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# INTERLENDING AND DOCUMENT DELIVERY IN THE UNITED GERMANY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ASPECTS OF CHARGING

By Heinz Fuchs

**Abstract:** Due to the federal structure there exists a decentralized system of libraries sharing the workload of literature provision. Like this system interlending is also characterized by decentralization.

One of the major disadvantages of the conventional form of interlending and document supply is its slowness. To overcome this situation the four central special libraries e.g. introduced a "non-conventional" supply of literature on a direct order/direct supply basis.

There is no uniform practice in charging. Due to the already mentioned federal structure the individual "länder" decide themselves on their charges.

Before I start talking about interlending and document delivery and the financial side of them I should say a few words about literature provision in Germany in general.

Due to the federal structure of our nation we also have a decentralized system of libraries sharing the workload of literature provision.

What does the academic library scene in a broader sense look like? As you all know we have a national library, called Deutsche Bibliothek, situated in Francfort. It is a comparatively young institution, founded in 1946. The other library working in this field is the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig which has been created in 1913 by the German Booksellers' Association. These two big national libraries have been amalgamted in 1990 and now form "Die Deutsche Bibliothek". Also of national importance are two other big libraries situated in Berlin and Munich, the State Library of the Prussian Cultural Foundation and the Bavarian State Library. The former was united with the German State Library in East Berlin in 1992 and figure under the somewhat complicated name of "Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preußischer Kulturbesitz".

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From 1959 on four so called Central Special Libraries were created, one specializing in technology in Hannover, one for economics in Kiel, one for medicine in Cologne and a last one for agriculture in Bonn.

In addition to the libraries mentioned there are about 40 institutions belonging to the group of regional libraries. Most of these libraries go by the name of "Landesbibliothek". They are regional copyright libraries and have the task to provide the general public with scientific literature. Sometimes they also combine the functions of a university library. There are now more than 70 libraries in the whole of Germany which serve as university libraries and in addition to these not far from 200 belonging to polytechnics or other specialized academic institutions. The number of special libraries in a narrower sense is much bigger and amounts to about 3.000.

In 1992 academic libraries have spent more than 500 million marks on acquisition and have lent more than 60 million media. A considerable part of the total expenditure was actually done by 37 state, university, and special libraries which take part in the Special Collection Area Scheme initiated by the German Research Council in 1949. These libraries try to acquire all relevant literature in a certain field and receive 75% of the money that they spend on the acquisition of foreign publications from the Research Council. There is however the duty to make the material available to readers in the whole of Germany via the national interlending system. The other institution which provides a lot of money for the acquisition of books, although only on a temporary basis, is the Volkswagen Foundation. The project sponsored since 1990 for 5 years is called "Collection of German Imprints 1450-1912".

It aims to diminish stock gaps caused by the fact that Germany lacks a national collection centre by purchasing antiquarian original editions or reproductions. Five important libraries in Munich, Wolfenbüttel, Göttingen, Frankfurt and Berlin share collection tasks by splitting it up in several time segments.

Like the system of literature provision the system of interlending is also a decentralized one. According to the national interlending regulations of 1979 (which have been revised in 1993) the "classical" way of an interlending request was (and still is to a certain extent) the following: if the desired item is not found in the local library a request is sent to the regional union catalogue for searchers within the region. If the item cannot be located the request is sent on to other union catalogues. There are seven in West Germany and another five in East Germany. As this "round tour" can be quite time consuming requests may be sent directly to the library which hosts the special collection according to the Special Area Collection Plan. It is also possible to restrict the circulation to 3 regional cata-

logues when a time limit is set. If the request cannot be satisfied within Germany there is of course the possibility of trying international interlending.

The classical way of transport for books, photocopies and microforms was and still is by mail on the one hand or by the regional mobile library service on the other hand which forms a network in the whole of Germany on the basis of circulating library vans. In addition to this conventional form of interlending fax transmission is quite widespread and some libraries experiment with electronic transmission using ILL protocols. We shall come back to this later on.

Now let us have a brief look at the system of literature provision and interlending in the former GDR:

The so called "Council of Ministers" exercised a central control also as far as libraries were concerned. This was done on the basis of legislation or by special decrees. One of the important ones of this sort had the lengthy title "Decree concerning the Functions of the Library System in the Formation of the Advanced Social System of Socialism in the GDR". In 1966 the "Special Collections Plan for Learned Libraries in the GDR" was installed similar to the one in West Germany. Initially 70 libraries took part later on the number even doubled. These libraries also bought foreign literature.

In 1971 the Institute for Interlending and Union Catalogues was founded as a central institution responsible for the libraries in higher education. Apart from the matters mentioned in the title it had the special task of listing foreign literature acquired by the libraries.

In 1975 new interlending regulations were issued by the Ministers of Culture and Higher Education. West German literature and West German libraries were to be regarded as "foreign". German-German interlending on the basis of the national interlending regulations was forbidden. From that time on international lending forms had to be used, which was more complicated and costly. Literature provision gradually became worse because of inadequate resources for collection building in general and in particular as far as the acquisition of literature from Western countries was concerned. The fact that direct orders were not possible increased the volume of loan slips in the Institute for Interlending and Union Catalogues and often lengthened the waiting times to an unacceptable degree.

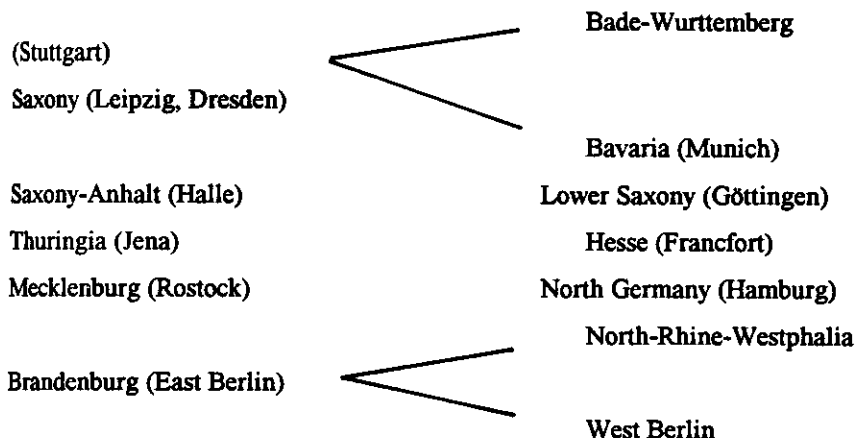
When first talks about restructuring interlending began in late 1989 there was at least a common basis in 3 points between the interlending systems in the Federal Republic and the Democratic Republic:

- the supply of literature free of charge on a reciprocal basis

- the regional principle and
- the possibility of ordering special literature directly from special libraries.

As early as February 1990 the first informal agreement as to interlending practices between the two states was reached. One month later the "Provisional Procedures in Interlending between libraries of the GDR and the Federal Republic" were introduced.

The main feature of these procedures was the cooperation between "partner regions". The institutions involved were the seven regional union catalogues in West Germany which were twinned with 5 regional union catalogues in East Germany in the following way:



The five east German union catalogues were equipped with

- COM catalogues of their partner regions
- the national union catalogue of serial literature and
- the national union catalogue of monographs.

After providing a basic infrastructure a provisional list of GDR libraries authorized for ordering purposes in the German-German interlending system was established. The important academic libraries were then gradually integrated into the library service network. In January 1991 finally 22 university, state and general research libraries were designated key libraries as to interlending for what was the GDR.

After the reunification it became clear that neither the West German interlending regulations of 1979 nor the East German equivalent of 1975 were suitable for an all-German interlending system.

So the new interlending regulations of February 1993 took account of the new national situation. For our colleagues from the former GDR it involved quite some changes whereas for us it meant a certain adaptation to changes which had come up during the last decade. One of the most pronounced features is the regulation as to directing requests which includes much more direct ordering from special libraries and the libraries which take part in the national special collection area scheme. Direct ordering has indeed become easier with the perfection of the national union catalogues for serial literature and monographs.

Up to now I have concentrated on the conventional form of interlending and document supply. One of its major disadvantages is the slowness, i.e. the long time between the submission of an interlending request and the receipt of the required item.

It is true that all 7 West German union catalogues operate cooperative databases from about 1980 but they still differ in terms of technical and organizational development due to the federalistic structure of the nation. This fact involves that the exchange of data between the catalogues is not yet totally satisfactory. And even when the process of locating the literature is quite quick the slow delivery to the reader is still quite annoying.

These insufficiencies are of course not new. When we go back to the seventies the four already mentioned central special libraries for technology, agriculture, economics and medicine felt the need to satisfy the demand for literature arising from research and practical activities outside the universities. These institutions had been developed from 1959-1969 and they were the libraries which introduced the "non-conventional" supply of literature (this is the term still used) on a direct order/direct supply basis.

One of the leading institutions in this field was and still is the Technical Information Library in Hannover founded in 1959, and attached to the University Library dating from the 19th century. It acquires relevant literature from the subject areas of chemistry, mathematics, physics and all branches of technology including reports, conference publications, norms and patents as well as the so called "grey literature". It buys a great number of publications in Eastern European and far eastern languages (Japanese, Chinese) and offers a translation service from these languages. The holdings of the library include about 4 million volumes/microforms. It subscribes to 19.200 journals.

As early as 1979 the Technical Information Library was able to act as a document supplier for the DIALOG database. Since December 1989 the machine-readable part of the catalogue is available as "TIBKAT" file via 8 database hosts among them STN, DIALOG, DOCLINE and DataStar. These hosts accept online orders of the holdings of the library. This is done in the following way:

- literature references are searched in the "TIB-KAT" file
- the client selects papers by means of abstracts
- the document store is addressed via the abstract number
- the charges are debited to his account.

It is also possible to direct orders to the library itself. This can be done via the telecom data network (Datex-P), via telefax, telephone or telex.

Now I finally come to *charging*. There are certain features common to the charging practice of direct document supply by the Central Special Libraries:

- One is that they sell prepaid order forms (like the ones from Boston Spa)
- A second is, that prices vary for client in Germany, Europe and outside Europe and furthermore that state supported institutions pay a reduced rate.
- A third feature is that they distinguish between normal and urgent delivery, that means supply within 2-6 days in the former case and within 24 hours in the latter case. Invoices are sent out for services which are not covered by the standard rate or the value of one order form. In order to keep the workload and costs as low as possible the libraries issue cumulative invoices or try to convince the customers to open a deposit account.

What are the actual charges now? I present the figures from the Technical Information Library as an example:

#### Normal requests

from commercial enterprises, private persons etc.	DM18,00
from academic institutions, institutions financed with public money	DM 9,00

#### Urgent requests

from commercial enterprises	DM 36,00	(via the TELECOM data net)
private persons etc.	DM 41,00	(via fax)
from academic institutions,	DM 18,00	(via the TELECOM data net)
institutions financed with public money	DM23,00	(via fax)

This applies to requests from Germany and Europe.

Document supply outside Europe is charged DM25,00 for a normal request and DM50,00 for an urgent request.

What do you get for your money?

The extent of supply is

- up to 20 paper copies
- up to 4 m of microfilm duplicates
- up to 4 m microfiche duplicates or
- 1 book.

This is as you see, commercial document supply for express information. But the statistics show that this service seems to be worthwhile for many clients.

The conventional form of interlending, as described in the beginning, is quite different, also as far as charging is concerned.

There is no uniform practice in this respect in German libraries. Due to the federal structure the individual "länder" decide themselves on their charges.

A basis is however laid down by the national Interlending Regulations of 1979 revised in 1993. Paragraph 30 of these regulations says that the library *lending* an item meets the costs. A counterbalancing of charges does not take place. Extraordinary costs (like express and insurance fees) have to be covered when demanded in advance or in the case that the borrowing person declares that he/she is willing to pay them. Paragraph 25 recommends that copies should also be free of charge up to a number of 20.

At the IFLA Conference held in Chicago in 1985 the Section on Interlending and Document Delivery recommended that literature produced in the country of the supplying library should be supplied free in international lending whereas requests for items published outside the country of the possessing library should be loaned on a free basis.

These suggestions were taken up by the Readers' Services Committee of the German Library Institute one year later. A flat rate-charge of DM 10,00 was proposed made for lending a work not published in Germany or for supplying up to 20 copies. The borrowing libraries had to attach declarations of liability to their orders and German libraries were advised not to accept any orders without such declarations. Still there was and is a considerable number of libraries which supply books or copies regardless of the place of publication free of charge in compli-

ance with our national German regulations. There also exist bilateral agreements with individual countries or libraries where charges are not levied.

There is a clear tendency in conventional interlending towards working on a balanced give-and-take basis without paying. And this is not only because the German Interlending Regulations recommend this. The workload involved in issuing invoices, checking payments received or issuing reminders is still seen to be a good reason to dispense with requiring payment. On top of it libraries which issue invoices and receive payment are generally checked by the finance department of their mother institution and are normally not allowed to keep the money and use it for their own purposes.

There are nonetheless libraries which stick to charging (especially in international lending) and issue cumulative invoices to keep the workload as low as possible. Others prefer international reply coupons in order to avoid invoices but want the costs of postage to be paid for.

Although there can be no doubt that interlending is expensive there still is a deep-rooted attitude advocating that the free access to information is a basic and guaranteed right and "free" is often understood as "free of charge". But even strong advocates of such an attitude have their doubts as to whether the state will still be able to pay fully for the future forms of document delivery. And this doubt is not only due to the present economic recession.

There are not only the costs of hard- and software to be covered but more and more the costs of the provision of the information itself. It is in this field that legal and economic problems are still awaiting a solution.

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