Letter to the Editor

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Popularity of entries in *ISKO Encyclopedia of Knowledge Organization*

The *ISKO Encyclopedia of Knowledge Organization (IEKO)* was launched in 2016 by Birger Hjørland, its Editor-in-chief, as an official ISKO initiative; Claudio Gnoli joined soon as co-editor and web editor. Peer-reviewed articles are published online at http://www.isko.org/cyclo/ then printed in the *Knowledge Organization* journal (Dextre Clarke 2017).

Since 2018, the Web version of new entries includes a counter of independent visits provided by Digits.net; the counter has also been progressively introduced for all previously-published entries, keeping track of the date when the count has started. After a couple of years, such statistics offer an interesting hint to assess which topics are the most popular in our field. Obviously, this is not an objective measure of the absolute relevance of a topic or quality of a page: for example, an entry on a very specific topic can be expected to be consulted less often than those on more general topics, yet still be a necessary component in the documentation of knowledge organization (KO) concepts.

On 8 November 2019, we have tabulated the current value of counters for 46 *IEKO* entries. The other 11 entries available at that time have not been considered, as they still had not had a counter for a period significant enough (at least 40 days). Visits for an individual page ranged between 113 and 9010. As these values are clearly biased by the different age of each counter, we have weighed them by the number of days elapsed since the introduction of the counter (often, though not always, coinciding with the entry creation). Number of elapsed days ranged between 44 and 604.

Dividing the former value by the latter, we got a visit rate v for every entry. Resulting values of v range between 0.89 and 17.36 visits per day per entry, with a mean of 4.11. The ten most often visited entries are as shown in Table 1.

There are many possible ways to explain these results. A first observation is that the most visited entries concern very general topics in KO and the broader field of library-and-information science (LIS)—as opposed to, for example, knowledge organization systems (KOSs) in specific fields or biographical articles on individual KO authors. This may reflect a use of *IEKO* in educational contexts, contributing to a greater awareness of the basics of our field among non-specialists.

Exceptions to this are the entries on Hornbostel-Sachs and on the classification of psychology, which may have been largely used due to the popularity of the subject as taught in specific KO courses or to the renown of their authors. In general, humanities may be of greater interest to the KO community than other covered fields, such as physics or astronomy, although this hypothesis would need further evidence.

The systematic index of *IEKO* is organized by broad categories that are identified by capital letters (compatible with the Integrative Levels Classification (ILC) notational system for special and local schemes) and used in anchor links. We have aggregated data on visit rates by such categories and calculated the average v for each category and subcategory. Results are shown in Table 2.

As can be seen, general entries on the discipline itself (entry on "KO") and adjacent disciplines (entry on "LIS") have by far the highest average v, confirming that users' interests focus on introductory resources. Apart from this,

17.36	Knowledge pyramid: the DIKW hierarchy
14.83	Library and information science (LIS)
11.60	Knowledge organization (KO)
11.49	Classification
6.92	Hornbostel-Sachs Classification of Musical Instruments
6.91	Literary warrant
6.58	Citation indexing and indexes
6.27	Knowledge organization system (KOS)
6.17	Indexing: concepts and theory
6.13	Classification of psychology

Table 1.

5.53	***A***	**KO: general and historical issues**	
13.21	*AD*		Discipline and adjacent disciplines
1.68	*AR*		Biographical articles
5.35	***C***	**Core concepts in KO**	
5.46	*CC*		Theoretical concepts
4.16	*CS*		Specific document types, genres and media
3.29	***K***	**Knowledge organization systems (KOS)**	
4.98	*KA*		KOS general issues
5.21	*KD*		KOS kinds
1.87	*KG*		Specific KOSs, general/universal
2.85	*KL*		Specific KOSs, domain/specific
2.90	*KN*		KO in specific domains
2.87	*KS*		Standards and formats for representing data
4.83	***P***	**Knowledge organizing processes (KOP)**	
2.48	***R***	**Methods, approaches and philosophies**	
2.09	***T***	**KO in different contexts and applications**	

Table 2.

the average values for all broad categories do not differ very much. The low value for general KOSs can be explained by the fact that entries for the most renowned systems (*DDC*, UDC, *BC2* ...) are still in preparation or (in the case of *Colon Classification*) have lacked a counter until recently so are not included in this survey.

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Databases should Keep Pace with the Needs of scientific Exploration: "Nationality" should be added to scientific Research Databases

The rapid development of science and technology has shortened the distances among people from different countries and regions. Many people study or work abroad rather than in their home countries. According to Decoding Global Talent 2018 (https://on.bcg.com/2tB3qy7), 57% of respondents expressed willingness to work abroad. Working abroad has become a global trend. At the same time, research on countries or regions has always been a hot topic. A large number of results can be obtained when searching for a country, a region, developing country, or developed country in Google Scholar. The question arises: How do we consider the impact of those who work abroad on related research?

It is difficult to assess the specific impact of talents on national development and social progress. Even the most intuitive literature analysis work is also facing difficulties. A great deal of literature analysis is based on *Science Citation Index* and *Social Sciences Citation Index* in the *Web of Science* database. However, it should be noted that the "Count-

ries/Regions Search" in the *Web of Science* database refers to the countries in which the authors work. There is no relevant nationality information in the *Web of Science* database. Nationality information is crucial to the rigor and accuracy of relevant research. Do researchers manually collect nationalities of so many unfamiliar people one by one? It sounds impractical and absurd.

Faced with such a problem, it is particularly necessary to add nationality information to the scientific research database, and it can bring the following benefits for future research:

1. Save time for relevant research staff.
2. Manual processing in a study is often difficult to verify. If there are nationality-related items in the database, reviewers or readers can easily and accurately verify the findings when they have doubts.
3. The number of highly skilled talents working abroad and their institutions in any field can be accurately and quickly obtained. That is to say, it can help us track specific data about talents flow in any field of any country. The accurate data on the changes in people working abroad will be easily obtained. The information about talent flow obtained in such a way is certainly more accurate and helpful than the sample interview. What's more, the cost of research will be reduced compared to the troublesome interview survey. And surveys like Decoding Global Talent 2018 will be easier and more convincing, and perhaps the findings will be more valuable than existing research.
4. When there is enough data about nationality in the future, it enables us to carry out some interesting research, for example, comparing the number of achievements, research directions, and other valuable aspects between native and foreign talents in any field of any country. In addition, a series of studies can be carried out and compared with existing studies to better understand social problems and promote global progress.

Therefore, I suggest that databases like *Web of Science* should include nationality-related items. It is not my opinion to determine the author's nationality one by one for those articles that have been published. I do not want to bring trouble to the staff of databases and publishers. Rather, I suggest that the newly published studies contain "nationality" from a certain time in the future. And 3 years, 5 years or 10 years later, there will be enough samples for scholars to carry out a series of studies.

Finally, it must be noted that not just the *Web of Science* database that needs to be improved and not just the "nationality" problem that needs to be solved. I hope to attract more innovative databases or other scientific research tools through the "nationality" problem. With the progress of the times, if the indicators in the database remain unchanged, they may not be able to keep up with the needs of scientific exploration. A little change today maybe provides valuable contributions for future research. Why don't we do that?

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