

COURSE 3. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH



COURSE OUTLINE

Definitions

Document types and search resources

Conducting documentary research

DEFINITIONS

1. DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH (DR)

- ✓ Documentary research is an **intellectual process** whose aim is to **find and analyze** documents on a given subject.
- ✓ This is the set of steps involved in **searching for, identifying** and finding **documents** (books and articles) relating to a subject, by developing a research **strategy**.
- ✓ It consists of **collecting** the information needed to understand the study.

DEFINITIONS

2. DOCUMENT

According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), a *document* is defined as “a set consisting of a medium and information, generally recorded in a permanent manner, and capable of being read by both humans and machines (computers, scanners, software, servers, and artificial intelligence systems).”

The document has two main functions



Information retention

Communicating information.

The archive: It is a specialized branch of documentation responsible for storing and preserving documents.

DEFINITIONS

3. INFORMATION

It's the dissemination of news and the transmission of knowledge. A distinction is necessarily made between a sender (the one who publishes or produces information) and a receiver (the one who consults or reads the information).

It can appear in many formats: **paper, microform, audiovisual, digital.**

- **Paper:** printed reports, books, laboratory notebooks, or handwritten notes.
- **Microform:** microfilm or microfiche copies of archival documents or newspapers.
- **Audiovisual:** recorded lectures, scientific documentaries, or microscopy videos.
- **Digital:** PDF articles, Word documents, or data files stored on a computer or in the cloud.

The medium (paper, CD, DVD, video, websites, etc.) acts as an intermediary.

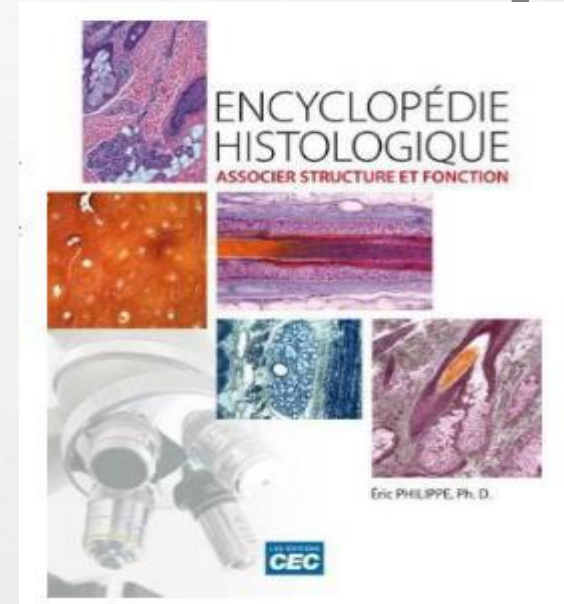
Today, extremely rapid progress in the processing of information and communication plays a major role in human activity (in various fields: scientific, economic, educational, social, artistic, etc.).

DOCUMENT TYPE

1. USUALS (REFERENCE BOOKS)

Reference works are the starting point for research, providing tools for **understanding and defining** your subject.

- Dictionaries
- Encyclopedias



It is a work which aims **to expose and cover all domains of knowledge**, or a specific part of them. **It offers an synthetic idea on any subject.** Presented in one or more volumes,

- Encyclopedias are books **that set out, alphabetically or methodically**, the body of universal knowledge (e.g. Encarta, encyclopediaof virology, etc.)..

DOCUMENT TYPE

1. USUALS (REFERENCE BOOKS)

Reference works are the starting point for research, providing tools for **understanding and defining** your subject.

- Dictionaries
 - Encyclopedias
 - Manuals
 - Directory

A directory is an **annually-updated list** of information (name, address, contact details, etc.) on members of an association, a company, an educational establishment, a professional organization, a specific sector or subscribers to a service.

DOCUMENT TYPE

1. USUALS (REFERENCE BOOKS)

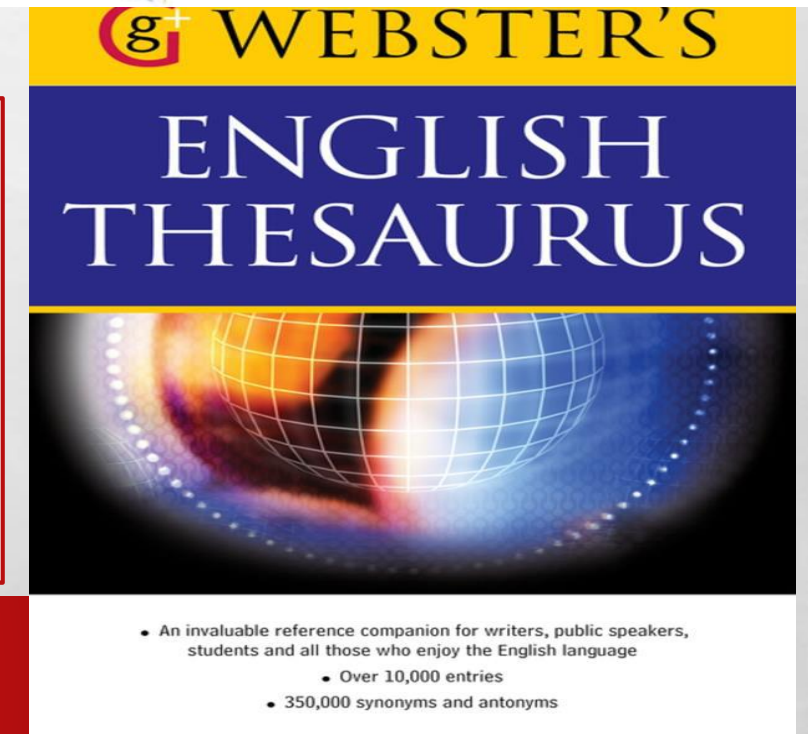
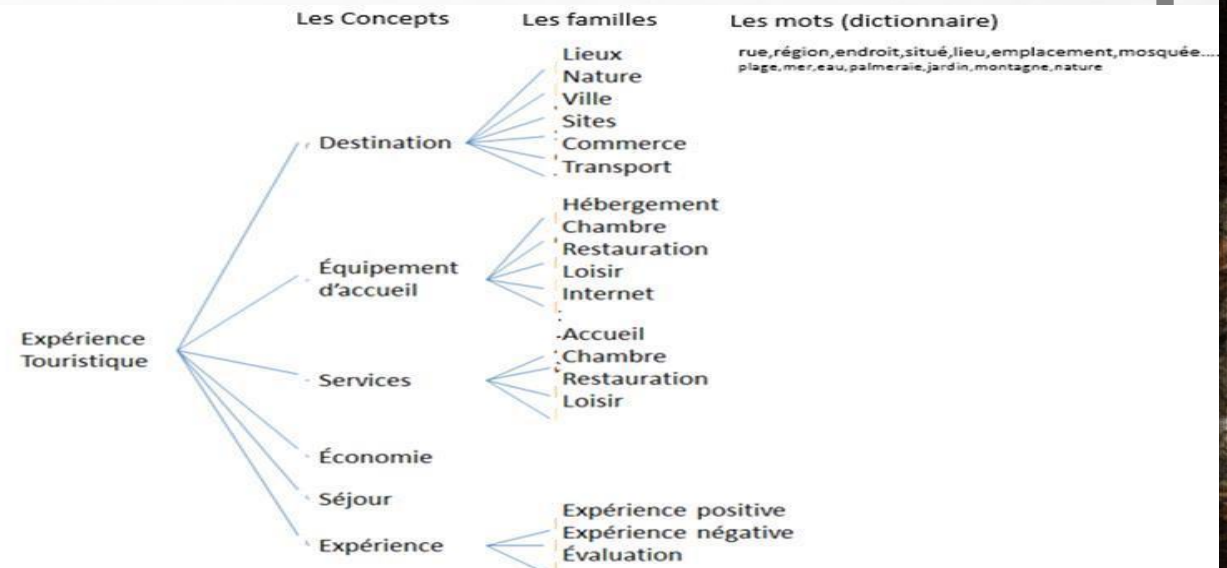
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DOCUMENT TYPE

1. USUALS (REFERENCE BOOKS)

➤ Thesaurus



It's a structured repertory of terms (keywords) used to analyze the content and classification of documents, or a list of standardized terms (descriptors and non-descriptors) used to index documents and organized hierarchically (generic term broken down into several specific terms) with cross-references for equivalence and association.

DOCUMENT TYPE

2. BOOKS (MONOGRAPHS) AND OTHER

It depends on the level and nature of the information required:

- Books or monographs (manuals, mementos, conference proceedings).
- Periodicals
- Theses, dissertations, research reports
- **Specific documents:** their use will depend on the disciplinary field or the approach chosen to deal with a subject, patents, images, statistical data, etc.).
- **Official documentation:** documents published by the State (laws, decrees, regulations, etc.).

3. CONDUCTING DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

The methodology of documentary research is divided into three stages:

- ✓ Preparation
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Verification

3. CONDUCTING DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

3.1. DR PREPARATION

To define and understand the various angles of your research topic, you need to start by analyzing it.

Subject analysis: This involves defining the range of your documentary research, using, for example: WHAT? WHO? WHEN? WHY ? WHERE ? HOW?

3. CONDUCTING DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

3.2. RD IN ITSELF

Once you have identified the subject, there are five main stages in the documentary research itself:

- Search for documents
- Select documents
- Extracting information
- Processing information
- Producing the final work

3. CONDUCTING DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

3.2. RD IN ITSELF

This stage is based **on training documents** by forming **keywords**. It is therefore important to:

- ✓ Avoid empty words (definition articles such as: the, of, the...)
- ✓ Integrate your keywords into a search tool to reduce **silences and noise**.
 - **Noise**: this is the excess of answers that don't correspond (or don't correspond well) to the subject. The relevant information is drowned out by the mass.
 - **Silence**: this is the absence (or very little) of information on the subject when searching for documents, even though there are relevant documents on the subject.

3. CONDUCTING DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

3.2. RD IN ITSELF

Several techniques can be used to reduce silence and noise when searching for documents.

- ✓ **Boolean operators : AND, OR, NOT**
- ✓ **Truncation * and Masks: ? or \$.**
- ✓ **Proximity operators: ADJ, NEAR, NEARx (xAV), FOLLOWED BY, SAME, etc. (depending on search tools)**
- ✓ **Search by exact expression : « »**

3. CONDUCTING DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

3.3. VERIFICATION OF COLLECTED INFORMATION

This stage is used to check the **reliability and relevance** of the information collected.

- ✓ The reliability of the information can be verified through **the author** of the document consulted (the author is a scientist (expert), his or her opinion objective or subjective...).
- ✓ The reliability of the information provided is also verified through the **source** of the information (official and truthful).
- ✓ **The timeliness** of the information: check the date of the information found.

Research Methods

Techniques used to collect and analyze data

Practical tools (e.g., surveys, interviews, experiments)

To gather data and test hypotheses

Narrow and specific

Using a questionnaire to study consumer behavior

Research Methodology

The theoretical framework guiding how research is designed and conducted

Philosophical and strategic approach to research

To justify the choice of methods and ensure alignment with research objectives

Broad and conceptual

Deciding whether a qualitative or quantitative approach best suits the research question

Méthodes de recherche

Techniques utilisées pour collecter et analyser les données

Outils pratiques (ex. : enquêtes, entretiens, expériences)

Viser à recueillir des données et tester des hypothèses

Restreinte et spécifique

Utiliser un questionnaire pour étudier le comportement des consommateurs

Méthodologie de recherche

Cadre théorique guidant la conception et la conduite de la recherche

Approche philosophique et stratégique de la recherche

Justifier le choix des méthodes et assurer leur cohérence avec les objectifs de la recherche

Large et conceptuelle

Déterminer si une approche qualitative ou quantitative convient le mieux à la question de recherche

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