



# Universität Trier

## **Searching and finding in the UB Trier Research guide for English Studies**

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## **1. Introduction**

In order to find literature for an academic paper it often is a good starting point to pursue the bibliographies of monographs and articles already at hand. Though developing a topic extensively, one will have to consult different databases, bibliographies, catalogues and other sources of information. This research guide shall give you some helpful tips how to approach your literature search and shows where to find literature for linguistics and literary studies. Of course this can only be a rough overview and it is definitely recommended to use further research platforms not mentioned here when researching. Depending on the topic it also can be of some worth to inform about ways of research in adjacent disciplines (e.g. media studies, history, philosophy, etc.).

## **2. Basic information for searching literature**

### **2.1 Time management**

When preparing a seminar paper one thinks about how much time will be spent on reading ones sources and writing the own texts. That research and getting access to literature requires additional time is often underestimated. You have to calculate as well that required media could be lent or are locally not available and have to be ordered via interlibrary loan. There is also the possibility that you find hints to further literature while working with your sources that you have to get then as well. Therefore you should start researching as early as possible, so you don't have additional pressure of time by waiting for important literature at the end when you should concentrate on writing.

### **2.2 Planning the research**

The better you prepare your literature search, the faster and more successful you will find literature relevant for your topic. It can be helpful to ask oneself the following questions:

*What am I looking for?*

Before starting, make clear what kind of information you are looking for (primary or secondary literature, statistics, historical sources, etc.). Also you should develop the concrete questions underlying your topic beforehand.

*Where can I search?*

The second step is to think about exactly where the needed information can be found. Are there specialised databases to the topic, are there (special) libraries or archives that deal with the subject. Which other platforms, institutions and online resources could help when researching?

### How can I search?

Before starting research it is helpful to think about reasonable search terms. Therefore you should be familiar with the specialized terminology of your topic. On the one hand you should try to find terms that are as precise as possible, on the other hand you should pay attention to homonyms and synonyms. Further you should be familiar with the functions of the different online catalogues, databases and platforms. Even though there are certain standard elements of search available at most services, it are especially the special functions of certain databases that reduce effort and make the search much more efficient.

### How do I get access to the literature I found?

Even though there is much material available online today, you also will have to access media the classical analogue way. Therefore you should also be familiar with the different possibilities of document delivering services (interlibrary loan, Subito, LitExpress, etc.). Depending on how specialized your sources are, it could also be that you only can refer to them locally at the possessing institution.

## **2.3 General information about research in catalogues and databases<sup>1</sup>**

### Simple vs. advanced search

In many cases you will get good results with the simple search, but it can be the case – especially when getting a great amount of search hits – that it is necessary to reduce your result list with the help of further parameters. Using the advanced search you can scan particular fields (e.g. author, subject, editor, publication date, etc.) and combine them with Boolean operators (see below) as well. Often there are additional operators (starts with, contains, is exact, etc.) available.

### Keyword vs. subject heading

Regarding research there is a differentiation between keywords and subject headings. A keyword is a word that occurs exactly in the title or in the searched field, whereas subject headings are standardised terms that are assigned in order to describe the content of a medium. Subject headings are very helpful if there are different meanings of a term.

„Troilus and Cressida“ could refer to:  
Chaucer, Geoffrey, 1343-1400, Troilus and Criseyde  
or  
Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616, Troilus and Cressida

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<sup>1</sup> The functions and examples in this part refer to TRiCAT. There are additional possibilities to specify a search. For this you should always have a look for special functions in the help section in the particular catalogue or database used. There are lots of different fuctions (searching in a defined amount of words, searching for frequency/relevance, searching for word stems, etc.).

Also you can use them to find search hits where it is not clear from the title what subject matter it is about.

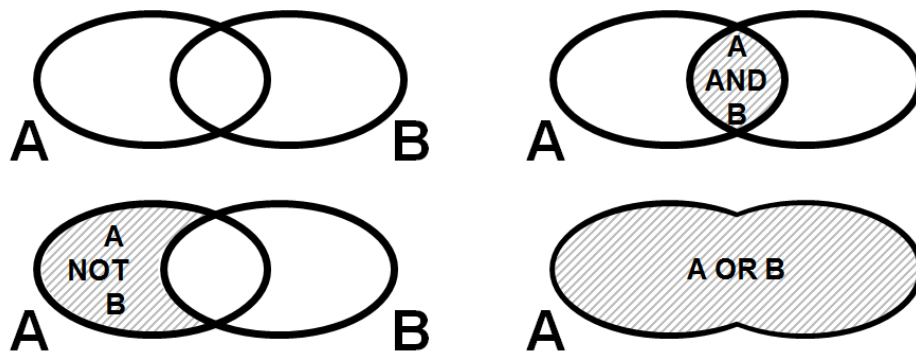
Title: The song of the earth  
Subject headings: Englisch; Literatur; Natur, Motiv; Geschichte 1800-1900; Literaturtheorie; Naturlyrik

It also is expedient when you want to separate primary and secondary literature.

Searching for „Oscar Wilde“ in the field „author“ will list you literature written by Oscar Wilde (primary literature), whereas searching for „Oscar Wilde“ in the field „subject“ will list literature about Oscar Wilde (secondary literature).

### Boolean operators

By combining several search terms you can either expand or reduce your results. This can be done with help of Boolean operators: AND, OR, NOT (UND, ODER, NICHT). These can also be combined with each other.



### Phrase search and placeholders

In many catalogues there is the possibility to use placeholders or phrases in order to expand or reduce the search.

If you are searching for a phrase, the search terms have to be put in quotation marks. Thus the search will not refer to “victorian” and “theatre” but it refers to the complete phrase “victorian theatre”.

Placeholders can be used within or at the end of a word in order to include variable terms or orthographical variations. The sign “\*” represents multiple letters, “?” represents one letter (e.g. “Schmi?t” for Schmidt/Schmitt or “litera\*” for literature, literary, Literatur, Literarizität, etc.).

### Researching databases

Inform about if there are special databases concerning your topic. That will make your research much easier. Before searching within a database, you then should have a closer look on which information the database contents: Which period is covered? Which sources is the database based on? Is it a full text database or does it only content bibliographical notes? Which thematic focus does the database have?

## **3. Researching locally**

### **3.1 Browsing the shelves**

In our reading rooms the literature is arranged thematically. This opens up the possibility to start your research for a special topic by comfortably browsing the shelf. The rough Shelving system classification can be found at the front end of each shelf, the detailed one can be found in a yellow folder at the very first shelf of a subject. You also find it on our homepage under „Fachspezifische Informationen“. Please note that you can only find a part of the literature in the shelf (there you won't find loaned books or books temporarily in use as well as books placed in the stacks).

### **3.2 TRiCAT - Catalog**

TRiCAT is the online catalogue and contains the overall collection of the university library. Here you can search for titles (i.e. it doesn't contain individual articles). By searching all fields (as well as the simple search), the search also includes content pages and other additional information, as long as it exists digitally. Via the different facets (notation, language, subject heading, resource type, etc.) at the sidebar you can reduce your search further.

### **3.3 TRiCAT – Database Articles**

In addition to the catalogue you also can research in an article database in TRiCAT. There the hit list is reduced to titles with full text access (print or digital) by default. You can also expand your results by clicking “Show results without full text online access too” at the side.

### **3.4 Bibliographies**

Especially when searching older sources or when dealing with a historical topic, it is worth to look at our printed library catalogues and (special) bibliographies. You find them in the reading room (shelf marks for English studies: 25=AA – 25=AF). Particularly bibliographies about certain topics, institutions or persons can be extremely helpful. But you should pay attention to

the publications the particular bibliography is analysing (especially type and period of publications).

#### **4. Searching for literature nationwide<sup>1</sup>**

##### **4.1 Karlsruher virtueller Katalog (KVK)**

KVK is a meta-catalogue that allows you to search multiple national and international libraries at the same time. Being only transferred to the selected catalogues, search queries – especially if more complex – could lead to incomplete results, for example if fields in the underlying original catalogue are not filled (e.g. searching with German subject headings in international catalogues).

##### **4.2 Zeitschriftendatenbank (ZDB)**

ZDB is the central German database for periodicals (journals, year books, periodical publications, etc.) containing also holding information of the participating libraries. Here you can find printed and digital journals as well (but only their titles – not individual articles).

##### **4.3 Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek (EZB)**

EZB is the central German database for digital journals containing licensing information of the particular libraries. In addition to the search there are also overview pages for each subject that show the journals connected with them (e.g. English, American studies). Via “choose institution” you can also look which titles are licensed by other libraries.

##### **4.4 Datenbank-Infosystem (DBIS)**

DBIS is the central German index of databases with information about licences of the particular library. In addition to the search there are also overview pages for each subject that show the databases connected with them (e.g. Anglistik, Amerikanistik). At the top of each overview page the most important databases are listed separately as TOP-databases. Via “Bibliotheksauswahl” here also can be looked which databases are licensed by other libraries.

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<sup>1</sup> Because Germany is divided into different library unions, you should know that the university library of Trier belongs to the hbz-union (covering North Rhine-Westphalia and Rhineland-Palatinate) of the Hochschulbibliothekszenrum in Cologne. Thus it is listed under HBZ or NRW in the transregional catalogues (under the library identifier 385).

## **5. Different starting points for research**

### **5.1 Internet**

Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.de/>)

Contrary to the standard Google search, Google Scholar is a special search engine for academic literature. In the hit list you will find partly links to full texts, partly bibliographical notes. Because the underlying data is very large and heterogeneous coming from different sources and there isn't neither a quality check nor any intellectual, systematic cataloguing, this service is more suitable for verification of information already at hand as well as for a first step into a topic. In order to do extensive thematic research it is rather inappropriate.

Wikipedia

Even though Wikipedia often shall/must not be quoted, it can be helpful as a first step into a topic. On the one hand you can make clear for yourself conceptual backgrounds by looking at the internal links, on the other hand sources and further literature is given at the end of an article. With these you can start your research.

### **5.2 Bibliographical databases**

MLA International Bibliography (access via DBIS)

The MLA International Bibliography is the most important bibliography for the fields of literature, linguistics and folklore of all modern philologies. About 4,400 journals are continuously analysed for this bibliography of secondary literature, furthermore representatively article collections, periodicals, congress papers, festschriften, works of reference, records of the dissertation abstracts and to a smaller extend also monographs. It starts in the 1920ies and contains more than 2.3 million bibliographical records. The MLA increases by circa 66,000 records annually.

Bibliography of Linguistic Literature (access via DBIS)

The Bibliography of Linguistic Literature (BLLDB) registers literature of general linguistics, English, German and Romance studies as well as other languages to a smaller extend. Also neighbouring disciplines (special linguistics) are covered. BLLDB contains circa 455,000 records (monographs, dissertations, manuscripts, journal articles, selected reviews, contributions to article collections, festschriften, congress papers and institution reports, etc.) from 1971 until today. The content is increased by circa 10,000 titles per year via trimonthly updates. Classification and subject headings are normally in English and German as well.



JSTOR (access via DBIS)

JSTOR contains journals from their first volume up to a so called "moving wall" (depending on the title up to 11 years preceding the current volume). A list of the participating editors and their journals is provided by JSTOR.

IBZ Online (access via DBIS)

Since over 100 years the bibliography IBZ is the leading international reference work for journal articles of the humanities and social sciences as well as neighbouring disciplines. IBZ Online registers currently 3.9 million journal articles from 11.500 journals from 1983 onwards. Each year it increases by more than 120,000 entries from 5,500 journals currently analysed. The database is updated weekly.

IBR Online (access via DBIS)

Like the IBZ Online the interdisciplinary, international bibliography of reviews IBR is an excellent information source for reviews. From 1983 onwards the database registers over 1.5 million book reviews. Each year further 60,000 reviews are added from currently 5,500 analysed journals. The database is updated weekly.

OLC Anglistik - Online Contents (access via DBIS)

The database OLC Anglistik is a subject related excerpt of the database Online Contents that is continuously analysing selected journals. Currently there are 425 journals analysed back to the publication year 1993. Thus the database contains of approximately 323,000 articles and reviews from English and American studies.

Web of Science (access via DBIS)

WoS is an interdisciplinary database with a broad range of disciplines (arts, humanities, social sciences, medicine, natural sciences and technology). There are over 12,000 referenced scientific journals analysed of all disciplines including open access journals (more than 1 billion records in total). Especially interesting is the citation index with which you can also see the articles that quote the article you have found.

### **5.3 Daily press**

Nexis (access via DBIS)

Here you find international information on (daily) press, companies and finance as well as about persons from economy, politics and contemporary history, industry data, country reports and law information.

Genios (access via DBIS)

Up-to-date daily press articles from more than 180 newspapers including archives reaching back to 1983 for some titles.

Library Press Display (access via DBIS)

Access to over 4,000 international newspapers and magazines (archive normally 60 to 90 days).

Newspaper archives (partly free, partly via DBIS)

Because some of the transregional newspapers aren't included in the databases mentioned above, you should also search within the archives of the particular newspapers. These are partly accessible for free, partly you have to look for them in DBIS (covering the most common national German newspapers).

#### **5.4 Other helpful sources**

Anglistik Guide

Anglistik Guide is a platform for scientifically relevant online resources within the field of Anglo-American language and literature. The platform is hosted and continuously updated by the state and university library of Göttingen.

Library of Anglo-American Culture & History

The Library of Anglo-American Culture & History as a portal of the state and university library of Göttingen offers a metasearch containing not only the catalogue of the SUB Göttingen but also article databases, special catalogues for websites and digital full texts.

Library of Congress Online Catalog

The online catalogue of the Library of Congress contains about 17 million entries for books, serials, manuscripts, maps, music, recordings, images, and electronic resources. Furthermore you can research within the „LC Authorities“ for persons and subject headings.

Copac

Copac exposes rare and unique research material by bringing together the catalogues of circa 90 major UK and Irish libraries (and growing). In a single search you can discover the holdings of the UK's national libraries (including the British Library), many University libraries, and specialist research libraries.

British Library Catalogue

Within the online catalogue of the British Library you find records for books, journals, newspapers, printed maps, scores, electronic resources, sound archive items etc. in the Library's collections. Furthermore links to other special research sites and library homepages are provided.

### Hamnet

Hamnet is the online catalogue of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington. This library is the world's largest Shakespeare collection and to major collections of other rare Renaissance books, manuscripts, and works of art.

LOTSE (<http://lotse.sub.uni-hamburg.de/>)

Guide for literature search and academic working hosted by the state and university library of Hamburg. Here you find a lot of further research starting points and tips for your literature research (ordered by subject).

### Specialised libraries

Until 2015 the state and university library of Göttingen was the official German special library für English studies (Sondersammelgebietsbibliothek - SSG für Anglistik). While the funding program by the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) changed, there will be “Fachinformationsdienste für die Wissenschaft” (FID) in the future. Such a special service for „Anglo-American Culture“ will be developed by the state and university library of Göttingen together with the library of the J. F. Kennedy institute of the FU Berlin. So, there shortly will be new platforms and information services. Thus you should keep an eye on the further development.<sup>1</sup>

## **6. Further literature**

Franke, Fabian (2014). *Schlüsselkompetenzen: Literatur recherchieren in Bibliotheken und Internet*. 2., akt. und erw. Auflage. Stuttgart: Metzler.

Haug, Jochen (2012). *Erfolgreich recherchieren - Anglistik und Amerikanistik*. 1. Auflage. Berlin [u.a.]: de Gruyter Saur.

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<sup>1</sup> Another „Fachinformationsdienst Allgemeine und Vergleichende Literaturwissenschaft“ (for general literary studies) will be developed by the university library Johann Christian Senckenberg in Frankfurt a. M., which was the official special library beforehand.