Conducting Secondary Research in TESOL

4 Strategies

MENU

1) Keyword Searching
2) Browsing through the Subjects
3) Finding Works by one Author
4) Using References

Ask a Librarian
Keyword Searching—
The Right Way & in the Right Resources

When conducting secondary research, make sure you:

- Do keyword searching in multiple Library Databases—each database has its own set of journals that it covers
  - Know our top 3 research databases for education!

- Don’t forget books in catalogs if that is an option for you—they can often give you a good chapter focused on your topic

- Conduct searches using good search terms to bring up as many relevant sources of information as you can—so you don’t miss the best ones out there!
  - Synonyms, related terms, even acronyms

- Know your options:
  - For focusing & limiting your results
  - For sorting, saving, & linking back to your results
  - For finding full text of the articles you need

Take a look at our videos:

- 5-min. video on searching in the library databases.
- 2 other videos available on your options in the databases
Browsing through the Subjects

Once you have done a search in a library catalog or database, take time to browse through the subjects listed in your initial search results.

They can give you any or all of the following:
(a) great new words/phrases for your search
(b) A quick understanding of the focus of the articles and/or books appearing in your results
(c) A link to a new search on your topic

[View Database Example] | [View Catalog Example]
If you did a search for **anxiety** and “**oral communication**” and **efl**, the article above could be in your results. You’ll notice from the **Subjects** specifically what’s involved in the article.

And you’ll have more search terms to work with!

- **Efl**: “second language learning”
- **Oral communication**: “communication skills,” “communicative competence”
Browsing through the Subjects – Library Catalog Example

If you did a search for pronunciation and efl, the book listed in the above OhioLINK catalog record could be in your results.

Tip: You can click on one of the Subjects to do another search to find additional relevant resources:

- English language—Pronunciation of foreign speakers
You can do an author search for works by an author:

- To see what else the author has written on your topic
- To find out whether the author has written extensively on your topic

Tip: If the author’s name keeps appearing in the literature on your topic, you definitely want to know what else that author has written!

Whether in a library database or catalog, type in first the author’s last name, then a comma, & then first name:

Searching: ERIC, Show all | Choose Databases

Xu, Jinfen

Search

Author

Sales, Stephen J

Search
Using the Work Others Have Done—Looking in the References

Whether you’ve found a great book or article, look at the References cited, usually at the end of the item—the list can be a gold mine!

**Tip:** You’ll need to learn how to read a citation in APA style to know whether you are looking at the name of a book or an article in the References cited.

You can then go into a library catalog or database, depending on whether it is a book or article, & type in the article or book title, & see if you can get it!


**REFERENCES**


Ask a Librarian—We’re Happy to Help!

- Chat with Us: anywhere you see our chat widget online!
- Email Us: refdesk@ohiodominican.edu
- Call (614) 251-4585; toll-free (888) 681-8044
- Stop by the Reference Desk in Spangler Learning Center

For hours & more info: www.ohiodominican.edu/library/ask