1. Stability and Changeability: Principal Qualitative Characteristics of Classification Systems (CS)

Stability of a classification system is determined by its ability to function for a long time without substantial changes in its structure and content. Stability of CS favours the preservation of its external form, and permits the organization of the process of study of the CS on the level of general principles and stable basic characteristics.

Changeability of a CS is determined by its ability to reflect new elements of content within the framework of a present structure, and in cases, when it is necessary, reflect structural innovations, which make it possible for the CS to retain, in the main, its functional properties, which are necessary and sufficient for normal use. Changeability of a CS ensures the possibility of using the CS in conditions of our changing world and information society.

Stability and changeability are contradictory qualities of a CS, yet they are not mutually exclusive.

2. Limits of CS Stability and Changeability

There exists objective limits of CS stability and changeability. Quantitative and qualitative parameters of changes in structure and content, introduced in CS, can lead to the generation of CS, which will belong to other typological groups. Thus, the process of transformation of an enumerative CS into a combinative one, through the introduction into the structure of auxiliary tables leads to the appearance of a new CS (a thing that happened to the Dewey DC in Europe in the end of the 19th century.)

There exists an opinion that all kinds of changes in the existing CS speak of their imperfection, weakness, ageing, absence of a scientific base, etc. However, we cannot agree with this—in our opinion the development of CS is a normal "physiological" process.

A CS that does not change and develop is doomed. Yet how else can we develop it if not through the introduction of innovations of a structural and substantial character into the existing CS?

3. Internal and External Reasons of Change Introduction

The development of CS is a manageable and, in many things, a planned and comprehended process of incessant character. At its basis lie internal and external factors.

Internal factors are the result of accumulation of intrasystemic contradictions, provoked by the introduction into CS of separate additions, which are frequently not connected with one another. With the passing of time, their quantity begins to approach a critical level and then this or that structural or substantial change of a generalizing character becomes evident. It is in this way that absolutely new classification structures, which absorb previously existing concepts and groups, appear. Moreover, in a number of cases, classes, which formerly had no additions, are
subjected to a radical and substantial transformation, simply because society sees the necessity of this or that development "in general."

External factors are the result of appearance of Change-phenomena outside the boundaries of CS.

We understand that the term "Change-phenomena" covers any new social, political, cultural, technical, etc. phenomenon, scientific discovery, regularity, a subject of animate or inanimate nature and so on, the appearance of which calls for the introduction of changes and additions into the CS.

A very principal and important is the differentiation of Change-phenomena by at least two types. To the first type we shall attribute those Change-phenomena the introduction of which into the limits of CS calls for immediate and urgent actions. An example of such a change is the appearance on the map of the world of a new state. Such changes, firstly, do not call for serious preliminary scientific research and, secondly, they are supported by standard algorithms precisely enough (one knows beforehand what should be done, including even the notation solutions.)

To the second type of Change-phenomena we attribute such phenomena, which do not demand immediate operative actions, and which can be accumulated, analysed and evaluated without hurry so as not to violate the CS structure.

4. Processing of Change-Phenomena

Processing of Change-phenomena is conducted in accordance with a standard technological plan, a detailed description of which would take up a lot of time. We shall limit ourselves to a brief list of the principal operations, the succession of which is designated by digits in brackets.

Search (1) and discovery (2) of Change-phenomena should be the special duty of information workers, who can scan a large number of publications. Only published information can be the source of Change-phenomena. It is desirable to introduce such a system of registration in which the indication of the source is envisaged. The identified Change-phenomena are analysed (3) with the help of dictionaries and manuals, and further in accordance with CS tables and alphabetic-subject indexes to them. If, as a result of this primary analysis, it is established that the given concept is really lacking in the CS, then it is put into (4) the data bank and registered (5).

Further, Change-phenomena are processed by experts, who not only assess the Change-phenomena from the stand of its content (6), but also give their opinion on the expediency (7) of reflecting the Change-phenomena in CS. In the case of positive decisions, approximate economic effectiveness (8) is estimated and one or more drafts of additions and/or corrections are prepared.

This draft is then widely discussed (9). When there are a number of drafts, it is recommended that they be compared in a practical experiment (10). It is only after all these procedures have been realised that a final decision is taken (11). This decision is published and got to the users (12).

Introduction of it into practice (13) should without fail be accompanied by a selective examination of results (14), with the estimation of realistic effectiveness (15). Indexes of estimated or expected effectiveness are compared with indexes of actual effectiveness and then appropriate conclusions are arrived at (16).

5. Prognostication of Change-Phenomena

It is generally known that there exist common regularities of development of science. We can assume that there are also exist regularities of appearance of Change-phenomena. We are familiar with some of them (for example, we do know that the proceedings of a major international
scientific congress will without doubt contain materials of this kind.) Thus it follows that we can and should prognosticate the appearance of a "flow" of Change-phenomena, and this means that we can organize and plan our work correctly.

6. Conclusion

In my opinion, we have good possibilities of cooperation and coordination among universal CS. A few stages of Change-phenomena processing are common for all. We may and must use information coming from international organizations (for example, from ISO). This conclusion allows us to speak of possible coordination and cooperation, and of the expediency of more active information policy.