Selective Bibliography on Distance Education

Francisco Pereira Manrique

One of the main concerns of people who have worked in distance education since its introduction on the continent has been maintaining documentation centers, in which the contributions to the discipline are collected, up to date.

The document files grow, then, as interest in the discipline arouses in different specialists who contribute their documents, articles and publications, reflections, interpretations, new ideas, discoveries, and their own experiences.

In the case of the Multiple Resources Center of the Open National University of Venezuela, in 1977, its directors set as a goal compiling a collection on the open and distance education system that has constituted the essential source for those who created, developed, and consolidated the educational plan of this university during these years.

The center's document register, since 1988, has been collected in this work by Aura Torrellos; the author set guidelines that made it a truly specialized and selective bibliography. Thus, it comprises exclusively the bibliography compiled by the center and excludes, on purpose, all instructional material or study guides produced by this institution or others. The bibliography collects, therefore, 1056 publications, works, and documents, of which 865 were originally written in Spanish. The 405 authors come from 60 different institutions and deal with 27 topics, all strictly related to the discipline.

Among those that stand out for the number of works are: general aspects of distance education (130 references); evaluation (87 references); open education (77 references); organization (46 references); curriculum (42 references). From a geographical point of view, the bibliography collects works that represent 32 countries from the five continents.

From the point of view of organization, the bibliography arranges the references alphabetically, by author or title, and catalogues them in accordance with the following norms: International Standards for Bibliographic Description (ISDB) and Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR, 2nd edition). Furthermore, it contains five indexes (author, subject, geographic, by institution, conferences and academic events) and a very useful appendix that includes a directory of institutions linked to distance education; a list of periodical publications specializing in distance education, with their respective addresses; and a list of the periodical publications published by the Open National University in its central and local centers. Anyone who works or is interested

on the subject of distance education will find in this work a good source of any information, through which one can obtain direct access to each work by writing to the indicated address.

The author, director of the Multiple Resource Center of the Open National University, is preparing the second volume, which, no doubt, will have the same impact as this one.