
UNIT 4 RELATIVE INDEX AND ITS USE

Structure

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

In the process of assigning a class number to a specific subject of a document, in addition to the Tables (Volume 1) and Schedules (Volume 2), the Relative Index (Volume 3) of DDC-19th edition also acts as an important tool. In this Unit, we will introduce to you the nature and use of the Relative Index.

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- define the Relative Index;
- describe its nature and characteristics;
- explain its need and importance;
- describe its organisation and structure; and
- use it for locating a class number in the schedules or tables for a given subject.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 3 of this Block, we have explained to you how to do subject analysis and ascertain the specific subject of a document. You have also been instructed about how to assign a class number to the specific subject with the help of the Schedules (Volume 2) and Tables (Volume 1) of DDC. In the process of ascertaining a Class Number, the

Relative Index (Volume 3) also plays a vital role in guiding you to get the appropriate Class Number from the Schedules and Tables.

The Relative Index of DDC has always been a part of the system since the very first edition (1876). It is not merely an adjunct or aid to the use of the schedules, but an entity in itself of value not less equal to the schedules. It is considered to be the paramount and enduring contribution of Melvil Dewey to library classification.

4.2 NEED AND IMPORTANCE

DDC is a classification by discipline. It means that subjects are classified in the context of a discipline. In the schedules and in the various auxiliary tables all the concepts and subjects have been arranged logically in their whole part relationship. That is also known as a systematic arrangement proceeding from the general to the specific. To locate a desired subject and its class number in the schedules, at least a preliminary knowledge of its position in the universe of knowledge is necessary. In other words, we should know the discipline. It is very difficult for any person to have even a preliminary knowledge of all the subjects in the universe of knowledge. Therefore, all persons, whatever their knowledge, have to use at one time or the other a key to the schedules. This key is the index called the Relative Index in DDC. A classifier may use the Index for reasons which have been explained below.

4.2.1 Place of Some Subjects in DDC is Illogical

In DDC the position of some subjects is not very logical or as per universal consensus among scholars. Some misplacements in the original plan of 1873-1876 continue to be so. At later stages some new subjects have been adjusted here and there where no vacant numbers available at their appropriate places. Now, nobody defends the system for its logical structure. As a result, the scheme has now a distorted structure. The number of illogically placed subjects increases with new editions. Therefore, sometimes even a systematic approach to the schedules may fail to locate a class number.

4.2.2 Limited Knowledge of Classifiers

Besides the illogical structure of DDC, a classifier at times may not understand the subject of the book to be classified. The term may be new to her/him or the classifier may understand the subject but may not know of its location in the overall system. Take the example of the subject of "Birthday Cards". At first one may not even understand to which Main Class it may belong. Some classes such as engineering are too crammed with topics to locate the desired subject easily. For these reasons, at times the DDC Schedules (Volumes 2) look like an impregnable fort. In some cases the hierarchical ladder leads to false ends or blind alleys. There seems no way to break open the schedules to reach the desired subject. In such a frustrating situation, the Relative Index provides a royal road to the desired subject in the schedules.

4.3 NOMENCLATURE: RELATIVE INDEX

The index is called the Relative Index. The approach of the Relative Index is entirely opposite to the approach of the schedules. In the Relative Index all the entries have been arranged in an alphabetical sequence. But more importantly, the disciplines are scattered by subjects whereas in the schedules the subjects are scattered by the discipline. Thus, the Relative Index brings at one place all the related aspects of a subject scattered in the schedules (Volume 2). Its approach is, thus, complementary to that of the schedules.

This index is called relative because it shows a term and its various aspects in relation to one another. Take, for example, the subject, “Birth”. It may have various aspects scattered in the schedules. Some of its aspects such as birth control, customs, etc. are shown in the following simplified entry from the Relative Index (p. 117).

Birth
 control
 customs
 defects

lit. & stage trmt.
 of Jesus Christ

So all the aspects of this subject, otherwise scattered in the schedules, have been collected at one point. This will enable the classifier to study a given topic from different angles and see its ramifications.

Self-Check Exercise

- Note:** i) Write your answers in the space given below.
ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

1) Why is the Index of DDC called the Relative Index?

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4.4 SCOPE OF THE INDEX

The Index consists of the following terms in a single alphabetical sequence:

- 1) All the key terms/concepts in the schedules.
- 2) All the examples and illustrations given under entries
- 3) Some of the compound concepts which can be obtained by number building notes.
- 4) All the concepts/entries given in all the seven auxiliary Tables 1-7 (in Volume 1).
- 5) Cross-Reference entries for synonymous terms and cross-reference to the related concepts, i.e., *see* and *see also* entries.

Thus, the total number of more than 80,000 entries in the Relative Index is far more than the total of 29,528 entries in the Schedules and Tables of DDC.

The Index cannot be expected to contain the names of all persons, cities, organisations, minerals, plants, animals, chemical compounds, drugs, manufactured articles and similar entities. Therefore, for specific names we should not consult the Index. For example, if our title is “A Biography of Pandit Ravi Shankar”, it will not be fruitful to look into the Index for Ravi Shankar. Instead we should look under the subject of biography, namely, musician’s biography. Similarly, if our titles for classification are the Indian Library Association or Jawaharlal Nehru University, we should not try to look up these names in the Index. We should rather look under “library associations” and “universities”, respectively.

Self-Check Exercise

- Note:** i) Write your answers in the space given below.
 ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.
- 2) Under which terms will you look into the Index for the following subjects?
- a) Shalimar Bagh
 - b) Indian Mathematical Society
 - c) Life Insurance Corporation of India
 - d) Biography of Charlie Chaplin
 - e) Bharatiya Janata Party

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4.5 ORGANISATION OF THE INDEX

Each page of the Relative Index has been divided into two columns divided by a vertical line. Each column consists of entries. The entries are arranged alphabetically. Any entry in the Relative Index is defined as: “A term or phrase followed by information in the form either of a number or of a reference to another term or phrase”.

For example (p.203):

Cities

local govt.	352.007 24
sociology	307.76
<i>s. a. City</i>	

Class numbers in the schedules have been given against each entry.

Another kind of index entry, instead of giving the class number, refers to the other term.

For example(p.124):
 Boars *see* Suiformes

It means that of the two synonymous terms “Boars” and “Suiformes”, the later has been preferred in the Index. Therefore, all the entries of this concept have been gathered under Suiformes (p. 1065, Volume 3). And the users who happen to look into this concept under “Boars” are redirected to Suiformes by *a see* cross-reference. Another form of entry may refer to related entries in the form of *see also (s. a.)* entry.

For example (p.687):

Monism

philosophy	147.3
indiv phil.	180-190
<i>s. a. spec. branches of phil.</i>	
<i>e.g. Metaphysics</i>	

The last line in this entry means *see also* specific branches of philosophy for their monism viewpoint

Let us see another relatively simple entry(p.):

Umpiring

American football	796.332 3
baseball	796.357 3
Canadian football	796.335 3
cricket	796.358 3
rugby	796.333 3
soccer	796.334 3
<i>s. a. other spec. games</i>	

In the above entry, after talking umpiring in some of the games (listed alphabetically), we may, if desired, refer to other specific games, e.g., hockey, for their umpiring aspect.

4.5.1 Looking under Key Terms

For lengthy compound titles we should look into the Index under the key terms. For locating a number for such a title we may have to look under more than one key term. The choice of the first key term to be looked under is very important and requires insight and experience. The simple rule is as follows.

If in the title one term refers to an object/substance and the other is a technique/process/action, then it is better to look under object/substance, i.e., the concrete term. For example, if we have to locate the number for “Lunar eclipse” in the Index, we should first look under “Lunar”. Let us take another title “Manufacture of jute pulp”. Here we should look under “jute pulp” (Adj+Noun form) instead of manufacture. Moreover, manufacture seems too vague a term for immediate location.

But if there is a specific process or technique then that process may be safely looked under. For example, for “Bergius process of manufacturing synthetic petroleum”, look under Bergius.

4.5.2 Locating Class Numbers in the Index

In the previous section you were asked to look under key terms, but the term you are looking for may not have been indexed at all. In the Indian context there are several terms used differently, e.g. a subject like “Primary education”. In this case you will find that there are two key terms “primary” and “education”. If you check in the Index you will not find any number for primary education. Under education there is no “primary” term listed. This is because in western countries it is called “elementary education” and hence it is also essential to know the preferred terms.

You are also likely to waste time in locating numbers through the index if you do not understand the subject itself or the correct connection of the terms.

Let us look at a simple example:

Economic geology of copper

There are three key terms: (1) economics (2) geology and (3) copper. Under which term will you search in the Index? If you check under “economics” you will not find any number. So will be the case if we look under geology. In this case there is a possibility of combination of two terms “economic” and “geology”. There is a number listed under

“economic geology” but it does not help us further in finding the specific number for the whole subject. But if you check under “copper” you will come across copper, mineral aspects-economic geology (p.250) and the number is 553.43.

Hence, it is essential to check under appropriate terms, otherwise you will be wasting time in searching. It is always advisable to recheck the numbers in the schedules. It helps you to understand the hierarchy of numbers and in a few cases, you will also come to know how the numbers have been coined.

Self-Check Exercise

Note: i) Write your answers in the space given below.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

3) Under which term would you look up the following subjects?

- a) Anthology of one act plays
- b) Libraries for children
- c) Fabian socialism
- d) Methods of offset printing
- e) Dynamics of particle
- f) Air-to-air guided missiles
- g) Diseases of legs
- h) Multi-language dictionaries

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4.5.3 Abbreviations Used in the Sub-Entries

In every entry you will find abbreviations throughout the Index. This has been done to save pace. The list of all abbreviations used has been given in the beginning of the Relative Index (pp. xi-xiii). Once you go through this list, then it may be easy to comprehend their full forms. If in the beginning you are not able to understand the full meaning of an abbreviated term, you may consult the list of abbreviations. With experience you will learn to read the abbreviations easily.

Some of the abbreviations are:

gen. wks.	=	general works
s. a.	=	see also
soc.	=	social
spec.	=	specific
spec. jur.	=	specific jurisdictions
O.T.	=	Old Testament
St.	=	Saint

All the states of the USA have been given in abbreviated form:

Ia	=	Iowa
Ida	=	Idaho
Wyo	=	Wyoming

All the abbreviations have been arranged at their proper places as if they were fully spelled out.

Self-Check Exercise

- Note:** i) Write your answers in the space given below.
 ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of this Unit.

- 4) Spell out the following abbreviations.
- a) appl(s).
 - b) gen. wks.
 - c) geog. subd.
 - d) govt.
 - e) ind.
 - f) jur.
 - g) transp
 - h) vet.sci.

4.6 NUMBERS GIVEN AGAINST ENTRIES

If a concept occurs in the Schedules (Volume 2), the full number is given against it for referring back to the Schedules.

For example (p.125):

Boilers

bldg. heating equip. 697.07

s. a. spec. kinds e.g. Steam heating

Let us interpret this partial entry

- 1) The class number for “Boilers” used as heating equipment for buildings is 697.07
- 2) The line under “building heating equipment” means: see also specific kinds of heating equipment for buildings. Steam heating has been cited only as an example. It means that in addition to “Boilers” as heating devices for buildings have been given under their specific names. In fact “Boilers” entry is a specific entry for one kind of heating equipment. For example, some other methods of room (building) heating are: solar heating, hot water heating and fireplaces. For these types of room heating equipment, we should directly look under these terms.

For example looking under ‘Solar’ (p.1023):

Solar
 heating
 buildings 697.78

In this case heating is subordinate to solar and building is subordinate to heating. These subordination aspects have been shown by indenting, i.e., by leaving space to the left.

4.6.1 Entries from the Seven Tables

If the entry is from one of the Seven Auxiliary Tables (Volume 1), then the sequence of the number column runs as follows:

First is given the short name of the Table in abbreviated form in italics, followed by a dash and the number proper for the concept.

For example (p.110):

Bhutan *area* – 549 8

It means that the term Bhutan is from the Areas Table (Table 2) and its number is 5498. The dash ‘-’ before the number indicates that the number is never used alone but attached to some number in the schedules.

Take another example:

Bhutanese people *r.e.n.* – 914 18

It means that the term “Bhutanese people” occurs in the Table of Racial, Ethnic, National Groups (Table 5), where its number is - 91418.

Abbreviations for the various Tables as used in the Index are as follows:

Table Number Full Name of the Table Abbreviations Used

Table Number	Full Name of the Table	Abbreviations Used
Table 1	Standard Subdivisions	s.s.
Table 2	Areas	<i>area</i>
Table 3	Subdivisions of Individual Literatures	<i>lit.sub.</i>
Table 4	Subdivisions of Individual Languages	<i>lang.sub.</i>
Table 5	Racial, Ethnic, National Groups	<i>r.e.n.</i>
Table 6	Languages	<i>lang.</i>
Table 7	Persons	<i>Pers.</i>

4.6.2 Cross-References

Sometimes we may not find a number against an entry. Instead we may be directed to some other term by *a see* or *see also* note. Understanding these cross-references is vital in using the Index.

These are of two types:

a) “see” Type

The Index uses standard terminology, wherein only one term for a concept has been used. In case of synonymous terms, we are referred from the unused term to the used term.

For example:

Linum *see* Flax

Linoleum *see* Floor coverings

Zyriam *see* Permian

Cartesian systems *see* coordinate systems

Jackals *see* Canidae

Dust-caused respiratory diseases *see* Pneumoconiosis

Immigrants *see* Ethnic groups; also Minority groups

Zoroastrian music *see* Zoroastrian sacred music

Flautists *see* Flutists

Tswana *see* Bantu

Brass

arts

decorative 739.52

other aspects see Metal arts

Similarly from abbreviated terms the reader maybe referred to the full form.

For example:

ADP see Automatic data processing

VAT see Added value taxes *UN see* United Nations

However, if a country has two names in English, then an entry is made under both.

For example:

Siam *area-593*

Thailand *area-593*

Ceylon *area-549 3*

SriLanka *area-549 3*

Holland *area-492*

Netherlands *area-492*

b) “s.a.(see also)” Type

But more important are the *see also* (entered in the index as *s. a.*) references. Such cross-references direct us to explore related topics entered under different terms in the Index.

Consider the following entry (p.402):

Flags 929.92

mil.sc. 355.15

s a. spec. mil. branches

nonverbal commun. *see* Flag signals

The above entry means that the general number for “Flags” is 929.92. Class number for “Flags” in the context of military science (mil.sc.) is 355.15. Again as a sub-aspect of military science there is *s.a.* (see also) entry directing us to specific branches of military such as Navy and Air Force, for flags of those branches.

Such a cross-reference is called a scatter reference as it does not refer to a specific term but suggests other possibilities.

4.7 SUMMARY

In this Unit, we have discussed the need value, scope, entry format and use of the Relative Index. The main points are:

- 1) Relative Index contains, in a single alphabet, a word-by-word sequence of all the key terms in the Schedules, the Seven Auxiliary Tables and some of the synonymous terms.
- 2) Relative Index (Volume 3) of DDC is not only the key to the classified arrangement of the concepts in the Schedules (Volume 3) and Tables (Volume 1) but also provides an independent approach to knowledge classification.
- 3) In the Relative Index, the disciplines are subordinated to the subject. Through the Index we can see at one glance the various scattered-by-discipline aspects of a subject which is not possible through the schedules.
- 4) For synonymous terms see cross-reference has been used to direct us from an unused term to the used term in the Index.
- 5) For related subjects scattered under different terms *s. a.* (see also) cross-references have been used.
- 6) Many of the sub-entries have been abbreviated and the key to the abbreviations has been given in the beginning of the Index.
- 7) We should not lean too much on the Index as it retards our learning and using of Schedules. It should be used only when the direct approach to the Schedules seems difficult or fails.

4.8 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) It is called relative, as its approach to knowledge organization is inverse to that of the Schedules. It also depicts all the relations of the subject.

- 2) a) Gardens
- b) Mathematics, societies/associations
- c) Life insurance companies
- d) Actors, biographies and work, motion pictures
- e) Political parties
- 3) a) One-act plays
- b) Children's libraries
- c) Fabian socialism
- d) Offset printing-There is *a see* direction
- e) Dynamics, particles
- f) Either under guided missiles or air-to-air
- g) Legs
- h) Dictionaries
- 4) a) applications, applied
- b) general works
- c) geographical subdivisions
- d) government(s), governmental
- e) industrial, industries, industry
- f) jurisdiction(s)
- g) transport, transportation
- i) veterinary science

4.9 KEY WORDS

- Entry** : A term or phrase followed by information in the form either of a number or of a reference to another term or phrase or both.
- Indentation** : Typographical setting in which sub-headings are printed leaving a space to the left of the line of the first letter of the main heading.
- Index** : Ordinarily an alphabetically arranged list of topics/concepts in the book giving information for each item is to be traced by means of a number. In some indexes the arrangement may be other than alphabetical.
- Relative Index** : An alphabetical index to a classification scheme in which all relationships and aspects of a subject are brought together under each index entry.

- Scatter Reference** : A cross-reference in the index not referring to a specific term but suggesting a variety of possibilities. This is done by *see also* references.
- See** : A direction note from a not used term to the used term. A direction note referring the user to related topics.
- s.a.** : This refers to related topics scattered in the Index under different terms.
- Word-by-Word Alphabetisation** : In it terns/concepts which have the same first words are arranged in the alphabetical order of the subsequent word. Here the word (not the letter) is the unit. It is also called the nothing before-something method. This method is also recommended by the British Standards Institution.

4.10 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Comaromi, John P. ,et al. *Manual for Use of Dewey Decimal Classification, 19th ed.* Albany, New York: Forest Press, 1982. Print.

Dewey, Melvil. *Dewey Decimal Classification and Relative Index.* 19th ed. 3 vols. Albany, New York: Forest Press, 1979. Print.

Osborn, Jean. *Dewey Decimal Classification, 19th Edition: A Study Manual.* Littleton: Libraries Unlimited, 1982. Print.

Satija, M.P., and John P. Comaromi. *Introduction to the Practice of Decimal Classification.* New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1987. Print.

Unit 4. 4.1. Put in the appropriate word or word combination to complete the statement. 1. To offer a higher price for an item than other buyers are ready to pay, especially at an auction means to . 2. A loan you are given by a friend or relative or an arrangement with a shop, bank etc. that makes it possible for you to buy something and pay for it later is called . 3. Physical harm caused to something or someone is . 4. To arrange that a planned activity or event will not happen means to . 5. The money that you earn from your work or that you receive from investments is your . 6. Money spent r 141

The use of relative clauses 338. 142 Relative pronouns and relative adverbs 340. 143 Relative clauses: participle and to-infinitive 342. Â There are various ways of using the book. If you know that you have problems with particular points of grammar, then you can start with the relevant units. The contents list and index will help you find what you want. Or you can do the Starting test (see page viii) and then use the results to decide which parts of the book to concentrate on. Or you can start at the beginning of the book and work through to the end, although the grammar topics are not ordered according to their level of difficulty.