ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

For Academic Purposes

Edited by

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2 Using the Library I

GETTING PREPARED

You would realize at this point that it is expedient for every student to learn how to use the library. The library renders information services that can help you to achieve academic excellence. In fact, studies conducted on the use of the library by students have shown that there is a correlation between the use of the library and the academic achievement of students. What then is the library all about and how can you benefit from the services, facilities and resources it offers? This chapter will attempt to provide information on the various issues enumerated above.

The word library is derived from the Latin word 'liber', meaning "book". Library has been in existence even before man discovered book as a medium for recording information. In ancient times, before the discovery of book, the media like clay tablets, papyruses, and scrolls used for writing were housed in repositories later known as libraries. Library was therefore seen as a repository where recorded information was kept. According to *Encyclopedia Americana,* library today connotes a body of recorded information brought together for a specific purpose, organized

for use, and made available to users. Library is thus described both as a collection of information materials, and the place where the materials are kept for consultation. The person who makes the stored information accessible to users is referred to as the librarian. It must be noticed that a collection of information resources like books in a room without a systematic organization to ease retrieval does not make a library.

Library is a repository for various forms of recorded information which may be in print and non-print format. Libraries now contain printed materials like books, periodicals, reference materials, manuscripts, magazines, theses, gazettes etc. Other non-printed materials like microforms, film, magnetic tapes, slides, videotapes, and data stored in electronic media like discs, CD-ROMs, can also be found in the Library. Libraries, regardless of their types, have three functions viz: the collection and preservation of information, the organization of information, and the dissemination of stored information to users. The library collections in whatever form either in print or non-print are used for learning, teaching, research, and recreational purposes. The library, to a researcher, is the knowledge hub of the universe (Maner, 1996).

Electronic Library

Information Technology (IT) is a new phenomenon. Its advent has changed the whole concept of library. In a traditional library, a user needs to physically visit the library to be able to browse, read or borrow the materials. The electronic library has its information recorded on electronic media and can only be accessed electronically. Computer Network Worldwide known as Internet has provided great potentials for information sharing worldwide. The World Wide Web (WWW) which is a part or a subset of internet has made the whole world a global village that information is no longer restricted to an isolated building. Websites on Internet can be visited with the appropriate search engines from any location to retrieve information. The electronic or digital library has provided a solution to the paucity of current information in books and journals being experienced in developing countries and has made accessibility of information to any user possible irrespective of his or her location. A library user needs not be localized before current information can be retrieved on the internet.

Types of Library

Various forms of library are established to serve the varying information needs and interests of readers in the society. The common ones that can be seen in any country include:

i. **Academic libraries**: These are libraries of academic institutions like those of Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. These libraries are established with the objective of serving the staff and students in the institutions to which they are attached. They support all academic programmes offered in the institutions.

ii. **Special Libraries:** The purpose of establishing these libraries is to cater for the information needs of specific classes of users. The resources of the libraries cover a particular subject or group of subjects. They have a definable subject interest and the information supplied is up-to-date and is mainly meant for research purposes. Their collections, therefore, emphasize primary sources of information like journal articles, research repots, conference proceedings and periodicals. Some libraries also include books and some non-print materials. Examples include the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) library, The Federal Institute for Industrial Research, Oshodi, Central Bank of Nigeria Library, Chevron library etc.

iii. **Public Libraries**. These libraries are owned by the government. They cater for the social, educational and recreational needs of the community. The library houses all forms of materials useful for different categories of people in the society – the children, adult, literate and illiterate. Information is often repackaged in this library using audio-visual materials to render information services to the illiterate class. National, State and Local Government libraries are examples of public libraries in Nigeria. The government is responsible for the funding of these libraries.

iv. **The School Libraries**: These are libraries attached to schools. In this group are primary and secondary school libraries. The Libraries are to serve the educational needs of the pupils and their teachers. The resources in the library include: books, reference materials like the Dictionary, Encyclopedia, Almanacs, Atlas, Yearbooks,

Magazines, Newspapers, fictions, visual materials etc. Abadina Media Resources Centre in U.I is an example of school library.

v. **National Libraries**: This is the major archives of all printed materials and some non-print materials produced within a country. It is the library that is supposed to coordinate the activities of other libraries in a country. National libraries are established to serve as the depository of a nation. Being the nation's depository centre, they are responsible for receiving all copy right publications within the country.

Fayose (2000) gives the functions of the National Libraries as follows:

- to act as the legal depository and bibliographic centres of the nation

- to give advice on library development or organization to any agency of the Federal, State or local government

- to have responsibility for the National Bibliography and development of bibliographic services.

The National Library of Nigeria with its headquarters in Abuja is saddled with the responsibility of performing a fatherly role to other types of libraries in the nation. It issues the International Standard Book Number, ISBN, to publishers and authors of books. It is also responsible for developing and upholding the national library policy.

Exercise 1

1. Library can be described as ...Collection......... of information materials. It can also be referred to as a.....place........ for keeping information materials.

2. The Library that coordinates the activities of other libraries and responsible for issuing International Standard Book Number (ISBN) for all books published in the country is called......NLN.............

3. List the three functions of the library.

The University of Ibadan Library

The University of Ibadan Library comprises many libraries of which the Kenneth Dike Library is the centre in the library system. The Kenneth Dike Library is the main building of the libraries. There are other 27 branch/faculty libraries and departmental reading rooms located in various faculties and departments for the use of the students and the faculty members. The largest of these branch libraries is the one located at University College Hospital (UCH) for the use of medical staff and students. It is named E. Latunde Odeku Medical Library.

The Library started in a humble way in a temporary wooden block in 1948, the same year that the University was established. It took off with 12,000 volumes and 300 current journals on open access. Today, the library contains about 500,000 volumes and receives 6,000 separate journals and other serials. The library materials, which are on open-access as well as in closed collections, are shelved in the main library and departmental libraries for circulation and consultations. The collections are developed to support the information needs of the various faculties in the University, especially learning and research purposes. The students and the lecturers are free to make use of the library stocks that are relevant to their needs in any of the libraries after they have been duly registered as bonafide users of the library. Access to the various documents which cover all the subject disciplines taught in the university are made possible to users through the catalogues in the libraries. The catalogues serve as index to the library holdings. The materials acquired in the library up till December 1974 were catalogued for easy arrangement and location, by using Bliss Bibliographic Classification Scheme while the materials from January 1975 were classified, using the Library of Congress Classification Scheme.

The physical layout and the organization of the library materials

The library is strategically located at the centre of the campus to ease accessibility from every direction on the campus. It is a four – floor storey building with a ground floor and an adjacent structure constructed to serve as the research library.

The main building houses the Undergraduate Collections and reading rooms, while the adjacent building is meant for the use of senior staff, research students, and other users with special permission. The ground

floor consists of the general reading room, American Studies Collection Room, the Catalogue Hall, the Circulation Desk, CD-ROM Literatures search work station. The general reading room houses the undergraduate reference collections, newly acquired books and journals which are on display from time to time, university calendars and prospectuses. The room is mainly for consultation and reading. The American Studies collection room houses research materials from the United States Government. The collections are meant for the use of those who would like to enrich their knowledge of American life and institutions.

The first floor of the library has two wings directly opposite each other. There is the East wing which houses collections (books) classified by Library of Congress (LC) classification Scheme. Books arranged on shelves in this section of the library cover Arts and Social Sciences disciplines. At the West wing of the first floor are books on the same subject background as in the East wing but they are classified by Bliss Classification Scheme. Books here are those acquired before 1975. The books in the East wing are arranged on the shelves according to their classification number by alphabetical notations: A-H (except CC & GN), J, K, M, P). The books in the West wing are arranged by the notations: A-AJ, A1, DQ, DR, DT, J, K, L-O (except LA) using Bliss Classification Scheme.

The second floor of the library also has the East and the West wings which are directly opposite each other. The East wing has books classified with Bliss Classification Scheme. Books on Arts, Social Sciences, can also be located here as in the first floor. Their location marks however start with alphabetical notations: P-T, W-VYYY, W-YH – using Bliss. The West wing houses books classified by both Bliss and LC Classification Schemes. Books on Literature and Education found here are classified using Bliss with letters HJ-HL, J, YI, YY. Books on Education and Librarianship acquired from 1975 to date are classified using LC classification Scheme. Such books are notated with letters, L and Z respectively.

The third floor of the library has collections on Science, Technology, Pre-clinical Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Naval Science, Military Science, Anthropology, Archaeology, Architecture, Fine Arts. The East wing of the floor houses materials on the listed disciplines and they are classified with letters CC, GN, N, Q, R, T, U, V. On the West wing of the third floor is located the University Librarian's office.

The fourth floor has both East and West wings as it is in the first and second floors. Books on Agriculture, Forestry, Science, Technology, Pre-Clinical Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Veterinary Medicine are shelved on the East wing using Bliss Classification Scheme. Such books have letters: A-K, AM-AZ, B, C, D-DP, DU-DY, E-G, H, LA, U, V-VUZ as their notations. All these are very old collections acquired before 1975. On the same wing are also found books on Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine acquired from 1975 to date. These are classified using LC classification schemes and they bear alphabet "S". The West wing of the fourth floor houses Arabic, Maps and Manuscripts collections. It must be noted that at present, all the books in the East wing of the fourth floor have been relocated and the shelves dismantled to prepare the floor for the proposed National University Commission Virtual Library Project which will soon take off as planned by the Federal Government of Nigeria.

Reference Section

The reference section of the library is regarded as the research library which is built adjacent to the main building of the library. It houses the reference and special collections. The reference collections which include Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Almanacs, Bibliographies, Atlases, etc are on open access and can be consulted but not borrowed by the users. The materials are classified and arranged by both Bliss and LC Classification Schemes. The special collections consist of resources like theses, Africana collections, Publication Ordinance Collections, and Rare Works. They are in closed access i.e they are not arranged on shelves in the reading area as the other materials, but are kept inside the room. They can only be accessed after users have made requests for them at the desk to be retrieved by the library staff for consultation and use. Admittance into the research library is strictly restricted to post graduate students and researchers only.

At the ground floor of the research library is located the serial section. It houses the periodicals, which consist of resources like journals, magazines, newspapers. They are all for research purposes.

The Reprographic section is located very close to the Serial Section at the ground floor of the Research Library. It provides photocopying services to the users of the library. The bindery is located at the basement of the Research Library building.

Departments and Services

The library is established to provide services to its clientele – staff and students. The various tasks and operations in the library have been identified and similar activities have been grouped together and these have formed a basis for departmentalization of the library. The sections responsible for the technical duties are called Technical Services Division and we have the Cataloguing, the Serials, the Bindery, the Reprographic departments in this division. The Technical division is headed by the Deputy University Librarian (Technical Services). Each of the departments however has its head who is directly responsible to the deputy Librarian (Technical Services).

The Readers Services division works directly with the public. This division ensures that the library users get access to the library materials. Under this divisions are the Circulation, the Reference, the Bibliographic sections and the Faculty/Departmental libraries. The Deputy University Librarian (Readers Services) is the head of this section.

The Collection Development division is responsible for the development of the library resources. Its function is to acquire the library materials. Under this division are the Gifts and Exchange, and Ordering departments. The Division is headed by the Collection Development Librarian.

The newly established Unit in the library which is directly in charge of the Information Technology is the Computer Application Unit. The section is responsible for the computerization of the library. It is being headed by a Systems Librarian.

Exercise II

1. Why does the University Library acquire books and periodical(s)?

2. Give a brief description of the physical layout of the University Library.

3. Identify the various sections of the library and state their functions.

Library Administration
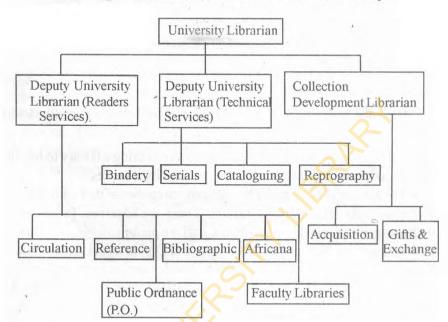
Libraries comprise three components, viz:

- • physical facility or a group of facilities to house the activities of the library;
- • a collection of resources;
- • and personnel to collect and organize the resources and to retrieve information needed by users.

Of the three components, only the personnel can bring a library to life and make it a dynamic, vital force for the community it serves.

The Kenneth Dike Library has different categories of staff with different levels and educational backgrounds. There are librarians (academics) with professional qualifications. Some staff are para-professionals (Library Officers) with professional qualifications and Diplomas in Library studies. There are also Library Assistants who render various services in their different departments. Other categories of staff are the typists, the drivers, the porters and the clerks. These are found at the bottom level of management. The University Librarian is the manager, the director of the affairs of the library. He and his management committee occupy the upper level of management, while the heads of units form the middle level of management and the other staff who execute instructions from the heads of units are at the bottom level of management.

Organizational Chart of the Library

The organizational chart is the graphic presentation of the organizational structure of the library. It shows how the departments are tied together by lines of authority. The chart below shows the organizational structure in a graphic format.

The Organization Chart of Kenneth Dike Library.

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │ University Librarian │
                    └─────────────────────┘
     ┌───────────────────┬───────────────────────┐
┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐
│Deputy        │  │Deputy        │  │Collection        │
│University    │  │University    │  │Development       │
│Librarian     │  │Librarian     │  │Librarian         │
│(Readers      │  │(Technical    │  │                  │
│Services)     │  │Services)     │  │                  │
└──────────────┘  └──────────────┘  └──────────────────┘
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| Bindery | Serials | Cataloguing | Reprography |

| Acquisition | Gifts & Exchange |

| Circulation | Reference | Bibliographic | Africana |

| Public Ordnance (P.O.) | Faculty Libraries |

Information Resources in Kenneth Dike Library

The collections of the library, which consists of materials; print and non-print, are acquired, organized and made available for reading and consultations. Generally speaking, the materials can be grouped according to formats. When the information is printed on paper, the resources become a printed material. In this class are books, periodicals, maps, atlases, dictionaries, encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers etc. Periodicals or serials come at regular intervals and are meant to continue indefinitely. Examples are journals, magazines, newspapers. Non-printed materials are those in electronic format and audio visual materials. These are stored on electronic media, discs, microfilms, CD-ROM, audio tapes, video tapes etc.

The library has acquired some Information Communication Technology (ICT) formats which have stemmed up the tide of communication within and outside the library. Through its Local Area Network (LAN), information on CD-ROM can be accessed at 4 workstations in the library

where computer literature search can be carried out. The staff in the library can browse the Internet to source for information for research purposes. E-mail facilities are available to send and receive mails. Other IT formats that are available in the library for use include telephone, and facsimile, etc.

Reference Collections

Reference collections in the library are very important information resources for research purposes. They are acquired, organized and stored in the research section of the library as tools for research work. They are different from other collections because of certain characteristics, which are enumerated below:

- They contain information on several subjects and broad in scope i.e multidisciplinary in nature
- Reference books are not for borrowing. They can only be consulted in the library.
- Their organization allows for quick and easy usage. For example, dictionaries, encyclopedias, bibliographies, directories are arranged alphabetically while some have items treated in them chronologically arranged.
- They usually have indexes and cross references.
- Their revision is done regularly for up-dating.
- Reference books are not to be read from cover to cover.
  Reference resources include Dictionaries, Abstracts, Almanacs, Atlases, Yearbooks, Encyclopedias, Handbooks, Gazetters, Biographies, Directories, Maps, and Atlases, Manuals, Guides.

Exercise III

1. Mention the different categories of library staff.
2. Itemise the various information resources that a library should stock.
3. (a) What are reference collections?
(b) State 4 characteristics of reference collections.
4. Mention the classification schemes used to classify information materials in the University library.

Conclusion

Having gone through this chapter, you must have realized the immense importance of the library, particularly to students and researchers. It is necessary for you therefore to be well familiar with the library and the services it provides. It is equally important that you learn how to utilize the services that the library provides.

Application

1. a. What do you understand by the word library?

    b. List the various resources that a University library can store.

2. Differentiate between an academic library and a school library.

3. What is a serial publication?

4. Explain briefly the organizational structure of Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan.

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