

February 2010

People Profile: Zahir Yahiaoui

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Recommended Citation

(2010) "People Profile: Zahir Yahiaoui," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 22: Iss. 1, Article 18.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5848>

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Use of Conspectus Outside America

This methodology of evaluation is still used outside America. The following examples concern its use in Europe in English countries as well as in France.

1 – Conspectus in Scotland:

The use of Conspectus by the **Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL)** began in 1987. The **Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED)** adapted Conspectus to electronic environment in 2000. They assign subject strength levels by self assessment. The search for terms in a category within hierarchical organization: (division, categories and subjects) can allow the user to increase his recall by using Boolean OR relationship. Up to 2005, the conspectus takes into account the new environment of I.E. that is the result of the activities of the **Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)** that support research and high education and include resources of all types [Dunsire, 2006].

2 – Conspectus in France:

The **Library of Fresnes** applied Conspectus to its collections. In 2001 it evaluated the division of philosophy describing either the collections or the users. The method is used afterwards to the collection of psychology. The evaluation consists of setting objectives to the categories such as psychoanalysis, family education, child psychology, sensorial perception, and applied psychology. It divides also its users to five classes: first: 0 to 13 years old, second: 14 to 19, third: 20 to 24, fourth: 25 to 54, and fifth: up to 54. The analysis is conducted during a period of five years from 2002 until 2006. The collection has been evaluated through the parameter of circulation. As an example we choose the category of child psychology. This objective matches student needs at the bachelor's level in university. As a result, the class of 20 to 24 year olds should be more interested and then should borrow more books, whereas the evaluation showed that the class of 25 to 54 year olds is the great borrower. They conclude that the collection or the objective is not fitted to the users [Giappiconi, 2006].

Conclusion

The Conspectus approach helped us to identify strengths and weaknesses, improve our collection, and also make these recommendations for librarians across Algeria:

- Develop objective standards to evaluate the collection at a given university for analyzing the existing collection strength, the current collecting intensity, and teaching objectives for the various disciplines.
- Develop a Conspectus handbook specific to Algeria.
- Compile a union list of all publications at the national level in the Arab world, in France, U.S.A. and other countries that use Arabic, French, or even English.
- Push for the installation of experts at the national ministry level to develop lists available to university libraries.

The values of the Conspectus for Algeria and other countries are various. List checking is among them. In the fields of Humanities, Social

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BORN & LIVED: Bejaia.

EARLY LIFE: Bejaia.

FAMILY: Married, one daughter (07), one son (03).

EDUCATION: License (psychology) **University of Constantine**; High Diploma (library science) **University of Algiers**; Master (library science) **University of Algiers**.

FIRST JOB: As a teacher in high school.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Teacher in high school 1986; Administrator 1991-2004; and librarian 2004 to present.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Read, write and watch T.V. with my family

FAVOURITE BOOKS: Algerian literature, librarian, and psychological books.

PHILOSOPHY: The creed on labour.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Online catalogue; specification project on acquisitions.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Write a thesis on Conspectus.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Electronic information shall reach the world of libraries even in remote and poor countries. 🌍



Sciences, and Law, the lists should be developed specifically for the country in question. They might be extended to all Arabic cultures in the subjects of Arabic language and social sciences. It is obvious that list checking in fundamental sciences and techniques should be available to all countries all over the world, making differences between countries using French, English, German or Spanish as primary language. English can be used as foreign language in the level 3b and upper for describing the code S for all countries using languages like French, Spanish, German and other languages. For countries using English as a primary language, a foreign language appropriate to the discipline should be chosen. For example, the German language can be rich in physics, French in economics etc. When in doubt, librarians can defer to professors in the chosen disciplines.

The use of bibliographic databases such as **Electre** for French publications and **Dawson** for English publications is of great interest to indicate the depth codes of books. Using benchmarking methods between libraries inside one country or inside a network of libraries, the means of them can serve as a reference or a standard. For periodicals, we use the *Journal Citation Report* to evaluate pertinent ones. Periodicals that have an impact factor can be considered as suitable to the research level (doctorate).

Furthermore, the Conspectus has benefits for evaluating the acquisition level for electronic resources, which are very exhaustive. They include local and remote databases, as well as free and costly databases. As always, librarians should confer with professors in those disciplines.

On the other hand, when a portion of a collection is identified as a point of weakness, the results may indicate a need to improve human resources in those areas. Revealed weaknesses may underscore the need for a management review. More research on this method is required, of course, but our preliminary findings indicate a certain robustness in this method for identifying weaknesses in a collection's holdings. We recommend its use in other libraries and look forward to the reporting of those results.

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