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Abstract

The subject headings are generally prepared upon the assumptions of the cataloguer about the subject of the work. But for creating a proper subject heading, the knowledge about the grammar of subject headings is also necessary. The grammar used in formulating subject headings is not only rules about English words. It is unique in its own way. It is mainly used to avoid ambiguity and maintain uniformity. The knowledge of the grammar of subject headings makes the allotment and creation of subject headings easier for the cataloguer. This article emphasizes on the grammar of subject headings offered by the 20th edition (2010) of Sears List of subject headings. The grammar includes form headings, subdivisions, arrangement order, etc. described with suitable examples. In this article the grammar of subject headings is enhanced by collaborating the technicalities given in the Sears List.

Keywords: subject headings, cataloguer, grammar of subject headings, Sears List of subject headings.

1. Introduction

The subject headings play a significant role in enhancing accessibility to a material through single or multiple terms that reflect the content, name, form, etc. of a work. According to Margaret Mann**, "**The subject heading is the word or phrase used on catalogue cards to express the theme or topic of a book". According to Maurice F. Tauber**, "**Word groups employed to express the subject contents of a document. It means subject heading is the statement of document expressing the specific subject dealt in the book". According to H. D. Sharma**, "**The term subject heading denotes a word or word groups used in cataloguing, indexing or documentation to describe the subject contents of a book. It is a summary in miniature of the book". The literal meaning of grammar is "the whole system and structure of a language or of languages in general, usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology (including inflections) and sometimes also phonology and semantics" (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018). Grammar actually provides rules of construction of words, phrases and sentences in a language. However, the grammar of subject headings is somewhat different.

The Sears List of Subject Headings is a vocabulary control device that delivers a core list of subject headings to prepare the subject entries of a material. It is the brain child of Minnie Earl Sears (1923) who thought to compile the Library of Congress Subject Headings into an abridged and comprehensive version to serve the distinctive needs of small and medium-sized public and school libraries. The aim is to make the library collections as easily available as possible to library users. The Sears List provides a guide for implementing the existing subject heading and also for creating and incorporating new ones. The grammar of subject headings in the Sears List is rules for formululating subject headings. These rules guide the cataloguer to incorporate fresh subject headings uniformly and without ambiguity.

2. Literature review

The Sears List of Subject Headings is a precise and organised list of subject headings which is easy to handle for libraries possessing a small collection. There are very few articles that discuss specific issues based on Sears List. Most of the pieces of writing enunciate general overview regarding it (Ignou, n.d.; Singh, n.d.; Rathmel, Schawo and Sylvester, n.d.; Satija, n.d.). Rathmel, Schawo and Sylvester (n.d.) have opined that the Sears List offers more universal headings and makes access easier for patrons. They have highlighted the impacts, strengths and weaknesses of Sears List on the global information infrastructure. Satija (n.d.) in his article have warned that Sears List is not very suitable for Pakistani and other Asians' subjects and suggests some measures for adapting it to Pakistani and Indian subjects. However these articles do not specifically focus on the grammar of subject headings which is provided in the Sears List.

Basically the Sears (1923) have suggested patterns, instructions and examples of subject headings to guide the cataloguer in incorporating new headings as needed. She has provided rules for determining, choosing, applying as well as formulating subject headings. The front matter of Sears List provides a guide for the application of correct form of headings rather the grammar of subject headings. But the explanations given in there is prolonged and to some extent scattered.

During implementation of subject headings to a work from the Sears List, the cataloguer hardly needs to consult the front matter from the list as it is much easier to find headings based upon determination. On the other hand, incorporating a new heading to the list is much difficult. The construction of a subject heading is not just about determining the subject and putting a word of the cataloguer's choice. The cataloguer must have the knowledge of the minute technicalities for the creation of accurate subject headings. Thus the cataloguer needs to consult the front matter to make a heading technically correct and unambiguous. But the intensified explanations can be somewhat incoherent for the regular cataloguers during the construction of subject headings. The grammar of subject headings has not been enlightened and invigorated yet in any article.

3. Objective

The main objective of the study is to rejuvenate the grammar of subject headings in steps to simplify the process incorporation of new subject headings.

4. Scope

The flexibility of Sears List in creating new subject headings makes it more acceptable. The scope of the study is based on the grammar of subject headings of 20th edition (2010) of Sears List of Subject Headings.

5. Rejuvenation of the grammar of subject headings

An improper subject heading can mislead a user to a different topic. Devising a subject heading is not always based upon determination of the topic or title of the work. There are many complex subjects of different works that confuses a cataloguer in implementing appropriate subject headings from the Sears List. Though the front matter of the Sears List provides a set of rules called the grammar of subject headings to guide the cataloguer in forming new subject headings. But it only consists of rules for forms of subject headings and subdivisions. However the factual meaning of grammar is the rules to choose, use and apply appropriate words to structure a meaningful framework. Thus an initiative is taken to reframe the grammar of subject headings of Sears List with the aid of it only.

When a cataloguer cannot find any suitable subject heading from the list, the Sears List gives the provision of incorporating new ones. This article tries to enlighten and re-embellish the grammar of subject headings for creating and incorporating new subject headings in the following steps-

5.1 Step 1: Choosing terms for a work

Generally 2 or 3 subject headings can be allotted for a work. An interdisciplinary work is only assigned with multiple subject headings. More than 3 subject headings to a material are assigned when the cataloguer is unable to find a single subject heading covering all the areas of the material. This provision should only be obtained after thorough investigation of the content of the material. For books, the terms can be chosen by assessing the title page, table of contents, preface, introduction and different parts of text. In the case of non-book materials, the container, the label, any accompanying guides, contents, etc. can be inspected for choosing the required term. Reference sources can also be consulted for better results like finding the synonymous terms. For creating and incorporating a new subject heading, a cataloguer needs to choose multiple terms from the work at first. There are 4 types of subject headings- topical, form, geographic and names. The terms should always be chosen based on the types abided by the following criteria:

5.1.1   The terms should be chosen in such a way that they must comprise more than one third part of a work. This leads to **Rule of Three** which is defined as "As many as three specific subject headings in a given area may be assigned to a work, but if the work treats of more than three subjects, then a broader heading is used instead and the specific headings are omitted."

5.1.2 Literary warrant or the language of the object being catalogued should be considered. The most common word used throughout the literature that best describes the item can be used as topical heading of the item.
For example: Total quality management should be chosen as a subject heading if a book uses and describes this word repeatedly.

5.1.3 The topical heading is chosen emphasizing mainly on the common English language usage.

5.1.3.1 If a word possesses several spellings, then the spelling which is common among the users of the region should be used as topical heading.

5.1.3.2 The words which are not fully incorporated in the English language should not be taken as headings.

5.1.3.3 In most small libraries the popular or common word for a thing is chosen based on the scientific or technical word.
For example: Tropical flower is preferable in most small libraries to tropical flora. In such a case the scientific term should be a See reference to the established term.
Color is used in the American libraries but colour is the subject heading to be used in the Indian libraries.

5.1.4 Maintaining uniformity in the library catalogue is the most important reason behind consulting the Sears list. The term preferred as established heading should be inclusive so that the synonymous words or spellings can be easily relatable or added or altered.
For example: Regional planning is an established heading with See references from County planning, Metropolitan planning

5.1.5 When the cataloguer cannot find any term based on the previous criteria, it is better to choose a general heading for the work. Such a work might be a collection of materials produced by several individuals on a variety of topics or one person's random thoughts and ideas.

5.1.6 The subject headings should be unambiguous to avoid any confusion in subject headings.

5.2 Step 2: Choosing the appropriate terms for new heading

After choosing multiple terms for a work, the cataloguer is intended to find the specific subject heading that can be assigned to the work.

5.2.1 The principle of direct entry states that a subject heading should stand as a separate term rather than as a subdivision under a broader heading.
For example: The cataloguer should enter a book on owls directly under Owls and not under "Birds—Owls," or under "Birds—Birds of prey—Owls" because the latter two subject strings are both specific, but they are not direct.

5.2.2 The importance of the principle of specific entry lies in the provision of adding new specific headings to the list if it is not present already. It states that an item should be entered under the most specific term found in the list instead of the class to which it

belongs. In many cases the most specific entry will be a general subject. The different cases that can appear under specific subject headings are as follows:

5.2.2.1 A work about a particular subject should be entered only under the most specific term that is not narrower than the scope of the book itself. It should comprehend the subject content of the work.

For example: A cataloguer may think of the terms Lawsuits, Suing, and Suits for a book on lawsuits. Upon consulting the List it becomes clear that those words are not headings but references to the established heading Litigation. Litigation is slightly broader than Suing but is more suitable as a subject heading because it includes the matter of defending oneself against lawsuits. In this case the cataloguer enters the book into the catalogue under the heading Litigation. A new heading is not necessary.

5.2.2.2 When a specific subject is not found in the List, the heading for the larger group or category to which it belongs should be consulted.

For example: If the heading penguins is not present in the list then the cataloguer should consult the broader heading birds where he finds a general reference that reads: "SA [See also] types of birds, e.g. Birds of prey; Canaries; etc. [to be added as needed]". The cataloguer must establish the heading Penguins as a narrower term under the heading Birds and then assign it to the book on penguins.

5.2.2.3 In some cases of cataloguing, the broader category for a new subject cannot be determined. In such cases the cataloguer should boldly handle the subject and establish that heading which seems more appropriate to him for the best use of the book.

For example: A book on thumb sucking, a common phenomenon among small children. For this book the cataloguer may think of the concepts Child psychology, Child rearing, or Human behaviour. But they are not present in the list and are also not nearly connected terms. No general reference is given for instructing the cataloguer to add headings for common childhood phenomena. In such cases the cataloguer is allowed to establish the most appropriate heading i.e. Thumb sucking for the book in the catalogue.

5.2.2.4 The cataloguer should not make an additional entry under a broader heading after assigning the specific subject heading to a work.

For example: A work with the title Birds of the Ocean should be entered only under Water birds and not under both Birds and Water birds.

5.3 Step 3: Choosing the correct form of the term

In choosing one term as a subject heading from among several possibilities the cataloguer must also think of the number, and connotations of the various forms. There are various forms of word for which the cataloguer needs the basic grammatical knowledge.

5.3.1 **Single nouns:** The easiest and simplest form of subject headings is single nouns. These are generally one word headings. It is ideal in representing the thought content of a subject with a single word. Both singular and plural forms of the words are chosen according to their applicability and con

5.3.1.1 Singular form of the nouns is applicable for concepts, activities or action, abstract ideas, names of disciplines and concrete things that are uncountable.

For example: History is for subject, Feminism is a concept, Writing is for an action, and Powder is uncountable

5.3.1.2 Plural forms of the nouns are used where the headings for concrete things are countable.

For example: Festivals or Children.

5.3.1.3 In case of homographs (an identical word with more than one meaning) both the singular and the plural forms of a word can be subject headings.

For example: Seal (Animals), Seals (Numismatics), Seals (Christmas), Seals (Law)

5.3.2 Compound Headings

Compound headings connect two nouns with "and" for indicating a single concept. These types of headings should be done with concentration. The two words are joined according to common usage. The word which is more common is considered as the predecessor while the other one is considered as the successor. If there is no established common usage then the words are arranged alphabetically. A See reference should always be made from either the second word or from both the words in a reversed manner.

For example: educational tools and measurements, See measurements and educational tools.

The compound headings are formed in several cases. Two words can be joined together:

5.3.2.1 to form a single concept or topic.

For example: Mind and body, translating and interpreting, etc.

5.3.2.2 because they are so closely related and they are rarely treated separately.

For example: Bank and banking, acrobats and acrobatics;

5.3.2.3 because they are so closely synonymous that they are hardly ever eminent.

For example: Manners and customs;

5.3.2.4 to show the relationship between two things.

For example: Advertising and children.

5.3.3 Adjective with Nouns

The word which describes a noun is an adjective. These adjectives qualifying a noun represent a specific concept.

For example: African art, administrative law, etc.

5.3.4 Inverted headings

The only headings that have been retained in Sears in the inverted form are proper names, including the names of battles and massacres.

For example: Dhoni, Mahendra would require a See reference from "Dhoni, Mahendra Singh," and if the library has material about any other person called Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the name heading would need to take the form Dhoni, Mahendra, 1981-.

5.3.5 Phrase Headings

Phrase headings are formed by engaging two or more elements which can be expressed only by more or less complex phrases. Articulating a phrase heading is the most difficult task for a cataloguer. These are the least preferable headings, as they offer the greatest variation in wording, are often the longest, and may not be thought of readily by either the maker or the user of the catalogue. But for many topics the English language seems to offer no more compact terminology.

For examples: Ability grouping in children and Illumination of books and manuscripts.

Step 4: 5.4 Adding subdivisions to the term

The subdivisions are used under any established term to describe different aspects of that term, or the form of the item itself. Subdivisions help to incorporate specific entries or narrower terms under a broader heading. The subdivisions lead over phrase headings for complex subjects by the uniformity which can be more voluntarily achieved with subdivisions. Instructions are provided for every subdivision for the proper utilization of it. The different ways of application of subdivisions are:

➢ Some subdivisions are applicable to only a few subjects.
  For example: Birds—Eggs, Eggs is applicable only under headings for oviparous animals.
➢ Some subdivisions are relevant under many subjects.
  For example: Trade—Analysis
➢ Some subdivisions are also headings and in such cases the instruction is given in a general reference as part of the entry for that heading.
  For example: Microbiology—Bibliography
➢ Other subdivisions which are not themselves headings are provided with instruction for the use of the subdivision which are a free-standing general reference in the alphabetical List.
  For example: Economic aspects

The subdivisions have been categorized as follows:

5.4.1 Topical Subdivision

Topical subdivisions reveal the approach presented in a particular work. Subject strings with topical subdivisions can be read backwards. The established subdivisions can be appended to any applicable subject heading without any confusion.

For example: Oceanography—Research—Ethical aspects means ethical aspects of research in the field of oceanography; Automobiles—Law and legislation reflects on the laws about automobiles.

5.4.2 Geographic Subdivisions

The names of particular places can be used as a component in subdivisions. The geographic subdivisions can be used to describe a topic in a particular location. The topical headings are subdivided directly by cities, countries, metropolitan areas or other geographic area. Many subject headings in the Sears List are followed by the parenthetical phrase (May subdiv. geog.). This means that the subject heading may be used in general or can be subdivided geographically as per need. Sears list provides the provision to make geographic subdivisions to any subject heading according to the need of the library without any hesitation. But this should be done properly following the rules of application of geographical subdivisions.

For example: Monuments—India.

But there are few exceptional cases that should be taken care of while making geographic subdivisions:

5.4.2.1 Geographic subdivisions are not applied to geographic subject headings.
      For example: Antarctic regions—Exploration.
5.4.2.2 Headings with a geographic adjective can be sometimes subdivided geographically and sometimes not. The 2 cases are defined as follows:
5.4.2.2.1   When a heading with a geographic adjective is further subdivided geographically, the geographic adjective is considered as the place of origin of the work being catalogued while the geographical subdivision indicates its location.
      For example: Indian art—Great Britain, Indian singers—Paris (France), etc.
5.4.2.2.2   Headings with a geographic adjective cannot be subdivided geographically mostly in the fields of literature and the art. Here the geographic location is preferred to be used as an adjective rather than a subdivision. Many of these subjects have a general reference similar to this reference at the subject Authors: "SA [See also] authors of particular countries or regions, e.g. Indian singers."
5.4.2.3 Geographic subdivisions are not applied to non physical or abstract items.
      For example: Fractions or Femininity of God
5.4.2.4 Geographic subdivisions are not applied to headings which are physical but cannot be easily located in a particular place.
      For example: Computer viruses or Space debris.

5.4.3 Chronological Subdivisions

Chronological subdivisions are used to assemble a specific historical time period of a country or the spans of time most frequently treated in literature. Searching becomes much easier by bringing all works together on a single period history. A heading is subdivided chronologically only when a library possesses a huge amount of historical work about specific regions or period subdivisions. The Sears list gives the provision to take the assistance of LC Period Subdivisions under Names of Places. Whenever there is only a small amount of material on the history of a country, it should simply be entered under the name of the country with the subdivision History, without a chronological subdivision.

For example: India— History—1526-1748.

The names of chronological periods vary from one country to another. The historical periods generally denotes dynastic or governmental thrones. The name of a particular time period should be included in the heading after mentioning the dates.

For example: United States—History—1600-1775, Colonial period.

The chronological subdivisions offered in Sears List emphasizes mainly on the historical collections of small libraries which may consist much historical works with the greatest number of period subdivisions under United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, and a few subdivisions only under several other countries.

The subdivision Politics and government under countries should be reserved for general and theoretical material. Historical material on the politics and government of a country are entered under the name of the country subdivided by History with or without a further chronological subdivision. Other kinds of subjects, especially those relating to literature and the arts may also be subdivided chronologically as appropriate, usually by century.

5.4.4 Form Subdivisions

Form subdivisions indicate the form of an item i.e. it tells what the item is. Some of the most common form subdivisions are Bibliography; Catalogs; Dictionaries; Directories; Gazetteers; Handbooks, manuals, etc.; Indexes; Maps; Pictorial works; Portraits; Registers; and Statistics.

Topical headings with form subdivisions, such as Children's literature— Bibliography or Geology—Maps, render such works retrievable by form and separate them from expository treatises. Apart from a few examples, these combinations of subject heading with form subdivision are not given in the Sears List but are to be added by the cataloguer as needed.

Form subdivisions are particularly valuable under headings for the large fields of knowledge that are represented by many entries in a library's catalog. In applying form subdivisions the cataloger should be guided by the character of an item itself, not by the title.

Many works with titles beginning with Outline of, Handbook of, or Manual of, are in fact expository works.

For example: H. G. Wells's Outline of History and H. J. Rose's Handbook of Latin Literature are lengthy, comprehensive treatises, and to use the form subdivisions that the titles suggest would be inaccurate.

5.4.5 The Order of Subdivisions

A standard order of subdivisions is recommended at the Subject Subdivision Conference that took place at Airlie House, Virginia, in May 1991, organized by the Library of Congress. It recommended the order of [Topical]—[Geographic]—[Chronological]—[Form] to be followed in the subdivisions. Uniformity is maintained in the recommended order using the Sears List. Only in a few subject areas, especially in the field of art, have exceptions been made.

For example: Elderly—Housing— United States to "Elderly—United States—Housing" (Housing is a topical subdivision)

5.4.6 Geographic Headings Subdivided by Topic

Subdividing geographic heading is a complex process. Airlie House recommends subdividing geographic headings by topic like history, geography, politics of a place, travel, etc. There are many topics which cannot be used as a subdivision under geographic headings. Specific instructions for the application of subdivisions like history, biography, boundaries, climate, population, etc. are given at the general reference for the subdivision in the List. For example, at Census in the List the general reference reads: "SA [See also] names of countries, cities, etc., with the subdivision Census [to be added as needed]."

For example: California – History, Peru – Census, Italy – Politics and government, Bolivia – Boundaries, Paris (France) – Population, Alaska – Climate, etc.

The different rules of subdividing geographic subdivisions by topic are as follows:

➢ The subdivision Defences / Race relations are used under geographic headings.
➢ History / Biography used under geographic headings exactly as they are under topical subjects.
➢ The subdivision foreign relations can be used only under countries.

For example: United States – Foreign relations.

Specific instructions for the application of subdivisions are given at the general reference for the subdivision in the List.

These are some of the grammatical rules that should be followed while assigning subject heading to a work. The types of things and examples of things which are not present in the subject headings List can be established as headings and added to the List locally as needed. In such cases the cataloguer should at first consult the category of the object present in the Sears List to which it belongs and then establish a new heading locally. The Sears List provides a List of Cancelled and Replacement Headings in the front of the volume to accustom the users with the changes made in the new edition from the previous one. The library should consult this with every new edition and revise the catalogue in accordance with it. Any headings created locally based on the pattern set by a Sears heading, and strings consisting of a Sears heading and a subdivision, must also be revised if that heading is revised in Sears.

6. Concluding remarks

The grammar of subject headings is mainly for the ease of the cataloguer in allotting subject headings to a work and incorporating new subject headings to the list. The Sears list of subject headings provide a detailed description of the rules that should be followed while formulating subject headings. Now days even the small libraries possess a versatile collection of resources. For making user searching easier, the cataloguer should make appropriate

subject headings for which the knowledge of the grammar of making the headings is inevitable.

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