Arabization vs. Expansion

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A comparative study of the Islamic topics in the Arabic and English standard classification systems

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SECTION 1

Introduction

Arabization vs. Expansion

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Introduction

With the growing interest in the study of the Islamic world in the past decades, the acquisition of titles about Islam had grown exponentially by many libraries worldwide. The libraries that have a reasonable big collection on Islam and its related disciplines are facing problem to classify and arrange the materials in such a way that could help and support the library users effectively.
The objective of this paper is to present the results of a comparative study between the Library of Congress Classification (LCC), and both the English and Arabic versions of Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) in terms of their level of specificity in covering Islamic topics and their weakness and strengths.

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SECTION 2

Comparative Study Tools

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Comparative Study Tools

Al-Faysal Thesaurus

al-Fayṣal : maknaz Arabī shāmil fī ulūm al-ḥaḍārah : qism ulūm al-dīn al-Islāmī (A Thesaurus of subject terms for Islamic studies developed by King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

al-Fayṣal was used to check the level of comprehensiveness of each of the three classification systems compared (LCC, Arabic and English versions of DDC) and the LCSH.

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Comparative Study Tools

- ✓ In depth coverage of Islamic terms (approximately 25000 terms).
- ✓ Identify rejected, broader, narrower and related terms
- ✓ Originally prepared and not a translation.
- ✓ Terms are divided under 7 broad topics: General, Qur'an, Hadith, Worship, Islamic law, Sufism, Sects
- × Terms are in Arabic language and needs to be translated to find the equivalent English term in LCSH

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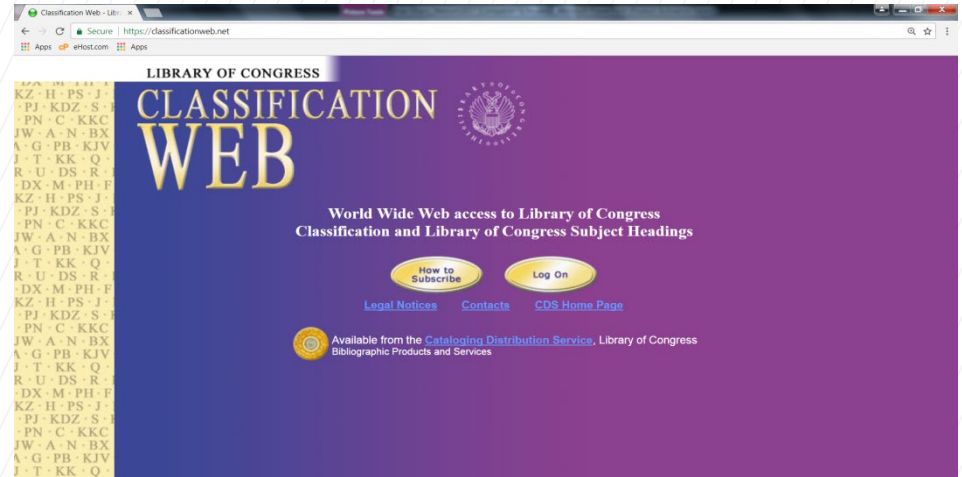
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SECTION 3

Systems Compared

Arabization vs. Expansion

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Systems Compared
English Systems

DDC 23 Expansions for Islam

LCC Class BP (Islam) and KBP (Islamic law)

Islamic topics in LCSH

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Systems Compared
Arabic Systems

QRMAK (Arabic List of Subject Headings)

قائمة رؤوس الموضوعات العربية القياسية للمكتبات ومراكز المعلومات وقواعد البيانات

المجلد الأول

توفر غلاف

الأستاذ الدكتور
شعبان عبد العزيز خليفة

دار الشروق

Arabized Version of DDC

الطبعة الثانية مزيدة ومنقحة

موسوعة التصنيف العشري

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المجلد الرابع
الكشاف النسبي

إعداد
محمد عوض العايدي
خبير المكتبات والمعلومات

المكتبة الأكاديمية
شركة مساهمة مصرية
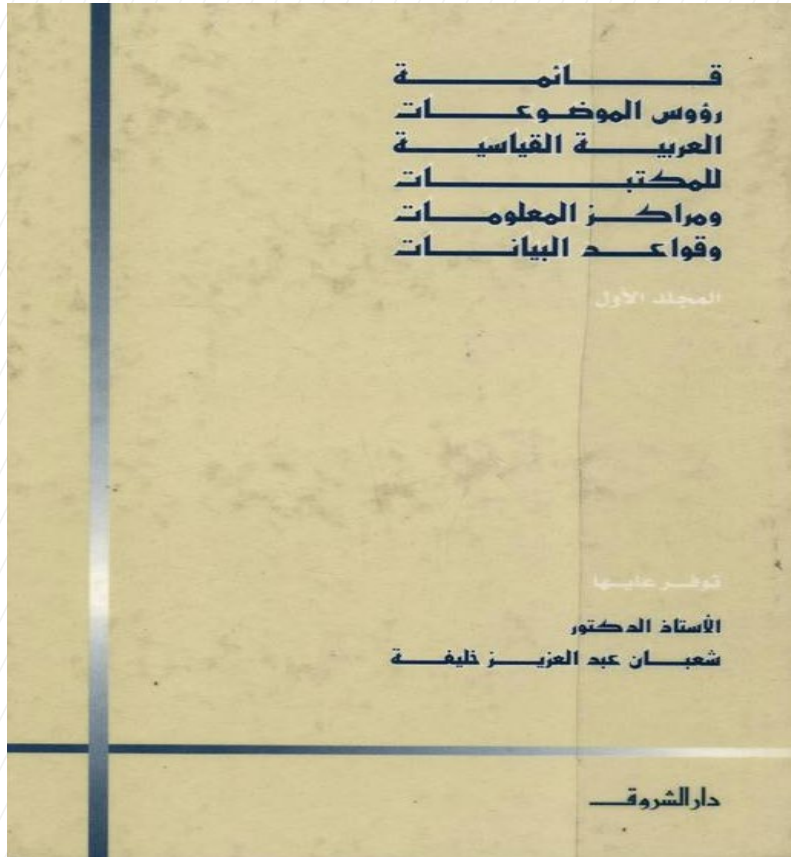
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Systems Compared
English Systems

DDC 23 Expansions for Islam

- The Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) got the authorization from OCLC to translate and develop the Arabic version of Web Dewey with expansions for Islam and Islamic law in 2006.

- The Dewey Translators Working Group was established from a team of librarians and translators who worked under the supervision of a Review Committee that included academic professors in Islamic studies, translation and librarianship.

- The BA proposed expansions for Islam and Islamic law was approved by the Dewey Editorial Policy Committee and published for worldwide review before it was officially adopted in the 23rd edition of Dewey (DDC23) in 2012.

Arabization vs. Expansion

Systems Compared
English Systems

DDC 23 Expansions for Islam

Structure and Notation of Expansions

- The expansions followed the same sequence in the original English version to ensure an international use of the proposed expansions for Islam.
- To facilitate copy cataloguing relocations were kept to the minimum.
- Optional numbers to class Islam in 210 to give local emphasis and shorter number were outlined for libraries through conversion tables.

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Systems Compared
English Systems

DDC 23 Expansions for Islam

The following class marks were expanded for Islam

297.122	Quran and Sciences of the Quran
297.125	Hadith Sciences and terminology
297.2	Islamic doctrinal theology (Aqaid and Kalam)
297.26-297.29	Islam and secular disciplines, social sciences and other systems of belief
297.3	Worship
297.4	Sufism
297.5	Islamic ethics
297.6	Islamic leaders and organizations
297.7	Islamic missionary work (Dawah)
297.8	Islamic sects and doctrines

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Systems Compared
English Systems

DDC 23 Expansions for Islam

The following class marks were expanded for Islamic law

297.14 Fiqh al-Ibadat (Comprehensive works about worship laws)

340.59 Shari'ah (Comprehensive works about Islamic Law)

340.591 Usul al-Fiqh

342-347 Furu al-Fiqh and Fiqh muqaran (General patterns for specific branches and topics of Islamic law and comparative Islamic/state laws)

The above provision allows building numbers for all legal topics from an Islamic law point of view. For example, books on Islamic contract law will be among contract law books as follows:

346.16702   Contracts (Islamic law)

346.1670482   Copyright (Islamic law)

346.167066   Corporation law (Islamic law)

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Systems Compared
English Systems

LCC Class BP (Islam) and KBP (Islamic law)

- The same as all LCC classes the Library of Congress (LC) developed Class BP (Islam) based on literary warrant from its vast Islamic collection.
- In 2001, the LC comprehensively developed the KBP Class for Islamic law.
- The LCC is continuously updated through Classification proposals from librarians all over the world. The level of specificity of Class KBP can be outlined by having a specific class number for Salam Contract (A specific sales contract in Islamic law where the buyer gives the money ahead of time from receiving the sold items from the seller).

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Systems Compared
English Systems

Islamic topics in LCSH

Approved SACO Proposals:

Gambling (Islamic law)

Set-off and counterclaim (Islamic law)

Kings and rulers (Islamic law)

Terrorism (Islamic law)

Baqā' (Sufism)

Fanā' (Sufism)

Approved LC Classification Proposal:

BP190.5.E76   for LCSH: Ethnicity -- Religious aspects – Islam

New SACO Proposals:

Political parties (Islamic law)

Rule of law (Islamic law)

Saving and investment – Religious aspects -- Islam

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Systems Compared
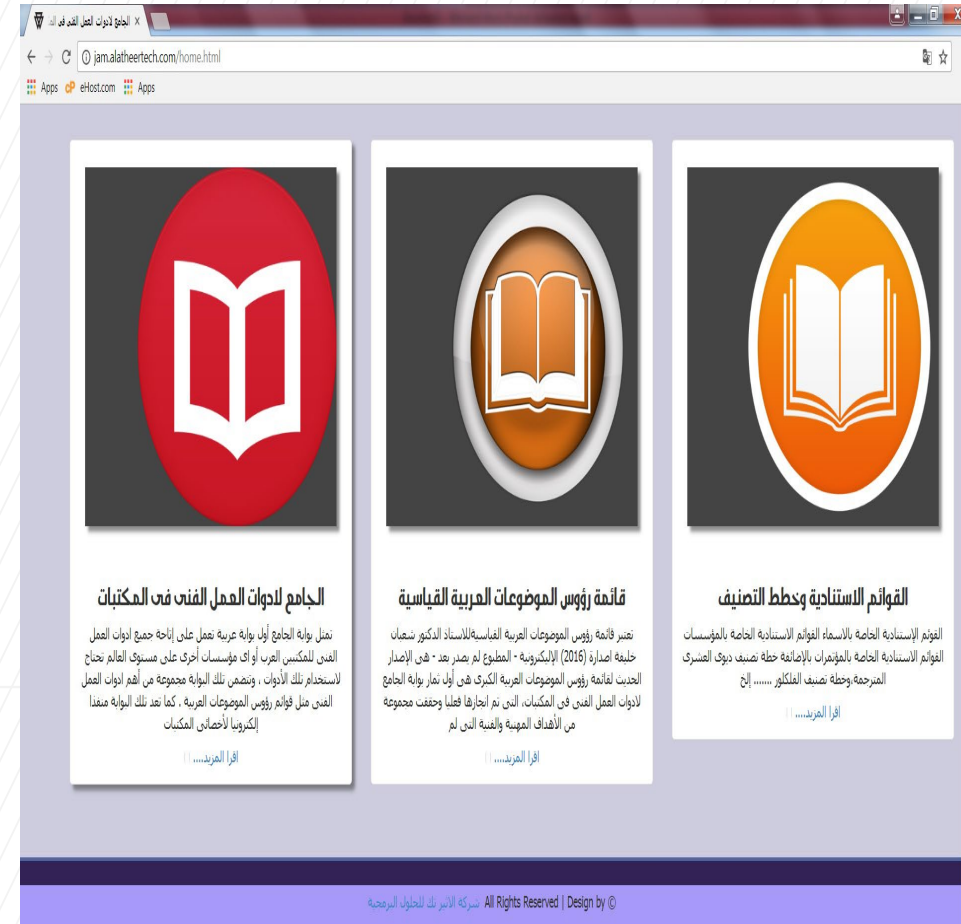## Arabic Systems

Arabized Version of DDC

- The Arabic version of Dewey is an adapted translation of the 21st edition of Dewey and included further development of Arabic and Islamic studies (Arabization).

- It preserved all the numbers from 210 to 269 for Islam and relocated all the other religions in the numbers from 270-290. The numbers of 250-259 are used for Islamic law and the number for Sharia law 340.59 is not used and relocated to 250-259.

- These extensive relocations has a shortfall of not supporting copy cataloging (especially from the Arabic Union Catalog: aruc.org) if the library is using the standard English version of Dewey or the LC classification. The cataloger had to reclassify the title in this case.

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Systems Compared
Arabic Systems

QRMAK (Arabic List of Subject Headings) by Dr. Shaban Khalifah

- Al Gamme is the electronic web-based version of the latest edition of the Arabic list of subject headings by Dr. Shaban Khalifah released in 2016.
- The printed copy is under publication.
- The electronic version includes more than 60,000 authorized Arabic subject headings with Dewey numbers from the Arabized version of DDC.
- Some Arabic subject headings also include class numbers from the Library of Congress Classification (LCC).
- Access to Al-Gamme is through subscription, URL: jam.alatheertech.com

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SECTION 4

Sample
Comparative Topics

Arabization vs. Expansion

Sample Comparative Topics

Quran, Hadith, Sufism and Islamic law

Main topics that need expansion:

× Quran – Readings (needs expansion in all English systems)
× Hadith – Authorities (needs expansion in all English systems)
× Sufism (Sufi state, customs and practices needs expansion in all English systems)

Topics covered in details:

✓ Islamic law is very detailed in LC Class KBP
✓ LCSH is continuously updated through the LC Arabic SACO proposals administered by MELA
✓ DDC 23 Islamic law expansions include many provisions for building numbers for all legal topics from an Islamic law point of view

Arabization vs. Expansion

Summary of Comparison
English Systems

❖ LCC has the best level of specificity in all English systems and continuously updated through Classification proposals

❖ LCSH needs further development in all Islamic studies topics and in particular Quran, Hadith, Sufism and Islamic law topics (this can be done through SACO proposals but there should be flexibility in approval)

❖ The Expanded version of DDC 23 needs further development (this can be done through allowing DDC classification proposals).

❖ The DDC policy should decrease the number of literary warrant needed to add a new class number to be 1 title instead of 20 (this can apply to specific DDC language versions if not applicable in the English standard version)

Arabization vs. Expansion

Summary of Comparison
Arabic Systems

❖ The Arabized version of DDC is very detailed in all Islamic studies topics (with the exception of "Furu al-fiqh" general branches of law from an Islamic law point of view (250-259). However, its shortfalls not supporting copy cataloging because of its extensive relocations and separation of Arabic and foreign collections within libraries.

❖ All available Arabic lists of subject headings including QRMAK lack the required level of specificity especially in comparison with the de facto LCSH updated biweekly. The Arab catalogers continue to translate and adapt new subject headings from LCSH or Rameau.

❖ This leads us to the final recommendation of having a regional entity in the Arab world that work on developing comprehensive Arabic cataloging tools including a detailed list of Arabic subject headings with continuous updates through subject proposals similar to the LC SACO program.

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SECTION 5

Conclusion

Arabization vs. Expansion

Conclusion

"No perfect system, no one size fits for all, adding, updating and expanding are ways of life."

- Sohair F. Wastawy, Executive Director, Qatar National Library

"It is with cooperation that we are able to achieve so much in our field, to the benefit of all."

- Paul Edwin Frank, NACO/SACO Coordinator*, Library of Congress*

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boilerplate
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THANK YOU

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