

INFS 326: COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Lecture 5 – Selection of Information Resources (Part II)

Lecturer: Mrs. Florence O. Entsua-Mensah, DIS
Contact Information: fentsua-mensah@ug.edu.gh



School of Information & Communication
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
Department of Information Studies

Lecture Overview

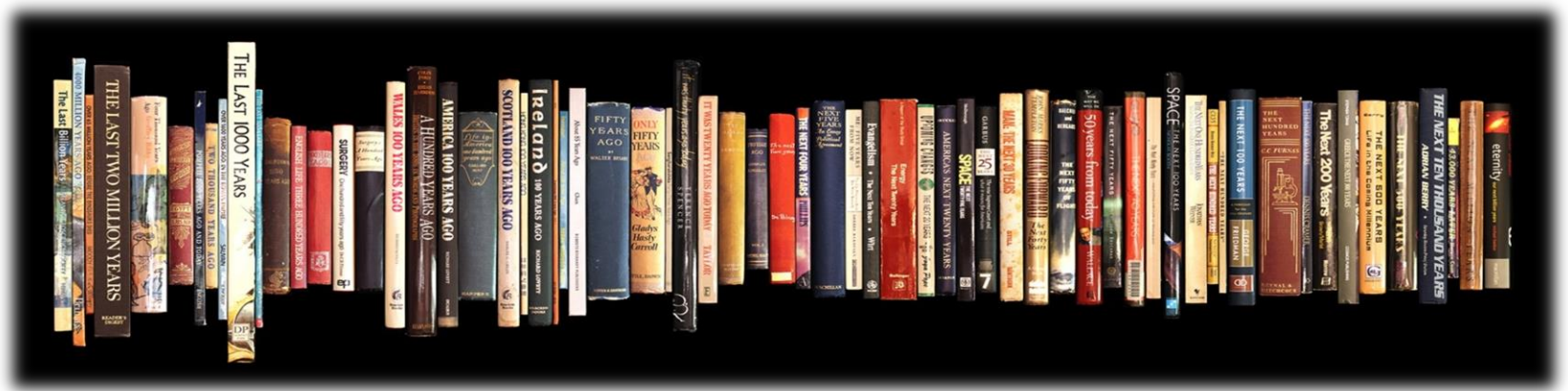
- Today's lecture extends the previous one. It continues the discussion on selection of information resources for the library.
- In this today's class, we will look at some of the tools that can be used to enhance the selection process.
- The lecture will also discuss the challenges associated with the selection process and the ways in which these challenges may be curbed.



Lecture Outline

The key topics to be covered in the session are as follows:

- **Topic One:** Selection aids/tools
- **Topic Two:** Challenges of the Selection Process
- **Topic Three:** Curbing the Challenges associated with the of Selection process



Reading List

Gregory, V. L. (2011) *Collection Development and Management for 21st Century Library Collections*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, pp. 261

Johnson, P. (2009) *Fundamental for Collection Development and Management* 2nd Ed. Chicago American Library Association.

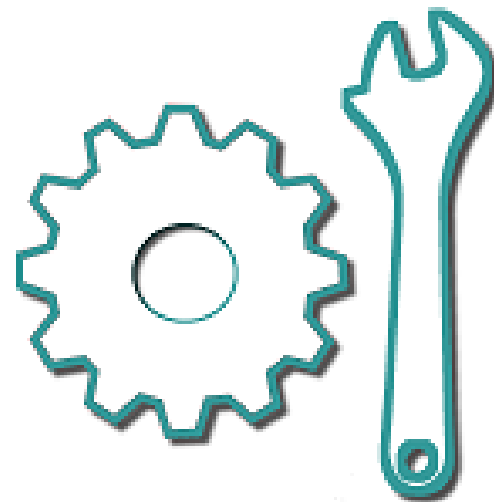


Selection aids/tools



Selection Aids /Tools

- Booklists
- Core lists
- Bibliographies
- Indexes
- Abstracts
- Publisher's catalogues
- Electronic catalogue
- Books Reviews



Booklists

A booklist is a journal listing recent books with brief notes designed to assist the librarians in selection (Vimal, 2014).

- A booklist contains only the list of recommended and best books for purchase.

Core Lists

A list of the best books, periodicals, etc., on a subject or in a discipline, usually compiled as a selection aid for librarians whose responsibilities include collection development (Reitz, 2002).

- Example: Core List of Best Books and Journals in Education by Nancy O'Brien and Emily Fabiano
- Although useful when first published, such lists become outdated within a few years.

Bibliographies

A bibliography is a list of books and periodicals of a specific author or publisher, or on a specific subject.

- It may be issued by a **publisher**, e.g., Longman's, Whitaker's publishers.
- It may also be issued by a **country** by which is called a national bibliography, or it may be by **language** for e.g., French, German.
- Bibliography may be *current or retrospective*.

Current bibliography (1)

Current bibliography lists books that have been published within the week, month or within the year.

- The yearly ones are the weekly and monthly accumulated, eg, of current bibliography includes R.R. Bowker's **publishers records** and Whitaker's-**the bookseller**.

Current bibliography (2)

- Information provided by a bibliography usually include the:
 - name of the author
 - title of the book
 - the publisher
 - place of publication
 - date of publication and price of the book.

Current bibliography (3)

- In addition to these basic information, there may be information about the;
 - **length of the book,**
 - **special features,**
 - **series information,**
 - **ISBN**
 - **sometimes cataloguing information including subject headings.**
- Annual list of current books include
Commutative Books Index (CBI) by H.W. Wilson,
British books in print by Whitaker and books in
print by R.R. Bowker (American Books in Print)

Advantages of current bibliographies:

- They identify new materials as they become available.
- They are particularly useful for large libraries attempting to achieve broader coverage of materials.

Disadvantages of current bibliographies:

- They only provide author searches
- Subject searches are time consuming
- They do not provide a review of the subject content of the document.

Retrospective Bibliographies (1)

A bibliography whose scope is restricted to materials published in the past, sometimes within a specific period of the past (LISW, 2011).

- Retrospective listing of materials are found in National Bibliographies so they are a reliable source of retrospective materials.
- Most countries with the book trade have some forms of National Bibliography.
- Frequency of publications of national bibliography varies from weekly to yearly (annually).

Retrospective Bibliographies (2)

- In some cases, it is issued whenever there is enough materials to warrant issuing one.
- Some of the national bibliographies are based in part upon books received by the country's copyright office, e.g., British National bibliography (BNB), Ghana National Bibliography (GNB).
- The GNB is published every five years; basically because the nations does not have a vibrant publishing industry (Alemna, 2009).

Indexes

An alphabetically arranged list of headings consisting of the personal names, places, and subjects treated in a written work, with page numbers to refer the reader to the point in the text at which information pertaining to the heading is found (Reitz, 2002).

- An index directs a user to sources of material and therefore serves as a good source of selection.
- They are arranged alphabetically.
- Indexes may be by author, subject or language.
- They are usually used for selection of periodicals. An example of index for periodical is Index Medicus.

A brief, objective statement of the content of a written work, to enable the researcher to quickly determine whether reading the entire text might satisfy the specific information need (ODLIS, 2004).

- They give a summary of the contents of the published material.
- By reading the abstracts, the selector may decide whether or not to select the material.
- Abstracts are used very much in the selection of scientific materials in information centres and special libraries.

- They are reliable because some provide the contents and conclusions of the subjects.
- They may be alphabetical by author or subject. Examples include Ghana Science Abstracts, Library and Information Science Abstract (LISA), Political Abstracts and Psychology Abstracts.

Publisher's catalogues

These are list of books and other materials issued for sale by a publisher for a particular year. e.g., Longmans, H.W. Wilson, etc.

- The difference between a publisher's catalogue and bibliography is that a bibliography may be restricted by language or subject whereas publisher's catalogue lists everything issued by the publisher irrespective of language or subject.

- Publisher's catalogue provides all the necessary bibliographic details as well as the price.
- Some of them provide abstracts of the material while some also provide statement of reviews on the material.

Electronic catalogue

- Electronic catalogues are now a popular source of acquisition of library materials.
- Most of the booksellers such as ebay.com and amazon.com have their catalogues online whereby materials can be searched and acquired through the webpage.

Book Reviews - 1

A book review is a form of literary criticism in which a book is analysed based on content, style, and merit (Princeton, 2011).

A book review is an analysis of a book which includes its subject, strengths and weaknesses, and context (Madison, 2017).

- Where there is a buoyant/vibrant publishing industry, you are likely to find an equally strong reviewing system.

Book Reviews - 2

- Book reviews can be categorized into three general areas:
 - Reviews for persons who make their living by buying books, i.e., trade and professional book sellers and libraries.
 - Reviews for subject specialists
 - Reviews for the general public



- Book selectors will use all three types but the greatest use is of the first category.
- Special libraries make the least use of reviews but when reviews are required, the first two categories are used in special libraries.

Challenges of THE Selection PROCESS

PROBLEMS OF SELECTION IN GHANA

Lack of Selection Aids/tools

- This is one of the major problems of selection for libraries in Ghana. It is often difficult to have access to bibliographies, abstracts, indexes, book reviews and other tools that can assist in the selection process.
- Even in areas where these tools are available, they are not often current, thereby making it difficult for the librarian to get the right information regarding the cost of the materials, the currency of the materials, and the place of publication.

- Most librarians in Ghana are operating on limited budgets. Therefore librarians have to be careful in taking decisions on how to allocate funds for the acquisition of their materials.
- It is also interesting to note that while library budgets are reducing, the cost of library materials keep on rising.
- The issue of finance is so important in the selection process that, a librarian may have all the time, the selection tools, and the knowledge to select but when he/she has no money to acquire the materials, it becomes very discouraging and frustrating.

CURBING THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SELECTION PROCESS

Solution to these Problems

- Sometimes the sheer lack of finance discourages the acquisition librarian from going through the selection process.
- The funding problem will be with us for a long time. Therefore librarians in Ghana must find innovative ways of getting their materials after they have been selected.
- These include looking for assistance beyond the government funding, e.g., from Old Students Association, etc. The library may also find ways of marketing some of its services to get money to take care of part of their selection.

Solution to these Problems

- In the case of bibliographic tools, where the librarian does not have access to correct publishers' catalogues, book reviews, abstracts, etc. he/she has to use their own professional judgment or that of a professional colleague.
- Visits to other libraries can also assist the librarian to know what is available on various subjects and this can also enhance the selection.

Summary

- We have seen how the selection process can be enhanced by tools such as indexes, book reviews, abstracts and bibliographies. These tools help to make the work of the acquisition librarian much easier and effective.
- We also deliberated on some of the challenges associated with the selection process and how we can mitigate against them as information professionals.

Activity 5.1

- Identify any five(5) selection aids, and describe in detail how each will aid you to select relevant information resources for the children's section of a named public library.

References

Gregory, V. L. (2011) *Collection Development and Management for 21st Century Library Collections*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, pp. 261

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Reitz, J. M. (2002). ODLIS: Online Dictionary of Library and Information Science.