



Glossary of Research Terminology

Abstract

A brief synopsis of the work to include goals, aims, and methodologies used by the Author. The abstract provides key terms and concepts which may be used by the researcher to find the work and validate pertinence.

Bibliography

A list of citations which appear at the end of a paper, article, or chapter of a book. Bibliographies on specific subjects or by a particular author are often published as standalone works.

Boolean Searching

Boolean searching refers to the logical relationship among search terms. The Boolean operators include AND, OR, and NOT.

Call Number

A combination of letters and numbers given for each item held in the library. The letters and numbers assigned to the work describe its subject matter and serves as its address on the shelf. This library uses the Library of Congress Classification System to assign its call numbers, which are printed on the spine or front of each item.

Command Line Searching

Command line searching is the ability to limit the fields that are searched by using abbreviated codes for those fields, e.g. **au** for author, **ti** for title, **py** for publication year, etc.

Citation

A reference to a work such as a book or journal article. When you look at a bibliography or search an index, you retrieve citations. They provide the author, title, publication place, and year of a work. Often many other pieces of information such as journal title and page number are added in order to make it easier to locate the work.

Database An organized collection of computer records.

Full Text

A full text database is a resource that provides access to the complete text of an item. In a full text periodical resource, both the bibliographic descriptions and the articles will be available. An example of this type of resource on the library web page is the ATLA Religion database found under the OCLC FirstSearch tool.

Holdings All the materials, in various formats, owned by the library.

Index

A list of citations to journal articles and / or books arranged by subject, author, or title. Indexes may be both print or electronic format.

Journal

The terms periodical, journal, serial, and magazine have slightly different meanings, although they are often used interchangeably. Generally, these are works which are published on a regular basis (weekly, monthly, annually) and contain articles written by various authors. Journals contain peer reviewed articles written by scholars

whereas magazines contain more popular articles often written by journalists. The terms periodical and serial are more generic and refer to all types of these materials.

Keyword Searching

A way to search an index or database for particular words in titles, names, subject headings, abstracts, or other searchable fields. You can combine keywords by using the Boolean operators AND and OR.

Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)

An alphabetical guide which lists the subject headings used for searching in the card catalog.

Limits

Limits place restrictions on retrieved data. This includes language, date, format, and number of pages, etc.

Magazine See Journal.

MARC

An electronic format used for cataloging works in electronic catalogs. The specification is sanctioned by the Library of Congress.

Online Catalog

An electronic or digitized version of a library's card catalog. The FESL's catalog is called *LUTHER* and makes use of Cybertools for Libraries technology which is in Java script – a database of materials held on the library.

OPAC Acronym for Online Public Access Catalog.

Periodical See Journal.

Periodical Index

A published guide which lists contents of specific periodicals. Some are general in focus while others focus on particular subjects like history, science, or religion. Use a periodical index to determine what articles are available for a given author, subject, or topic.

Primary Sources

Primary sources are eyewitnesses or personal accounts that were written at the time of an event.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources are works what are created using the information gathered from primary sources.

Truncation

Truncation uses a symbol bases "shorthand" as an operator at the end of a search term. For example, "library*" retrieves records containing the words "library," "libraries," and "librarian."

URL Universal Resource Locator or web site address.

Wild Card

A wild card allows for the substitution of a symbol (either *, ?, !) for a letter in a word. Example: m?n retrieves both "men" and "man."