Electronic information sources II.
Scientific licensed databases for MU

In this module you will learn about a new EIS category, which is **databases of professional information**. You will learn to what licensed databases you have access as Masaryk University students, where to find them and how to work with them.

Module objective:

- to acquaint you with databases of professional information

- to teach you where to find them

- to teach you to search in databases of professional information

- to teach you to use tools for the work with EIS

Basic terms

Electronic information source (EIS) – an information source stored in electronic form...

Database – a system the basic elements of which are data and a program for the work with such data. The data content is made up of structured data stored in a computer memory or on a memory medium.

Impact factor – the average number of quotes presented by a journal in one year, in proportion to articles published by the journal in the previous two years. It is important for example in scientific work evaluation.

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

In this module we will deal with the so-called databases of professional information, i.e. commercial licensed databases containing high-quality, verified scientific information, either in the form of full-text documents, articles etc. or in the form of bibliographic entries (often with abstracts). We will focus on the most important databases available to you within paid licensed sources at MU. An advantage of these databases is their **quality guarantee** and **content credibility**. They are an important and necessary source of information. Use these valuable sources, which are available to you during your studies.

2. DATABASE DEFINITION

We will start with a database definition. *A **database** (data base, databank, database system) is a **system** intended for the shaping of objects and relations of the real world (including abstract and fictitious objects and relations) via digital data arranged in such a way that they can be effectively manipulated, i.e. quickly found, uploaded into a memory, processed - visualised; it should also be possible to add new or upgrade existing data, carry on mathematical calculations, arrange data into views and sets etc.*

*According to the type of data, we distinguish among the following **databases**:*

- ***text** (**full-text, bibliographic, reference, factual**),*
- *numeric,*
- *visual,*
- *multimedia.*

3. DATABASE TYPES AND EXAMPLES

While selecting a suitable information source, you will depend on the concrete **topic** to which you will search information (you will choose a suitable *subject* or *multi-subject database* accordingly); it will also depend on whether you need **full texts (a full-text database)** or **bibliographic entries** (*a bibliographic-abstract database*), or whether you search for basic information in encyclopaedias or dictionaries.

3.1 BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES

The so-called bibliographic or bibliographic-abstract databases are a *secondary* information source; they do not contain full texts, only **bibliographic entries** on publications (above all articles, anthology contributions) often accompanied with **abstracts**.

Web of Science – a quotation and bibliographic journal database covering natural and social sciences and arts. The journal quality is measured by means of the so-called "impact factor".

SCOPUS - a quotation and abstract database; it includes reviewed journals from the field of natural, social and engineering sciences and medicine, and focuses on European production.

3.2 REFERENCE AND FACTUAL DATABASES

Factual databases contain **factual (i.e. concrete) data**. Such data may be textual or numeric information, statistics. Among electronic reference sources are encyclopaedias, dictionaries and other basic reference books.

Oxford Art Online – a collection of reference works from the field of fine arts

Gale e-books – electronic encyclopaedias and books from the field of education, law, business etc.

3.3 FULL-TEXT DATABASES

Full-text databases contain **full texts of primary documents**, e.g. journals, books, dissertations, newspapers, conference anthologies etc.

3.4 SOURCES WITH MULTIMEDIA AND VISUAL CONTENT

Electronic information sources containing visual, audio or multimedia documents are important for a number of fields. In practice you will often see the so-called **combined (mixed) databases** which may contain both bibliographic entries and full texts, textual and visual files etc.

4. LICENSED ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SOURCES AT MU

You will find a list of all licensed sources supported by Masaryk University in one user-friendly environment, which is **Portal of electronic information sources of MU**.

As MU students, you may **access** it from all computers connected **to the university network muni.cz**. If you need to work with EIS on a computer outside the MU network, for example at home, you may use **remote connection** technologies, i.e. VPN, proxy or EZproxy.

4.1 EXAMPLES OF MULTI-SUBJECT DATABASES

Masaryk University enables access (via EIS portal) to several large **multi-subject databases** which you should not miss.

4.1.1 EBSCO

EBSCO is a huge **multi-subject** journal database (platform) which enables access to minor databases. MU has access to approx. 12,000 journal titles with full texts of articles, and to several subject-specific bibliographic and abstract databases.

4.1.2 PROQUEST CENTRAL

ProQuest Central is the largest **multi-subject** source, enabling access to more than 12,600 documents, out of which nearly 10,000 are full texts. It contains full texts of **journals, dissertations, newspapers, market reports, company and industry profiles** etc.; it is the successor of the database ProQuest 5000 International.

4.1.3 JSTOR (Journal Storage)

JSTOR is a database of **digitized full texts of scientific journals**. The database contains journals from the field of arts, economics, and social and natural sciences. Digital versions of journals are available **from the beginning of publishing** (the first issue) up to the present day.

MU has purchased access to 5 collections: Arts and Science I collection, Arts and Science II collection, Arts and Science III collection, Arts and Science IV collection, Business II .

4.1.4 SCIENCE DIRECT

By means of the **Science Direct** database, you have access to electronic versions of scientific journals issued by the **Elsevier** publishing house; these journals cover the field of natural sciences, medicine, mathematics, information and computer science, engineering, economics, management, psychology, social sciences etc.

Points to think about

While working with multi-subject databases, it is advisable to specify your search at the beginning and select suitable bases. A precise formulation of your query is also very important, or else you might get too many entries.

Hint! Remember that databases of professional information are licensed sources and are intended for your personal use only. The respective text notifies you of this fact directly on the homepage of EIS portal.

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5. SERVICES AND TOOLS FOR THE WORK WITH MU ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SOURCES

In the following chapters we would like to acquaint you with important tools which may facilitate your search in the MU electronic information sources.

5.1 METALIB AT MU

MetaLib (http://metalib.muni.cz) is a **meta-search system** enabling a **parallel search** in the MU electronic information sources. Search results corresponding with your query will show **in one interface**, and you can then work with them further. MetaLib is available at.

Practical example Try to find documents relating to *gandhara art* in MetaLib. The term may have the form of *gandharan art* or *gandhara art*. Use both forms in your search query. Connect them with the oerator OR, since you want to find documents. You can also try to put the query as follows: *(gandharan OR gandhara) AND art* or "*gandhara? art*". Compare your search results.

5.2   ⊚   S.F.X.

S.F.X. ("Special Effects") is a service/technology determining the availability of a document full text. It provides the connection of bibliographic sources and full-text sources, as well as the MU union catalogue. It is of great help while searching for document full texts. **Hint!** If you come across the SFX service icon while searching for full texts of articles, books and other sources, you can click on it and ask about the availability of a full text (or at least an abstract) for MU.

Practical example

In the bibliographic and quotation database SCOPUS we have found an entry of the article *At the origin of Gandharan Art: the contribution of the Isido Italián archaeological mission in the Swat Valley Pakistan.* By clicking on the SFX icon ⊚ we will access the full text which is available in the Academic Search Complete database (within the EBSCO platform).

5.3 ELECTRONIC JOURNALS PORTAL AT MU

Electronic journals portal at MU enables access to a uniform database of electronic journals available at MU. If you are searching for a particular journal title, there is no need to search through every database separately. **Practical example**: Try to find e.g. the journal *Modern philology* at the Electronic journals portal at MU. You may choose to search by the title beginning (*Begins with*) or by entering words the journal title should contain (*Contains*). After clicking on the **SFX** icon next to the journal title you will see that the journal *Modern philology* is available via *EBSCO*, *JSTOR* and the *MU union catalogue*. The service will redirect you to the title in the selected source.

6. SUMMARY

In this module you became acquainted with the concept of database, and learned to distinguish among the different types of scientific databases. You had a look at the basic multi-subject databases of professional information available at MU. You saw concrete examples of searching in such databases, and again you found out that different databases may have different interfaces and search functions. You also became acquainted with upgraded services and tools you may use while working with the MU electronic information sources, and with further education in the field of EIS offered by MU.