Therefore, the letters “الف” and “ل” showing relations (location, job, etc.) and “الف” and “ل” showing possession to a specific name are eliminated except in combinations that are considered a whole unit. At this class, Arabic language has been the criterion, not current political and geographical borders or nationality of the authors like Khalil Gibran whose Arabic works are in PJA class and English works in PS class.

PJA	
2001-2538	Literary history and criticism
2090-2158	Chronological divisions
2160-2536	Form divisions
2544-2804	Collections, Wars
2560-2572	Chronological divisions
2576-2802	Form divisions
2815-4902	Individual authors and works
4998-5368	Local literature

2.3 Rewriting and rearranging Some LCC Classes

Another type of adaptation of LCC is related to literature classes. In most libraries in Europe and America, if language of cataloguing is English, the Persian names are transliterated into English. In the same way, NLI applies transliteration of Latin names to Persian script. As the sequential letters of Persian and Latin are different, the numbers of classes needs to be modified. For example, in translation of “Opdycke, john B.” to Persian, the author name is located to letter “a” in Persian script. As of today, the adaptations of PS⁶¹, PQ⁶², and PG⁶³ classes were published, and other classes are being completed.

In these classifications, rearrangements are done when personal name authority records are made. If this rewriting and rearrangement of the classifications are not conducted, the difference in English and Persian letters will lead to the order of Persian letters not observed in the call number in open shelves of book alignments.

Final words

What is significant in expressing the experiences of National Library of Iran in developing indigenous tools is that the history and persistence in the process are the bases for principles of international standards and frameworks. This could not have been possible if not for the love and interest in librarianship among Iranian librarian pioneers, especially late Poori Soltani who shared and expanded this love among many Iranian librarians. We hope that this brief piece of work can be a motivation for libraries that have not taken measures so far to meet the indigenous and local needs in cataloguing and classification. The experience of NLI has shown that this is difficult but possible and useful.

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