

MICRODIS TESTING AND TRAINING IN THE  
USAID/CAIRO DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION CENTER (DIC)

TRIP REPORT

on a TDY to USAID/Cairo

May 31 through June 4, 1987

for work completed under

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by  
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TDY OBJECTIVES:

To install MicroDIS version 2.1. This version includes necessary modifications to the program which were identified during the prior TDY of February 1987.

To provide DIC staff with additional training and supplementary user documentation.

To install the Wang VS reporting system and generate the four catalog reports.

To contact two potential MicroDIS users: NARP, the National Agricultural Research Project, and CDELT, the Center for Development English Language Training.

VS REPORTS

Prior to my arrival, DMS had loaded the VS report programs and run them all. There was a problem with the Author report, however. Under unknown conditions, the author name header will repeat more often than is necessary. Apparently it is duplicated every ten citations. All other reports functioned as expected.

After correcting the Author report program, the MicroDIS bibliographic data was once again loaded onto the VS with LCFS. This was done so that the reports would be completely up-to-date. Then we ran all four reports and printed them throughout the week.

Technical note: the fix to the Author Report program was in line number 012300 of MDISAUTH. The length of the variable was changed from 40 to 77.

Here is a summary of the four reports showing number of entries, runtime, and number of pages printed.

Report	# of	Runtime	Pages
Author	authors - 4826	150 min.	971 p.
Keyword	keywords - 3042	50 min.	3589 p.
Shelf List	docs - 6124	3 min.	474 p.
Title List	docs - 6124	4 min.	474 p.

The documentation on running reports was converted to a Wang word processing document so that DMS could manipulate it to reflect conditions at their installation. All reports were printed and given to the Library before my departure.

## MICRODIS DATA

Dylis was having trouble with modifying keywords on half a dozen documents. On the third Modify screen, some identifiers, always project or contract numbers, come up with "UNKNOWN KEYWORD ####". This is despite the fact that they appear okay in Search - Fast Access File reports.

After Dylis did the recommended Rebuild, all was fine. I stressed the need for use of Rebuild monthly as a preventative measure. Let's document this in the Preventative Maintenance section of the Technical Reference guide.

On the last afternoon, Hoda prepared a tape containing a copy of the DIC database files. This will again be carried to Washington to be loaded onto a Wang PC so that we can simulate the Cairo environment.

## MICRODIS SOFTWARE

While cleaning up the Author fast access file, Dylis found several Authors whose names are longer than what is printed on the author fast access file report. In order to view the authors, she tried a right-truncated search. On the search View, however, the names are also trimmed. The only available recourse was therefore to call up citations in Modify, one by one. This situation was partially corrected in MicroDIS 2.1; now Search shows the entire Author name. Furthermore, the Author fast access file report was modified to print 72 characters of the author name instead of what was 60. We should investigate using compressed print for long author names.

Version 2.1 of MicroDIS was installed on both PCs without incident.

The new menu system has one drawback. Whenever two option names begin with the same letter of the alphabet, the first option will be used. We therefore made menu changes to eliminate duplicate initial letters. The Acquisitions Tracking, Circulation, Circulation Report, Daily Log, Catalog Utilities, Search Print Format, Reference Desk Maintenance, Main Selection, Authority File Maintenance, and Index Rebuilding Menus were all updated for this reason. All of the changes were programmatical except the Authority File Maintenance Menu which involved changing information in ATHORITY.DBF. Also, the Catalog menu was updated; Utilities became Catalog Utilities.

The call number search is always right truncated, whether or not the truncation symbol is included. This should be examined and corrected in Washington.

Dylis was using the Author report to browse author names of documents she had entered recently. When using a date range and viewing on the screen, one gets many Authors without documents. Lots of information scrolls off of the top of the screen. Dylis realized that Search or Search - Fast Access view is more appropriate for her task. We need to educate in use of fast access files for on screen browsing, and reports for the printer. Fast access files would be more likely used if they had a backup option.

The authority file maintenance Modify required two steps, an add and a delete, for some types of modifies. This requirement was removed in Cairo with a program change.

There was much discussion of messages on the third data entry screen. When adding terms to the thesaurus, the two comments are contradictory. One says "If AID approved, answer Yes." Another says "If you have corrected a spelling error, answer No." Scenario: The cataloger is using a previously unused term and makes a spelling error. Hit F5. Message comes up about new keyword or spelling error. Check of screen; user sees spelling mistake and corrects it. Hit F5. Message comes up about new keyword or spelling error. User thinks "this must be a new keyword, because I know it is spelled correctly." Therefore hits F2 to update thesaurus. Now the two Y/N prompts appear, contradicting each other. Hmmm ...

Fixed the search/view/mark comma requirement. No trailing comma required now.

The keyword fast access file report Restart option asks for a page number. We need more explanation on what that means. MicroDIS shouldn't ask for a page number when the report is going to the screen, anyway. Also, restart is not an appropriate name for that option. Most use of keyword report is simply browsing through list of searchable terms. Restarting is an oddball situation, only used when printing & things jam up. We need to assume a consistent position on this. The fast access file reports are intended for online, ad hoc browsing; the reports go to the printer.

The call number search is always right truncated. Only causes trouble when searching for a document which has sub-documents (e.g. call number DA00-B517 has volumes labeled DA00-B517.1 etc.).

We need routines to completely reconstruct fast access files from scratch. Part of the quarterly maintenance guide. Any DP operation needs them, not just MicroDIS.

Not much HELP available in Search.

#### MICRODIS OPERATIONS

Library staff is doing their own backups now, without DMS assistance. Usually weekly, sometimes every other week. No troubles with LCFS since before February TDY.

DIC needs a new thesaurus!

#### NARP

Met with Susan Emerson of NARP project. They need a very small, PC-based system for now. Approximately 2000 documents to be cataloged initially, 85% in English, 15% Arabic. Despite hard sell, no initial Minisis. Will not have funds for minicomputer for 3 or 4 years.

Their initial scenario: approximately 5 sites cataloging from Library of Congress distributed catalog records, 30 sites searching. All sites will be within Egypt. Stressed importance of following considerations:

- 1) data exchange logistics planning for temporal data integrity
- 2) need for custom interface between Library of Congress format cataloged records and MicroDIS import
- 3) thought to upgrade plan on the implementation here in Egypt
- 4) lack of cataloging of Arabic documents.

Gave Susan the demo software and documentation from Lee White. Her assistant will be in USA in August; may be available for some D.C. training. Assistant is familiar with online searching with Dialog et. al.

Susan appeared to be sold on MicroDIS before ever discussing it. Thursday she turned over signed agreement form for Bohall to carry to Washington.

Outline of NARP's cooperative catalog plan:

- 1) Primary site with the bulk of usable publications will have full entry and search capability.
- 2) Monthly, secondary sites will receive diskettes from primary site and import data into their catalog with search capability only.
- 3) As new items are received at secondary sites, they will search full catalog. If item is already in the catalog, they will request primary site to add location identifier for them. For items not in database they will prepare a data entry form for primary site. Send data entry sheets and list of items needing a new identifier to the primary site every month.

CDIE response:

- 1) In general, a parent site & several children sites is more manageable, from a temporal data integrity perspective, than several peer sites.
- 2) Media for updates of new documents acquired by secondary sites depends upon volume. Options are data entry sheets or diskettes.
- 3) Two immediately apparent schemes for location codes. Each site could have its own sitecode, or locations could be keywords (identifiers). If each copy of a document has its own sitecode and presumably the same call number, then multiple citations will exist for the same document. Any retrieval based upon a key other than site code & call number will yield duplicate documents. With a keyworded location, retrievals will not yield duplicate documents. In the future when the data is used for research purposes, this scheme is more valuable, because search results will show the locations at which each document is available more effectively.
- 4) Again emphasized need for either custom interface to precataloged records or the complete use of data entry sheets. Custom interface could be build by either NARP or AID.
- 5) Concern with interim catalog acquisitions at secondary sites. Any data integrity considerations here? Suppose site A is the first to receive a document and, not finding it in catalog, fills out a data entry sheet for the parent site. Then all data entry sheets are collected. Then, before parent site finishes updates, site B receives a copy of the same document. Site B, not finding it in the

catalog, fills out a data entry sheet for the parent site. In the next data collection, the parent site will have two citations of the same document. In a site code -> location cataloging scheme, this is all okay, not an anomaly. In a keyworded location scheme, this is incorrect. Not a critical problem, as it will show up and be obvious eventually.

Shipping things to NARP can be done through Lou Anne. Mark outside of package Lou Anne McNeil, etc. On inside:

Dr. Ahmed Momtaz  
General Director, ARC  
National Agricultural Research Project  
9 Gamma St.  
Giza, Cairo, Egypt  
attention: Susan Emerson

Their phone number in Giza is 731574.

DIC

Lou wants Nora to have a complete walk through of Document Catalog, Reference Desk, and System Utilities because Nora will be running Library this summer. Nora's activity will be retrieval only, no new cataloging. Lou plans to start using Circulation and Acquisitions this fall after home leave.

Following an organizational change (four becomes three), Lou Anne has a new supervisor. She now reports to Theresa Ware from Program Planning.

MICRODIS DOCUMENTATION

Had trouble explaining the difference between the Thesaurus and the Keyword fast access file. MicroDIS manual needs a one-pager on this.

CDELT

David Carroll and Johanna Kowitz of CDELT came by to discuss MicroDIS as a possible tool for their Library. They hadn't seen the demo package yet as Pat had it at home. Their situation: Patricia is leaving library. They have about 3000 technical documents cataloged on a dbase3 database. Not very well indexed, but are cataloged consistently. Library will have no librarian or cataloger in the foreseeable future; David and Johanna have been involved in this as a side project. Interest in MicroDIS mainly as an access tool. Their current system doesn't have many reports or ways to search.

They were impressed with the capabilities of MicroDIS. Emphasized that MicroDIS is a simple tool for doing a complex job and that a library needs at least one full time cataloger/librarian to use MicroDIS effectively. They would also need to develop cataloging guidelines and a thesaurus. AID thesaurus probably would not be appropriate because all their materials deal with training. At the earliest, they would have a full time library person in Spring of 1988.

One problem is with shipping; they cannot receive parcels through the pouch. Address is:

Johanna Kowitz

English Teacher Training Program

CDELT, Ain Shams University

1081 Corniche El Nil St.

Garden City, Cairo, Egypt

Telex 93773 AMEMB Telephone 2589974 or 3544799

WHAT'S NEXT?

NARP - expecting MicroDIS diskettes, documentation, and written response to cooperative cataloging plan. Susan's assistant will be in the states in August, no fixed dates yet.

CDELT - should wait for a cataloger or librarian.

DIC - will be here briefly this summer.