Moving from research question to literature review in Anthropology

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Learning outcomes:

By the end of the session, you should:

- Understand the literature review process;
- Be able to plan an effective and structured search for your thesis;
- Know where to look for different types of information;
- Have evaluated different methods of searching;
- Have developed search skills that can be applied across different resources;
- Have had a chance to practise;
- Know where to come for future help.

Access to online resources provided by the Bodleian Libraries:

- SOLO http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk
- Databases A-Z https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php
- Libguides http://ox.libguides.com/
- Single Sign On http://www.oucs.ox.ac.uk/webauth/oxfordusername.xml
Doing the literature review  Key questions and some answers...

1. Why is the literature review important?
   a. To provide a rationale for your research, to justify your research and its value, in light of what has gone before
   b. To understand your topic, how it has been researched before, and the issues involved (look at the journals in your area: the issues, the ‘discourse’ and genre, the methodologies used)
   c. To develop a conceptual framework for your own research
   d. To identify gaps in the literature
   e. To help focus your own research question
   f. To develop your own argument

2. Why be methodical?
   a. Gives a true, comprehensive and unbiased picture of previous research
   b. Provides a broad coverage of what IS there and identifies what ISN’T there - gaps
   c. Justifies what you want to include in your review – scope, coverage etc – and what you leave out
   d. Transparent and replicable – easy to find material again, can explain what you did to your supervisor/examiner
   e. Efficient use of time (not the same as time-saving!)
   f. Finds manageable and relevant results

3. How do you choose your search terms?
   a. Discussions with your supervisor
   b. Subject dictionaries/ thesauri
   c. Initial readings
   d. Subject databases – scope notes, thesauri
   e. Repeat/iterative searching – using subject headings, thesaurus terms
   f. Experimentation – keywords will evolve during review process

4. Where do you plan to search for the literature?
   a. Subject-specific databases
   b. Interdisciplinary databases
   c. Cross-searches of databases
   d. Library catalogues
   e. References at the end of articles
   f. Hand searches/online browsing of key titles
   g. Citation indexes
   h. Scholarly search engines, e.g. Google Scholar
   i. General search engines – limit to academic domains
   j. Current awareness databases (sign up for alerts)
Building a structured search

An example of one possible approach...

| Visual depictions of Nuer initiation ceremonies |
|-------------------------------------------------
| **Row 1** | **Concept 1:** | **Concept 2:** | **Concept 3:** |
|          | Visual         | Nuer           | Initiation Ceremonies |
| **Row 2** | Visual ; film ; photography | Nuer ; Sudan | Initiation ; ceremony ; culture ; customs |
| **Row 3** | #1 = visual OR film OR photog* | #2 = Nuer OR Sudan* | #3 = Init* or ceremon* OR cultur* OR custom* |
| **Row 4** | #1 AND #2 AND #3 (N.B. # means search number) |

**AND** university and oxford

**OR** university or oxford

**NOT** university not oxford

Truncation: often represented by *
search on stem of a word and retrieve variant endings
eg postmodern* gives postmodern, postmodernism and postmodernist

Wildcards: used within words, to retrieve alternative spellings
In some databases, for example:
$ retrieves either 0 or 1 characters, eg colo$r will find color & colour
? retrieves a single letter, eg wom?n will find woman or women
Building a structured search – task

Write your **research question** (or if you don’t have one, a brief sentence about a research interest) in the top box.

**Row 1.** Identify the **key concepts** in the research question and write one in each concept box (you may have more, or less, than 3 concepts).

**Row 2.** In the column under each concept brainstorm **alternative terms** which might be useful (e.g. synonyms, alternative spellings, broader/narrower/related terms.)

**Row 3:** Decide on your **search terms** and note down **truncation and Boolean operators** as appropriate.

**Row 4:** Complete the search strategy by **combining** your search sets.

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<th>Research Question:</th>
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<td><strong>Row 1</strong></td>
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Doing a structured search of the literature — General tips

Searching databases will not locate all research reports, as some may not be referenced in databases, and others may be missed in the searches. It is important therefore to use a combination of the following approaches:

- electronic database searching — free text and subject / thesaurus searching
- hand searching / electronic browsing of key journal titles (if being very thorough)
- searching of specialist websites — e.g. government bodies/organisations
- citation searching — tracing references forwards as well as backwards
- asking personal contacts, authors and experts in the field (can find contact information through databases such as SCOPUS and ProQuest).
- using general search engines, such as ‘Google’ and ‘Google scholar’

Whatever your approach to searching, it is advisable to keep a 'search log' to record the detail of how searching was undertaken. For example, which journals, websites and databases were searched and how and when, along with the list of search terms used and the combinations in which they were applied to the databases.

General expectations regarding structured searching of literature

- A list of databases, other sources to be searched, and possible journals to be hand searched should be defined initially.
- A list of search terms and the way they will be combined (OR, AND) should be established before formal searching begins and added to during the search process.
- The actual terms used and their combinations for each database search should be recorded, along with the date upon which the search was run (databases get updated) and the host that provided access to the database (e.g. ProQuest, Ovid, ISI Web Of Science). Databases usually allow you to save a copy of the actual search run.
- Searching the literature should be an iterative process. You may need to re-run your searches several times, using new words found during previous searches.
Online resources for Anthropology

**Major platforms:**
- **Proquest:** International Bibliography of the Social Sciences; Sociological Abstracts
- **EBSCOhost:** Anthropology Plus, Art full text
- **Scopus:** Scopus is a bibliographic database for science, medicine and some social sciences
- **Web of Science:** ‘Core collection’ includes Science Citation Index and Social Science Citation Index
- **Ovid:** Global Health; MedLine; PsychInfo

**Specialist eResources:**
- **ABIA:** index of South and Southeast Asian art and archaeology: In-depth bibliography (1928-present) covering South and Southeast Asian art, architecture, anthropology, crafts, inscriptions, palaeography, coins and seals from the region.
- **Africa Bibliography:** guide to works in African studies published under the auspices of the International African Institute annually since 1984. The online consolidated version brings together every record collected since the bibliography’s foundation, producing a rich and interactive resource for all scholars interested in the study of Africa.
- **Anthropology Online:** a wide range of written ethnographies, field notes, seminal texts, memoirs, and contemporary studies, covering human behaviour the world over
- **Art Stor:** Images and photographs from around the World, from many museum and private collections.
- **Bibliography of Asian Studies** - all subjects (especially humanities and social sciences) pertaining to East, Southeast, and South Asia
- **Ethnographic Video Online:** contains over 600 hours of classic and contemporary documentaries
- **Informit Indigenous Collection:** The primary focus is material from and about the Asia Pacific region. Full text available.
- **World Cultures** - Information on all aspects of cultural and social life.

**Primary Sources include:**

**News:** Multi-regional
- Nexis UK (BBC Monitoring International Reports under Countries Tab)
- Factiva
- World News Connection
- Foreign Broadcast Information Service
- Emerging Markets Information Service

**News:** Regional
- Nikkei Telecom21 (Japanese news and finance)
- Russian Central newspapers
- Pravda (1912-2009)
- China Core Newspapers Database
- WiseSearch (China)
- Ethnic Newswatch

**Theses and dissertations:**
- ProQuest Dissertations & Theses / Index to Theses / EThOS / ORA

**Conference proceedings & working papers:**
- ZETOC (conference proceedings, British Library) or OCLC databases
- Working papers generally available on institutional websites or subject based repositories such as SSRN.
Web of Science

The Web of Science Core Collections brings together 5 major “citation indexes” including:

- Science Citation Index
- Social Science Citation Index
- Arts & Humanities Citation Indexes
- Conference Proceedings Indexes
- Book Citation Indexes
- Emerging Sources Citation Index

Between them they bring together thousands of journals articles. In addition, Web of Science tracks citations to articles. You can therefore find out which articles and authors have been most heavily cited, and for an individual article you see how often its been cited, which papers have cited it and which papers it cites.

Connecting and choosing citation indexes

1. Connect to SOLO (http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk), search for Web of Science Core Collections and click View Online.

2. You will be prompted to choose between “Link for Users in Oxford (University members login for remote access)” and “University members only (login required for remote access)” If you are off campus it is important to choose “University members only (login required for remote access)”, you will then be able to log in using your Oxford Single sign on (SSO). If you are on campus, it doesn’t matter which option you choose.

3. Click (towards the bottom of the screen). This lists the various databases that you can search from Web of Science (e.g. Science Citation Index, Social Science Citation Index, Arts & Humanities Citation Index etc). You can search across them all, but unless your topic is very interdisciplinary if it often a good idea to limit your search to just one or two databases. By default all the databases are ticked, so untick any that you don’t want to include.

4. Look at the search terms that you came up with in the “Building a search” exercise earlier and work out how to use the terms you identified in Web of Science. Here is an example on the topic of the human rights of child asylum seekers. See the tips below for more information

- Make sure all of the drop down menus are set to Topic and click Search
Working with your results

5. Take a look through your results and try out some of the following actions:
   - Use the options on the left to refine your results list (e.g. by subject)
   - Use the Sort by menu at the top of the screen to sort your results by Times cited (this will bring the articles which have been most heavily cited to the top of the list)
   - Choose some results by ticking the check boxes to the left and email them to yourself (or use the Save to drop down menu to export them to RefWorks or Endnote).

6. Click on one of items in your list to see:
   - An abstract
   - Times cited - A list of later items which have cited the article
   - Cited References (the article’s bibliography – with links to full text)
   - Related records (articles with at least one citation in common)
7. When viewing the article abstract it's also worth looking at the keywords section. This may help you to identify more search terms to use next time.
Citation searching

Citation searching allows you to find new and current research based on earlier research as well as giving you an idea of the impact of a particular paper. The following task uses Web of Science.

- Search SOLO for Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI).
- Search Web of Science SSCI using your structured search from before – you can break down the search as you have done for the ProQuest database and then combine your various searches from the search history.
  - Sort your results by Times Cited – highest to lowest and pick a number of titles that look relevant – these can also be saved to a Marked List.
- Click on the Times Cited number for a title you are interested in. You will see a list of articles that have cited that title – some of which may also be relevant to your research.
- For any number of titles that interest you can set up an email or RSS alert to tell you when they have been cited by a new article.
  - Click on the title of any article that interests you, then select Create Citation Alert in the right hand box.
  - Type your email address and choose the format of the email you want and click Create Alert. (You will need to be signed into Web of Science to create an alert. If you don’t have an account you can set one up at the top of the page).

Cited reference search

This search can show you which articles have cited one particular article. So if I am search for Ewart’s ‘Lines and circles: images of time in a Panarà village’, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 9 (2), 2003, pp. 261-279.
1. Click on ‘cited reference search’
2. Enter the author’s details
3. Enter the journal abbreviation. If you are not sure, search using ‘view abbreviation list’
4. Search

You will retrieve a list of results of articles in this database that cite this article.
Setting up a search alert in Proquest – task [http://search.proquest.com/](http://search.proquest.com/)

Once you have found some useful search results, you can set up an alert that will notify you every time new material is added to the database which matches your search criteria.

- To do this on ProQuest, you first need to have a My Research account, so click on this icon ![User icon](image). in the top right of the screen.

- If you already have an account, **sign in**.

- If you don’t already have a Proquest My Research Account, scroll down to create one by clicking on ![Create a My Research account](image)

- Fill in the short online form and click to **create an account**.

- Then click on ![Go to My Research](image)

- At the top right of the screen, return to your previous search, by clicking on the icon for recent searches: ![Recent searches](image)

- You will see a record of your recent search(es). Hover your mouse over **Actions** to the right of the search you would like to use for your alert.

- To set up an email alert, select the option “Create Alert”.

- Complete the four online steps to set up your alert. **(Note:** make sure you select **Yes**, to include details of the search you used to set up the alert. You may also want to change the default drop down option, to include older documents that are added to the database.)

- ![Alert content settings](image)

  - You will now receive email alerts at the frequency you have chosen, listing all new material added to the database.

- You can also choose to use feed readers, such as Feedly or InoReader to receive your alerts as RSS feeds rather than as emails.
**Keeping up to date with journals - task**

Information sources are increasingly varied and vast, and monitoring the latest developments is especially challenging for those engaged in interdisciplinary research. Developing a method for keeping up to date with new research is a key step in the research management process.

In this task, you will set up an email alert to get new research to come to you from selected academic journals. This task uses JournalTOCs, a freely-available journal current awareness service providing access to recent tables of contents from over 28,000 scholarly journals. Zetoc (http://zetoc.jisc.ac.uk/) is another commonly used email alert service.

### Setting up JournalTOC Email Alerts
- Go to JournalTOCS (http://www.journaltocs.ac.uk)
- If you want to set up email alerts sign up for a JournalTOCS account (centre screen). Registration is free.
- Search for a journal title of your choice.
- Your search results will appear beneath the search box (not in the centre of the screen). Click on a journal title to see the latest table of contents.
- Tick the Follow [ ] check box next to the journal title
- Click on your JournalTOCS log in name (top right) and click Followed Journals
- Check that [ ] Email Alerts is On. You will now receive the table of contents for your chosen journal every time a new issue is published
- To determine how often you receive an email alert click on your log in name and choose Account Settings.
- If you have signed in to JournalTOCS be sure to Sign out at the end of your session and close your web browser using the x in the top right hand corner.

### 2. Other Types of Alerts

It is also possible to set up RSS feeds from many different sources including JournalTocs (by exporting your Followed Journals), SOLO, saved searches in databases, institutional websites, citation alerts for specific articles and so on. You can set up a feed whenever you see the RSS or \( \text{RSS} \) logos.

- Subscribe to an RSS feed for news. Feeds can be found on many library websites including:
  - Bodleian Libraries (general): http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/
  - School of Archaeology events feed: http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/school.xml
Setting up RefWorks

Set up a Refworks account

a. Go to: https://refworks.proquest.com/ or search for Refworks Proquest.
b. Click on create and account and enter your University email address and then click ‘check’ to start the process of setting up your account. NB you MUST use your University email address.
c. Refworks should recognise the address as belonging to Oxford. Now pick a password to continue the signing up process, and click ‘sign up’.
d. An activation email will be sent to your email account. You can then either click on the link or copy and paste the link into a browser to continue.
e. Once you click the activation link, you will be prompted to fill in some details for your account eg name, area of study, type of student.
f. You then have the option of watching a small slideshow with a very brief introduction to Refworks but you bypass this by clicking ‘Skip tutorial’.
g. You should now have your account set up.