

Information resources

Text objective:

In this module you will get acquainted with document types which may help you solve problems, you will learn to distinguish among primary, secondary and tertiary information resources.

Keywords:

information resource, information source, document, text documents, visual documents, audio documents, audiovisual documents, electronic documents, primary information resources (sources), secondary resources, tertiary resources

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1. MODULE INTRODUCTION

With each of the below mentioned document, try to imagine if and how you could make use of it. i.e. situations in which you may search for information in encyclopaedias and dictionaries, or for articles in scientific magazines, etc.

2. INFORMATION RESOURCES AND THEIR DIVISION

Key concepts

Information source, information resource - an information object which contains available information corresponding to the information needs of the user. An information source may be in a printed, audio, visual or electronic form (including sources available online).

Document - an information resource consisting of a carrier and a set of information fixed on the carrier; it serves to transfer data across time and space...

Documents can be divided according to various criteria:

- according to the way of recording information (written/text, visual, audio, audiovisual, machine-readable),
- according to the document carrier (printed, electronic, micrographic),
- according to the originality of their content (primary, secondary, tertiary),
- according to their continuity (periodical and non-periodical),
- according to the level of publication (published, unpublished, in-house) .



2.1 DIVISION OF DOCUMENTS ACCORDING TO THE WAY OF RECORDING INFORMATION

2.1.1 TEXT DOCUMENTS

Text documents are written documents made up with verbally expressed information. We distinguish among the following types.

2.1.1.1 Book publications

MONOGRAPHY

A non-serial publication which deals with one usually closely defined topic in a systematic, exhaustive and detailed manner.

TEXTBOOK

A publication with a goal to educate; it gives knowledge of a certain field, it is directed at and adequate for a certain age group, it is comprehensible, illustrative, intended for various grades of study.

UNIVERSITY TEXTBOOKS

Temporary study texts for universities.

ANTHOLOGY

Usually a non-periodical publication which mostly comprises individual works by various authors, compiled under a collective title.

REFERENCE BOOK

A document enabling quick and effective access to information, knowledge etc. based on the demonstration of basic knowledge of a certain scientific field or area of activity; We divide them into encyclopaedias and dictionaries.

The following types also belong in this group: keys, guide books, catalogues, tables, instruction books, atlases, etc.

2. 1. 1. 2 Periodicals

Documents published successively in individual issues sharing a collective title, a marker of succession (e.g. numbering), uniform design and type of content; they are published at regular intervals with the aim at continuance. Among the so-called *real periodicals* (published at the interval of one day to six months) are:



- newspapers,
- magazines,
- periodical anthologies and
- almanacs.

2. 1. 1. 3 Special text documents

Documents belonging in this group are not published in the common way, that is, they do not go through the usual publishing stage; they are found in special institutions and databases. Such documents are sometimes called *grey literature* or *half-published literature*. The following document types belong in this group:

PATENT DOCUMENTS

Descriptions of inventions, discoveries, improvement proposals, trademarks, utility models and industrial designs (e.g. patents, authorship certificates, improvement licenses);

NORMATIVE DOCUMENTS

Documents containing certain criteria for materials, products, procedures and services, so that they answer a given purpose; they are divided according to their sphere of action, content, and extent of obligation. This group comprises technical standards and legal rules (codes, regulations...)

TRADE PUBLICATIONS

Their function is to promote, inform and instruct with the aim at selling a product, service or activity (e.g. company monographies, periodicals, booklets, catalogues, guidelines, price lists, annual reports).

SCIENTIFIC-QUALIFICATION PAPERS

Diploma theses, dissertation theses and inaugural dissertations (such works serve as the basis for granting an academic degree). Qualification papers of other universities may be searched for via Theses.cz or in digital repositories of individual universities.

RESEARCH REPORTS

They present the results of a research assignment. Full texts can be found in scientific databases, on professional websites of individual researchers, etc.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

They are frequently found on the website of a particular conference or in libraries.

2.1.2 VISUAL DOCUMENTS

Visual documents are produced by means of displays or illustrations, which visualize the communicated content either directly or via certain signs; they are sometimes complemented with accompanying texts.



This type includes:

Information Literacy

- graphics (original graphics such as woodcuts, and printed graphics such as posters), photographic documents,

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- cartographic materials,
- drawings,
- diagrams,
- illustrations, etc.

Selection of sources from among visual documents:

- <http://www.gallery-worldwide.com>
- <http://help.oldmapsonline.org>
- <http://www.corbisimages.com>
- <http://search.creativecommons.org>

2. 1. 3 AUDIO DOCUMENTS



Audio documents are produced via acoustically communicated audiorecordings. They are recorded on various media (gramophone records, cassettes etc., or in various digital formats such as MP3 etc.). You may also borrow audio documents from mediatheques or audio libraries (or from audio departments of libraries).

HINT!

Selection of sources from among audio documents. Audiobooks are more and more popular. You will find more information e.g. on the website of a Czech project Audioknihy.net.

2. 1. 4 AUDIOVISUAL DOCUMENTS

Audiovisual documents record video and sound at the same time with the advantages of comprehensibility, clarity, attraction, emotional effect and positive influence upon memory. Many people can perceive them at the same time and in the same space.

Among AV documents are:

*films (full-length, short),
trailers,
teasers,
instruction and educational films and
videos,
television programmes,
productions,
broadcasting and event recordings (e.g.
intelligence, sports),*

*advertisements,
videogames,
video clips,
projection graphics...,
and also combined multimedia works, as
long as they contain a considerable
audiovisual component.*

2.1.5 ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS

Electronic documents do not differ from traditional documents with regard to content; what is different is their formal characteristics, above all their *digital way of information recording*, due to which content is less dependent on the medium. Technical means are needed to view the content. Among the advantages of electronic documents is the possibility of more operative work, easier updates, availability, duplication, space saving etc. Disadvantages include e.g. varied stability or the above-mentioned ease of duplication regarding copyright issues... etc.

What is digitization?

Digitization is a process during which information recorded on an analogue medium is converted into a digital (electronic) form. Information form may be text, visual, audio or all combined. Information on an analogue medium is thus e.g. a text in a book, an audiorecording on a cassette, a film on a videotape, a picture in a photograph, a score on a paper, a picture on a slide, a technical drawing etc. (M. Krčál)

3. MODULE SUMMARY

In the first section of the module we got acquainted with the basic *types of information resources regarding the ways of content recording*. In the second section we looked at information resources in terms of the *originality of information contained in them*.

Points to remember:

- Upon determining whether a resource is primary, secondary or tertiary, the context in which you look at the given resource is what matters.
- Documents in their traditional forms are found in libraries and other similar institutions. Use library catalogues in the search for them.
- Full-text versions of electronic documents available via various networks are found in full-text databases, digital libraries, repositories and archives. As for documents freely available online, always check their quality.
- Bibliography sources do not contain full texts; they contain bibliographic entries which will help you find documents relevant to your topic.