

Interdisciplinary Course (IDC) – 101 (FYUG 1st Sem.)Library & Information Science (LIS)**UNIT 2: KNOWLEDGE ORGANISATION – I : LIBRARY CLASSIFICATION****2.1 Library Classification**

Systematic grouping of entities (both abstract and concrete) to meet one's requirement is known as classification. It is a mental process by which we group or separate things on the basis of common characteristics.

Classification lies at the root of all human activities. Our daily life is very much dependent on the process of classification, however, elementary this process may appear. In case of libraries, classification is recognised as the most important activity as it aims at arranging the information resources in the most helpful order so that their utility increases to the optimum level.

Definitions of Library Classification:

According to Margaret Mann, classification is "the arranging of things according to likeness and unlikeness. It is the sorting and grouping of things, but in addition, classification of books is a knowledge classification with adjustments made necessary by the physical form of books".

W. C. Berwick Sayers defines it as "the arrangement of books on shelves or description of them in the manner which is most helpful to those who read".

According to Ranganathan, "it is the translation of the name of the subject of a book into the preferred artificial language of ordinal numbers, and the individualisation of several books dealing with the same specific subject by means of a further set of ordinal numbers which represent some features of the book other than their thought content".

Needs and Purposes of Library Classification:

Library classification fulfils several important needs and serves multiple purposes within a library environment. Here are some of the key needs and purposes of library classification:

- **Organisation and Structure:** Library classification provides a systematic framework for organising library materials. It brings order to the collection by grouping similar items together, making it easier for librarians to manage and maintain the resources.
- **Efficient Access:** One of the primary purposes of library classification is to facilitate efficient access to information resources. By assigning unique call numbers or codes to each item, classification enables users to locate specific materials quickly and easily. Users can browse the shelves or use library catalogues to identify relevant resources within their areas of interest, saving time and effort in searching for information.
- **Subject Retrieval:** Library classification systems are designed to support subject retrieval. By organizing materials based on subject content, classification helps users find resources on specific topics or within particular disciplines. Users can browse through specific classes or subclasses to explore related materials, increasing the chances of discovering relevant information beyond what they initially sought.

- **Collection Development and Management:** Classification aids librarians in collection development and management. It assists in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the collection by providing insights into the coverage of different subject areas. Librarians can identify gaps, duplication, or areas of special interest for collection enhancement or weeding based on the arrangement of information resources.
- **Resource Sharing:** Library classification supports resource sharing and interlibrary loan services. When libraries use the same or compatible classification systems, it becomes easier to exchange materials or request resources from other libraries. Standardized classification schemes facilitate the sharing of bibliographic records and enhance cooperation among libraries at local, regional, or international levels.
- **Shelf Arrangement:** Classification systems determine the physical arrangement of materials on library shelves. By assigning unique call numbers or codes, classification ensures consistent and logical placement of items. This arrangement makes it easier for library staff and users to locate specific resources, maintain order, and re-shelve materials correctly after use.

Overall, library classification meets the needs of both library staff and users by providing an organised and accessible system for managing and accessing information resources. It enhances the efficiency of library operations, promotes effective information retrieval, and supports the organisation and dissemination of knowledge within a library setting.

2.2 Call Number

In library classification systems, a call number is a unique alphanumeric code assigned to each item in a library's collection. It serves as a specific address for locating a particular book or resource on the library shelves. The call number acts as a roadmap for library users and staff, helping them efficiently navigate through the library and find the materials they need.

All printed copies of books in the library are assigned a call number, usually found on the book spine. Because books on the shelves are arranged in call number order, we will find books on similar subjects shelved near each other.

Parts of Call Number

The call number consists of three parts – *Class Number*, *Book Number* and *Collection Number*.

- Class Number:** The class number refers to a specific code or number assigned to a particular subject or topic within a classification system. It is the first part of a call number, which is used to identify and locate materials in a library collection.

The class number represents the broad subject category to which a resource belongs. It is typically derived from a specific library classification scheme, such as the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) or the Library of Congress Classification (LCC).

(Since several documents may deal with the same subject/content, they are all likely to bear the same class number. Therefore, to distinguish one document from other documents on the same subject and bearing the same class number, two additional components are required.)

- Book Number:** The book number of a document is a symbol or characters used to fix its position relatively to the other books having the same class number. Book number may represent features

like author, publisher, publication date, etc. Several methods of forming a book number exist and any of them may be used for the purpose.

- iii) **Collection Number:** The collection number of a document denotes the collection to which it belongs. A collection number is a suitable symbol to be improvised by each library according to its needs.

For the convenience of readers / users and also for managing library resources more efficiently, libraries establish different collections based on subject or other purposes. For example, R for reference, F for fiction, TB for textbooks, RC for rare collections, etc.

Examples of Call Number:

1. *Book Title* – A textbook of Microeconomics *Author* – Gautam Purkayastha

The call number of this book by DDC is **338.5 PUR TB**

338.5	Class Number	}	Call Number
PUR	Book Number		
TB	Collection Number		

Here, 338.5 is class number of the book derived from DDC (*Dewey Decimal Classification*), PUR stands for Purkayastha (i.e. first three letters from the surname of author) and TB means Text Book collection.

2. *Book Title* – Introduction to Political Theory *Author* – K. K. Ghai

The call number of this book by DDC is **320.01 GHA RR**

320.01	Class Number	}	Call Number
GHA	Book Number		
RR	Collection Number		

Here, 320.01 is class number of the book derived from DDC (*Dewey Decimal Classification*), GHA stands for Ghai (i.e. first three letters from the surname of author) and RR means Reading Room collection.

3. *Book Title* – Elements of Biotechnology *Author* – P. K. Gupta

The call number of this book by DDC is **660.6 GUP RS**

660.6	Class Number	}	Call Number
GUP	Book Number		
RS	Collection Number		

Here, 660.6 is class number of the book derived from DDC (*Dewey Decimal Classification*), GUP stands for Gupta (i.e. first three letters from the surname of author) and RS means Reference Section collection.