

Report of what I have practiced and seen
during my attachment at the library

Written (completed on 20 October 2008) by Lek Jeanson

Copies given to:

Puan Sonia Suria
Training & Quality Unit
Sarawak State Library

Mr M. Pollak
human resources
Collège du Léman

Mrs E. Brown
librarian
Collège du Léman

Mr S. Robbins
primary school principal
Collège du Léman

Mrs Díaz
careers counsellor
Collège du Léman



The library: Pustaka Negeri Sarawak

Name of the library:	Pustaka Negeri Sarawak (“Sarawak State Library”)
URL:	http://www.pustaka-sarawak.com/
Size of collection: as of 2008	100000 ⁺ items, steadily growing everyday Largest collection in the state. Big collection of materials about Sarawak
Users served:	All categories and ages (for adults: non-fiction only)
Type of library:	Public, government sponsored, state library having smaller libraries as its branches in the state of Sarawak
Opened in:	2000
Attended working hours:	08:00–13:00 & 14:00–17:00

Details about the trainee:

My present occupation is full-time librarian at an international school. I serve French- and English-speaking classes. I also have a substantial role and responsibility in ICT for the same classes. The age range is 6–10.

I've worked in this position continuously from September 1997 to the present. I love what I'm doing. I have no diploma in librarianship.

I wanted to do a training course in a library because

- I have no diploma
- After eleven years in the same library, and the only one yet, I was curious to see the functioning of a library, from the inside and in real-time.

I wanted to do it in **this** library because

- It is in Malaysia, I wanted to experiment working in a new setting
- I've been there as a reader almost every summer from 2001
- I have a friend in Kuching, and a friend working in that library

To apply for a training course in a public library in Malaysia, on 6 May 2008 I wrote a letter to the state's library's chief executive officer. At the same time I informed the principal at my job of my application. It is usual for such procedure to take two months, I just had to wait for the answer from Malaysia. On 13 June 2008 I received a positive answer from the human resources department of the state's library.

As the principal at my job had informed me, my employer didn't provide me with any financial sponsorship. The training course wasn't oriented to my present specialisation that is children and school. Its purpose was more general in the librarianship field and could serve for future employment in different specialisations.

I have attended to that training course during my summer holidays.

It is the first training course I attend to in a library. I wish to continue doing so in other libraries in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia or Australia; in a public, private or educational setting. School holidays is a time I like doing this.

I've written this report without following any specific official standards in report-making. I'm aware that it might not have the required format, being mostly a personal creation.

Nobody asked me to do a report, it is of my own initiative. But I did inform Sonia that I'll produce one. She informed me that I'll receive a certificate of my attachment.

Monday 28 Jul

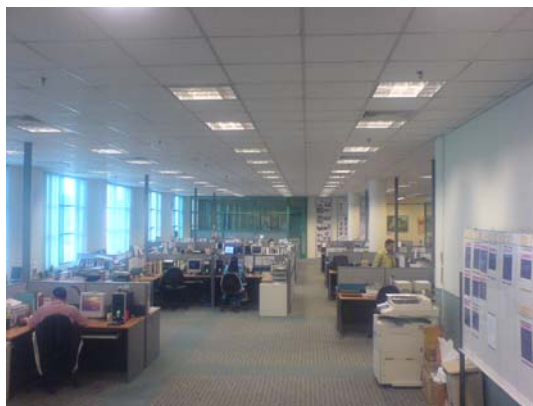
Technical Services Section

Morning:

- **Welcome** by the library's chief executive officer, Rashidah Hj. Bolhassan
- **Cataloguing**
Supervisor: Norassimar
Using the MARC 21 standard
System: Angkasa Library Management System (Web-based)

Afternoon:

- **Cataloguing:** continuation



Technical Services, ground floor



Technical Services, ground floor

Short comments

I came upon books of which the authors' surnames have the Mac prefix, like MacKinnon or MacDonald. For their call numbers should I use "MCK" and "MCD" or "MAC" and "MAC"? In my own library I would use the first option. But according to Nadhira who was at the processing unit (where the books are physically processed) we should use the second option.

Two days later I did go in the main reading hall ("Information Resource Centre") and have a look at the books in the shelves, those books written by names having that "Mac" prefix. On the call numbers I did see several MCK, MCN and other letter (following MC), and several MAC too! So it didn't look consistent and I was thinking that the library should apply a common policy that would not change whatever staff member is doing the cataloguing.

My opinion is that the first option (MCD, MCK, MCN, etc.) makes searching easier than (MAC, MAC, MAC, ...), even more so in a large library. Of course a call number can always contain MAC, when Mac isn't the name's prefix, such as in the name Mach.

Tuesday 29 Jul

Technical Services Section

Morning:

- **Cataloguing**

Supervisor: Norassimar

In case of doubt for some books, I checked MARC tags and call numbers on the online catalogues of:

- o Library of Congress
<http://catalog.loc.gov/>
- o National Library Board (Singapore)
<http://vistaweb.nlb.gov.sg/>

Afternoon:

- **Acquisition**

Supervisor: Sani

System: Angkasa Library Management System

Short comments

The acquisition module seemed to me to be the most confusing task of all in the library. Both the course of action of this unit and the menus in the Angkasa system were complex.

This acquisition unit is the area that I understood the least during this training course. But I don't mean that it was unnecessarily too complex, is it because this kind of unit has to follow legal or budgetary constraints?

- Explanation of **staff structure**

By: Jim

With use of organisation charts.

- **Processing**

Supervisor: Nur Nadhirah Frida

In most units we use personal computers, phones and other office appliance. But the processing unit is concerned purely with manipulation of the physical book. Call numbers & bar codes are printed & fixed on the book, re-magnetisable antitheft strips are inserted, jackets are wrapped, the library seal is pressed. Each accompanying CD is also processed as a separate item.

The bar code is fixed at always the same position on the bottom left of the front cover. This is done with a template (see 1st picture). The reason is for the bar code to be easily scanned when books are passed on the reading apparatuses at the loan counters.



Bar code Template

Likewise, the call numbers must all be at the same height on the books, this is why a template is also used when fixing them.

Most stationary are of brand 3M.



Seal press

- **Item listing**

Supervisor: Norassimar

System: Angkasa Library Management System

The books come back from the processing unit and are now getting their final stage before being shelved. They are catalogued as items (the first cataloguing was bibliographic), their bar code is scanned to be added to the book's record.

Accompanying CDs are linked to their books.

Wednesday 30 Jul

Information Services Section

Morning: Visit with Henry of

- Sarawakiana reference area
- Malaysiana special collection
- Bastin Collection (very rare books)
- Digitization room
- Sarawakiana closed stack (books, maps, newspapers, paintings)

**Sarawakiana & Malaysiana
reference area**



Short comments

These collections with the Digitization room are my favourite part of the library.

Afternoon:

- With Suhaili: Visit of and searching in the **Closed Stack**

Thursday 31 Jul

Technical Services Section

Morning:

- **Sarawakiana reference area**

Supervisor: Koie

For Koie, I had to search on the Web for potential purchase of materials for the Sarawakiana special collection. I've produced an Excel list, which is attached to this report.

I made sure that each material did not belong already to this library. For this I had to check the availability in the staff OPAC of the Angkasa System because the public OPAC doesn't show newly acquired material.

A lot of books were found at a bookshop's website. This bookshop in Singapore is specialised on Southeast Asia: Select Books (<http://selectbooks.com.sg/>)

Afternoon:

- **Serials management**

Supervisor: Rina

System: Angkasa Library Management System

- Introduction to the library's CAS (Current Awareness Service)
- Cataloguing of two issues of *National Geographic*, including articles and keywords
- Same with one issue of *Fortune*

Short comments

The keywords are chosen by the cataloguers (in this instance: Rina and I). The cataloguers have to read the article or its summary when available. As I was trying to find the keywords, a few things were coming to my mind. I did not mention them to Rina, as they were coming spontaneously:

- I tried to put myself in the reader's shoes. What words would he type or expect in his search? Should I worry about his level of library science awareness, from the ignorant to the librarian? I must be aware that the user might not know what is a keyword, a thesaurus, or their difference from a title word and the name of a theme. Should I try to "educate" him through my choice of terms?
- It helps when the cataloguer knows the field or subject that the article deals with.
- Reading the articles can be time consuming. I tried to read diagonally while picking words, but was scared to miss important keywords if they don't appear in the text.
- The choice of keywords seemed to me too subjective. Should we not use a tool that would provide us some sort of standard? The use of commas to separate them looked like a too crude method of entering them.
- Are combinations of words more accurate and better than single words? That is, are we dealing with key concepts (made up of one or more words) or single key words?
- For one article, is there a limit in the quantity of key words beyond which it would be useless or heavy?
- Should we systematically include words of the title, or is the title always taken into account anyway in keyword queries?
- If half of the article deals with psychology in general and the other half deals with psychology of the child, should we put "psychology, child psychology" (a term is repeated) or just "child psychology" (psychology appears once and is enough)?
- When there are synonyms, which one(s) should we put?
- In all these questions, am I not getting confused between keywords and subject designations?
- Perhaps these questions may have different answers according to the query system and database used. If I knew well the Angkasa Library Management System, I might know the answers applying best there.

Friday 1 Aug

Technical Services Section

Morning:

- Study of the library's divisions, sections and units, on its website, and from documents and notes taken

Afternoon:

- Online exploration of the Angkasa system
- Study of the four volumes of DDC 22, with focus on the 800's
- Web research on DDC 22 documents for librarians and children

Monday 4 Aug

Information Services Section

Morning:

- Staff assembly
This is a monthly assembly, and I was given the chance to introduce myself to the audience, with a microphone.

- **Business Information Service (BIS)**

Supervisor: Fatimah

- Survey of the collection
- Survey of documents called "Information Repackaging" (produced & binded on demand, for sale)
- Selling photocopy cards
- Supervise the Virtual Work Space (VWS), comprised of 3 PCs



BIS

Afternoon:

Technical Services Section

- **Reparation**

Supervisor: Daut

Visit with Daut of the repair service, which is outsourced in Demak

That place employs two people. The book covers are recreated using thick compressed cardboard and special paper. When a cover was very damaged, they scan & reprint it. The pages are rebinded after being drilled near the spine. The drilling machine is enormous for drilling very small holes, and is very accurate.



A new cover



Books at the repair place

Repaired books are updated accordingly in the Angkasa catalogue.

- **BIS**

Same as morning

Tuesday 5 Aug

Information Services Section

Information & Literacy

Supervisor: Muhamad Ali

- Explanation to me of services provided by this unit
- I started to elaborate an “Audio & Video” document to be used the Educational Services Unit for the ICT activities it provides to clients. Still to be completed.

Wednesday 6 Aug

Information Services Section

Online Services

Supervisor: Kalthoum

URL: <http://www.pustaka-sarawak.com/>

Morning:

- Browse the library’s **Subscribed Online Databases**
URL: http://www.librarynet.com.my/pls/pustaka/esther_2.main
- **SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information)**: Elaborate a bibliography of Sarawak in the Chicago Style. I’ve produced a one-page Word document, which is attached in Acrobat format to this report.

Afternoon:

- Create six dummy questions on the **Genie online information service** (database of questions-answers where users can submit new questions, questions are answered by staff of this service).

URL: http://www.librarynet.com.my/pls/genie/genie.get_searchtype

I had also to provide the answers on the database myself, providing bibliographical sources.

Short comments

At first I was asked to create 50 dummy questions! This was not realistic, it would have exceeded the available time and prevented me from practicing the other tasks.

- When the Genie online information service was started to operate, the answers lacked bibliographical sources. The present policy is to systematically include them. As answers already stored in the database can be appended, bibliographic sources may be added to them — which I was encouraged to do. To one question, I gave bibliography to a long standing series of answers: see last line at http://www.librarynet.com.my/pls/genie/genie.disp_answer?vn_gq_id=1812

Thursday 7 Aug

ICT Section

Supervisors: Fairul, Tonny

Morning: Visit with Tonny of installations:

- Computer System/PABX (Personel Assistant Branching Exchange) room
 - Network switches
 - Telephone lines
 - LAN system
 - Optical fibre system
 - 2 UPS
 - Audio Distribution Panel (audio CD media)
- MMCC (Multi-media Control Centre) room
 - Intranet server
 - Domain controller
 - Web server
 - VOD (video on demand) Server (RealMedia format)
 - Network Management Server

Afternoon

- With Kamarul: Troubleshoot a data-corrupted HDD.
 - 1) Take the user's HDD, plug it to one of the ICT's PCs, using external HDD adapter.
 - 2) Copy all its user data. This involved the use of Winternals Wincommander 2003 because the files' protection rights prevented their copy.

Short comments

Restarting the PC in Safe mode would have been enough, resetting the protection rights would then have been easy.

- 3) Format it
- 4) Install OS and return to user



ICT, main room

Friday 8 Aug

ICT Section

Morning:

- With Kamarul: Troubleshoot Sani's computer (Acquisition Unit). Her PC wouldn't start. When turned on, a beep sequence specific to the trouble is emitted. It was not the RAM modules, not the motherboard... it was the display card. Kamarul replaced it with a temporary less powerful one while waiting to replace it.

Afternoon:

- For Tonny: Find info on the Web for free software about Thin Client

Short comments

In the main room of the ICT Section, the ambience was nice & cheerful. I really liked it.

Monday 11 Aug

Information Services Section

Reference & Client Services

Supervisor: Ainie Umairah Lee

Morning:



Information Resource Centre



Information Resource Centre



View to the exterior

- Shelving in the Information Resource Centre (Pusat Sumber Maklumat)
This is the main reading hall, where the greater part of the library's collection is shelved and directly accessible. The books to shelves are on shelving trolleys. It was a good way for me to get familiar with the different locations according to the call number, its text colour and the label's colour (text background).
- At the Information Resource Centre's loan counter: check-out and check-in of readers' books. Printed slips showing books on loan are given to the borrower.

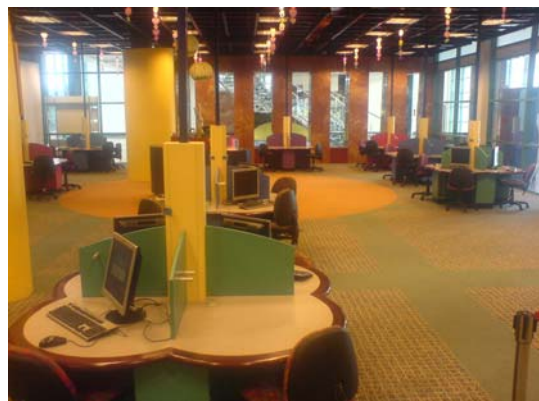


**Bar code reader
and strip magnetiser
combined**



Slip printer, bar code reader

- Visit of the Children's Infotheque
11 PCs with a software called virtual
CD rack
20 LeapPads



- Visit of the Special Needs Room
There is a Braille printer.

Afternoon:

- With Ainie:
Visit of the Story Telling Room.



Story Telling Room

- Relocate a book from the Closed Stack to the Information Resource Centre (main reading hall).
A big book, volume II of Fahr-Becker: *The Art of East Asia* is located in the reference area of the Information Resource Centre. But volume I was missing. After a search in the online catalogue, I saw that the volume II was in the Closed Stack.
Normally extra copies of a title are stored in the Closed Stack, and both volumes were mentioned with the same title, just saying “two volumes” each time. As a result it was unclear whether the copy in the Closed Stack was the other volume or another copy of the same book. For sure, only the 2nd volume was in the shelf. The best was to go there and check. I went with Nadhira to see that it was indeed the other volume. I took the book and we went to her computer to update its status and location in the catalogue. Then I just had to shelve the book next to its companion.

Tuesday 12 Aug

Morning:

several sections

- Gather various documents (soft copy or printed) from the different units
- Photography of places, apparatuses and documents

Afternoon:

Information Services Section

Reference & Client Services

Supervisor: Ainie

- Comparison of two documents, one being a short version of the other, but of a highly different date. The two documents are:
 - *Information Services Policy* (an Information Repackaging document)
 - *Rules & Regulations*

I had to highlight the differences and incoherencies on the short version, for a future updating of both documents.



Wednesday 13 Aug

Morning: Complete Tuesday's tasks

Afternoon:

Technical Services Section

- **Digitization**

Supervisor: Suhaili

At this spot newspaper articles concerning Sarawak are scanned (responsible: Rina). For books and other material the responsible is Suhaili. When I was posted here, there were no specific document I had to scan. Suhaili showed to me the scanning procedure, from turning on the equipment to saving the Word document.

The equipment used comprises:

- o a book scanner (Zeutschel OS 8000)
- o a PC

The software installed on the PC comprises:

- o Microsoft Windows
- o Omniscan (goes with the book scanner)
- o Adobe Acrobat
- o ABBYY FineReader (OCR), with its own proofing tools
- o Microsoft Word with proofing tools in English



Short comments

The book scanner's glass had ugly finger prints, easy to wipe out, but no cleaning liquid was available. It would be convenient to have a bottle and cloth on hand, without having to wait for the cleaners to do it.

I don't know why Acrobat is used. It could be easily skipped: the picture obtained from Omniscan can be interpreted directly in FineReader, and from FineReader it can be exported directly in an editable text format.

Proofing tools in English were there in function, but none in Malay. It would be very useful since most documents to be text-exported are in that language. PCs in the technical services, at the ground floor, do have Malay proofing tools installed! They are provided from the e-Kamus CD-ROM, of Alaf Teras, a Malaysian software company. Proofing tools in Malay can also be found at Microsoft for the MS-Office applications.

For materials concerning Sarawak to be scanned, the responsible person is Koie. She came and asked me if I would write an introduction to a book to be published. It would have been unrealistic in my allocated time. Unfortunately I had to decline her request.

Thursday 14 Aug

Public Library Services Section

Morning:

Supervisors: Ali, Japri Bujang Masli and Abang Yuzry

- Help pack kindergarten books, and wrap the boxes in gift wrap. The books, about 400, are for a prize giving during a convention.

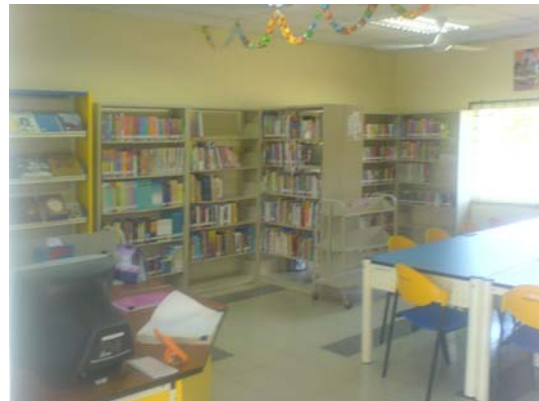
Afternoon:

Supervisors: Herrie Suliano and Abang

- Visit of two communal libraries, some 30 km from here:
 - o Perpustakaan Désa Palma



Outside



Inside

Situated at Sungai Tengah.

Short comments

On the books on the shelves, some call numbers had a minor problem. The format of the Dewey number should always have three digits before the possible point. But when the number was meant to start with **0** or **00**, these zeros were missing. Instead of the regular **001 JOH** one would see **1 JOH**. First I was confused whether they use the DDC or another classification system. I quickly knew it is the DDC, like at the central library, PNS.

- o Perpustakaan Désa Tondong



Outside



Inside

Situated at Taman Sri Cahaya

Short comments

There was the same problem with the zeros, as in the previous library. But here at least they were handwritten. Seeing call numbers partly handwritten, partly printed, I was reminded of that tricky problem in Excel: when you enter a number in cell, it won't keep the leading zeros you type.

For example, **0032** will become **32**. However there are ways of keeping leading zeros. One method is to apply a different format to the cell.

Another is to use the apostrophe: type '**0032**' instead of **0032**; once entered the number will appear and be printed without the apostrophe but with the zeros.

I hinted this to Abang, and now explain it here. I don't know whether these communal libraries use Excel or not for printing the call numbers. If it's not Excel, a similar method is surely available in the software they use.

In each case: we met two working staff. The collection is very small. There are titles for adults, some for children. The buildings and furniture are modern and standardised. The layout is almost identical.

In both libraries the children area has tables and chairs of adapted, smaller size, with round corners (less dangerous), sturdy, and nice-looking.

I would love to know where we can order these (or their equivalent) in continental Europe.



Both libraries also have this librarian's desk. I would love to order this one as well.

Friday 15 Aug

Morning:

- Begin to edit this report, from my draft notes
- Interview by Laurena Aloh (from Human Resources Management), to be published in the staff's journal.

Afternoon:

Public Library Services Section

- Supervisors: Herrie and Abang
Bring books to the Sarawak Islamic Information Centre, for their library.



Sarawak Islamic Inf. Centre



New books for its library



Inside

- Continue editing this report

General short comments

I'm also a member of the library. I wished to consult a book that was available in another library in Kuching. I filled-in an ILL (Inter-Library Loan) form and handed it to the responsible of the ILL service, in the BIS room. This was during the first week.

I have the regret to say that I've never received any news about the book or my request.

I would have loved to do some digitisation. I've only surveyed the process on 13 August although I did express my wish to do some actual scanning of materials, attached at the Digitization room with a certain amount of material.

In any case, I've enjoyed the training course as a whole. I'm satisfied with my initial curiosity.

I noticed that the situation was very different from my current job: no stressful situation. The rooms are so large, and I haven't seen classes rushing to the library.

I've visited that library a few times, yearly, and noticed its collection growing each time. I feel I'll never catch up going through all the new materials.

I'm only longing for more training courses or other practical assignments, perhaps in other libraries of the region.