field, England: Postgraduate School of Librarianship and Information Science, University of Sheffield, 1971. 314p. £3.50.

Language has always been one of the easier criteria to apply in selecting books and journals for academic libraries. There is a generally understood but largely unmeasured correlation among the language of the publication, its subject, and its actual use. In times of budgetary restraint, therefore, the book selector is often tempted to choose the path of least resistance; i.e., to prefer the language used by the majority in the academic community. Tradition, assumption, and intuition play a major role in this decision-making process as published knowledge on scholarly behavior and use-patterns in libraries has yet to provide interpretable data.

The detailed case study done at the University of Sheffield by Hutchins and others is a significant step toward a better understanding of the practical problem of language in the transfer of scholarly and scientific information and it offers an interesting variety of contact points for thought and action.

Building on earlier work done at the same university, the authors have tried to determine the nature and effects of the "language barrier" between the "very large rapidly increasing quantity in all fields of knowledge in languages other than English" and the efficiency and quality of research and scholarly activity. The possible need for translation services was explored in relation to this barrier. During a two-year period the team interviewed more than half of the population being surveyed—in virtually all representative academic disciplines—with an emphasis on language competence and education, assessment of the importance of research work carried out in various countries in the world, and methods by which the population kept up to date in their fields. This information was collated against a variety of records and analyses of the actual library usage including a full year's borrowing and foreign language interlibrary loan transactions, Xerox copying of foreign language items, and the use inside the library of current foreign language and multilingual journals. To add further dimensions an

analysis was made of all citations in publications and theses produced during one year, and all the library's holdings and budgets with regard to the foreign language material. The results of these surveys have been reproduced in a substantial number of detailed tables showing the language and use relationship in the humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, medicine, and engineering.

The conclusions, of course, are not so surprising: There is indeed a language barrier and there is a great need for access in one form or another to especially French, German, Russian, and Japanese research output. The authors recommend that special courses in technical language knowledge be developed. Despite the low usage in some fields the library should continue to select foreign language materials and the library staff should increase its efforts to promote the use of the available bibliographical and indexing tools. The need for coordinated, competent translation services is clearly identified.

For American university libraries faced with dwindling funds and sharply decreasing university language requirements, this study comes at a most opportune time. Its methodology and the detail with which the data have been arranged can serve as a very useful model for local or national application. We hope that this volume will not only reach the shelves but also the eyes of concerned librarians and university administrators.—*Hendrik Edelman, Cornell University Libraries.*

UNISIST: *Study Report on the Feasibility of a World Science Information System.* United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Council of Scientific Unions. Paris: UNESCO, 1971. 161p. $4.00.

In one triad of scientific investigation—desirability, necessity, and feasibility—it is often only the third component which garners the focus of attention. It is refreshing to note that in this study, however, the elements of desirability and necessity are considered with equal concern.

The results of this four-year inquiry suggest that the needs of the scientific and technological communities can be met more satisfactorily through a flexible network of

information services. The now familiar characteristics of the information problem were all considered, including the increasing rate of information production; the faculty dissemination practices; the inadequate libraries; and the linguistic barriers.

In addition, attention was directed toward the less familiar elements of the information problem such as the shifting requirements of the scientific community; for example, the interdisciplinary approaches to environmental problems necessitating information from not only the classical sciences but also such subjects as sociology and economics. The lag in accommodating these requirements is demonstrated in the present services of journals, indexes, and abstracts. A search, therefore, for more flexible forms is herein attempted.

Although these aspects of the information problem have been recognized and under study intermittently for several years, the investigation tries to unify some of the existing fragmentation by resolving the issues on an international scale. The utilization of the most advanced communication technology is an obvious conclusion in view of the computer's capability to handle speedily large chunks of information as well as its flexible capacity to manipulate. Mechanized systems also create problems in the information arena vis-à-vis compatibility and fragmentation. The added problem of reliance emerges upon machines and their indigene to industrialization which many developing countries lack along with a paucity of infra structures of libraries.

The subject of costs is dealt with knowingly and realistically. An information network has to be more than a luxury for the wealthy, so says the UNISIST Committee. International communication and cooperation are essential elements in a successful information system. Through such a unified effort, reduced costs and more effective information transfer may be expected, according to the investigators. New and emerging patterns of cooperation are also identified, which augurs well toward a feasible world network of scientific information. The job to be done, nonetheless, exceeds the resources of any one or two countries, making cooperation and sharing imperative requirements.

The investigators advanced twenty-two wide-ranging recommendations. They run from the development of basic philosophy of sharing the work and products of information transfer and the on-going experiments aimed at increasing effectiveness, to the establishment of governmental agencies at the national levels in consonance with the principles of UNISIST and the creation of interrelated managerial bodies, one of which would be a permanent secretariat.

It is notable that the study emphasizes that UNISIST is not a radical departure in science information transfer but rather a systematization of international cooperation. Another way to describe the plan is to regard UNISIST as a type of worldwide movement more than an operating system in its own right. In essence then, the concept of UNISIST appears not to be an information system superimposed upon existing services but a cooperative effort of governments and scientific organizations toward approaching solutions in an evolutionary and pragmatic fashion.

As the document itself suggests this is indeed, "a report of major importance to all those concerned with the communication of scientific information."—*Le Moyne W. Anderson, Colorado State University.*

Proceedings of the Second Conference on Federal Information Resources. Washington, D.C. March 30–31, 1971.

This little volume is hardly an appropriate subject for review, since it is in itself a review of the announced subject by a large number of participants. As one of them, a few additional remarks may serve to elaborate the text usefully.

The nearly verbatim record of presentations and comments reveals no essential change in the divergent approaches of those on the donor (government) side or those on the receiver (public) side. The producers (?) of information are plagued by costs and funding problems and the users by frustrating reductions in available resources, while both sides are targets of steadily increasing demand. There are a few noteworthy statements, for the record, if for no other purpose. Milczewski's summary of progress since the first conference,