

Transforming Traditional Chinese Bibliography: A Database with a Novel Approach

Hur-Li Lee

Knowledge Organization Research Group, School of Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA

This presentation will discuss the idea, planning, and design of a multi-functional database with a novel approach for major traditional Chinese bibliographies from the past two thousand years. While there have been other projects that converted traditional Chinese bibliographies into digital forms, the current project has a number of unique features and advantages. First, unlike most previous efforts that treat bibliographies as plain, flat texts, the current project builds a multi-faceted database structure utilizing advanced technology to transform traditional bibliographies into a state-of-the-art research tool. The database resembles a modern-day bibliographic retrieval system in that it offers dynamic functionalities for sophisticated data retrieval and manipulation. Second, the project is the first to recognize classification as an integral part of traditional Chinese bibliography and incorporate classification into the database structure. Classification functions as a knowledge organization tool; thus in Chinese bibliography, it has been regarded as a form of intellectual history, for every bibliography presents what was knowledge and how that knowledge was organized at a given time in history. Incorporating classification into the database structure adds significant value for intellectual historians and knowledge organization scholars. Third, in addition to search capabilities, a navigation mechanism is created so that users of the system may easily browse through the classificatory structures. This feature may be useful in generating new ways of researching Chinese bibliography. Fourth, the project adds name authority control that will make searching for personal names easy and consistent. Ancient Chinese authors often have several variant names. Having authority control not only facilitates searching but also helps collocate works by the same author across different bibliographic works. In the presentation, each feature mentioned will be explained with examples.