

Chapter 16

The Situation of Bibliographic Control in Vietnamese Libraries

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ABSTRACT

The role of bibliographic control in Vietnamese libraries is analyzed from various perspectives such as the function, objectives, and direction of standardization in cataloging. In Vietnam, the unified description cataloging and bibliographic control in libraries still faces many difficulties due to the inconsistent application of the MARC21, AACR2, DDC, ISBD, and other emerging cataloging standards in the Vietnamese library system. This chapter analyzes the limitations of applying standards through the Cataloguing in Publication (CIP) tool and offers suggestions for improving the situation for better bibliographic control and better information for users.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL IN VIETNAM

This chapter analyses the role of bibliographic control in Vietnamese libraries from various perspectives such as functions, targets and orientations towards consistency in cataloguing in order to provide satisfactory information services and improved information retrieval for library users. Bibliographic control refers to the activities involved in the process of creating, organising, managing and maintaining the files of bibliographic records (Thapa, 2009, 57). Mansor and Jarjis, (2008) argued that bibliographic control should be tackled through a long-term vision of collaboration, decentralisation, internationalism, standardisation and web-based activities.

Bibliographic control is not a new issue. It was first mentioned by Cutter (1876/2020) in his book “*Rules for Dictionary Catalog*”. The changing content of information has made bibliographic control complex, making it an important issue in cataloguing in Vietnam. In the era of information technology 4.0,

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the online catalogue has gradually replaced the previous card catalogue, which accelerated changes in the way bibliographic records are catalogued (they are the basic component of online catalogue). Documents are of many forms from the traditional to digital, and other web forms, such as text files, audio, animated or unanimated images and videos. New cataloguing standards including Resource Description and Access (RDA) and MARC have been developed and introduced for more effective adaptation to the digital environment. These changes and improvements have made bibliographic control even more important.

Cooperation in cataloguing has become popular, too. CIP is preferred in this article as a tool to evaluate the consistency in cataloguing. The results obtained from bibliographic control will contribute to promoting unified bibliographic records. This will make information sharing and integration between libraries and information units easier and more convenient. Cooperation will also reduce cataloguing costs and cataloguing staff effort. There is a true and vast need for regular cooperation between Vietnamese cataloguers and international cataloguing organisations such as Online Computer Library Center (OCLC).

Finally, in order to develop successful bibliographic control in Vietnamese libraries, the roles of leading agencies such as the National Library of Vietnam and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism must be strengthened. The State should, therefore, help all the libraries with high quality training courses for cataloguers.

Explanation of key concepts relating to bibliographic control:

1. Cataloguing

Cataloguing is part of the bibliographic control process. It refers to the whole process related to the organisation of bibliographic tools in general and the catalogue in particular. Bibliographic tools include bibliographic description, subject analysis, and consistency control. The result of all these processes create information products and library services. More specifically, the records in online catalogues are the users' main search tool.

- **Cataloguing:** Cataloguing refers to the process of creating entries for a catalogue in order to facilitate access to the library holdings (Downing and Downing, 1992). In libraries, this usually includes bibliographic description, subject analysis, the assigning of classification notation, as well as all the activities involved in the physical preparation for shelving. These tasks are usually performed under the supervision of a librarian who is trained as a cataloguer.
- **Bibliographic control:** Bibliographic control includes the standardization of bibliographic description and subject access by means of uniform catalogue codes, classification systems and preferred headings; the creation and maintenance of catalogues, combined catalogues and search tools; and the provision of physical access to the items in the collection (Thapa, 2009).

Bibliographic control entails the standardization of the records in the catalogue databases, including subject access points, classification symbols and title control.

2. The Role of Bibliographic Control

The roles of bibliographic control are clarified by Cutter, (2020, 16) as the objects of the catalogue. Downing and Downing (1992) and Wynar (1992) highlighted the following purposes of catalogues:

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