

Findability of Evidence – The Cornerstone of Successful Practice. Case Finnish Veterinary Medical Terminology Ontologized

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Introduction

Successful decision making based on high quality evidence – accessed rapidly – is required in contemporary clinical practice. Helping the busy veterinarians in their literature search processes, by creating solid and trustful literature search systems, is the task of information specialists. The help of ontologies, tailored to special user groups, adds value to the collection work information providers do. It is not possible to practice on evidence basis if evidence is not acquired. Availability is necessary, but without findability it is of no use. The aim of this study is to address how to make the veterinary medical information better findable with the help of ontologizing in the Finnish subject indexing landscape.

Methods

Refining search tools will serve both academic research and practicing fields of the veterinary business. Testing the working of the terminology veterinary medicine Finland, is done by comparing the vocabularies used in different databases. Search strings are formulated in a way that the results will reveal the pitfalls in the contents and subject headings of the services. Major attention is given to topics related to Finnish specialities. Finto.fi (Finnish thesaurus and ontology service) includes many ontologies on life sciences, incl. medicine, e.g, MeSH & FinMeSH, TERO and AFO ontology. It is maintained by the National Library of Finland and well accessed. From the veterinary point of view, the main interest is focused to the MeSH translation in Finnish, FinMeSH. Other veterinary subject headings are found in CAB Abstracts and serve as comparative data.

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Results

The results reveal the differences between vocabularies of several databases. From the ontologising point of view, the content description with exact terms in very special areas is crucial. Deep understanding of the discipline indexed, as well as solid semantical basis of the vocabulary served, are needed for a reliable search procedure.

Discussion

Applications in everyday practice are considered from the veterinarian's workflow needs: (1) the time factor: decisions made immediately in rapidly changing situations, (2) the challenge of the availability and the accessibility of the articles found in peer reviewed scientific journals. The next step will be a follow up of the search results by interviewing practicing veterinarians.

Keywords: Animal Health, Finmesh, Information Retrieval, Knowledge Organization, Metadata

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