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Beyond the “Misleading” Google: An Annotated Compilation
of “Hidden” Academic Databases for Language Research

Writers:

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Abstract:

This article argues that it is misleading for language research writers to always consult Google about every piece of information they look up. The reason is that the best academic part of the Internet is hidden from Google and other traditional search engines. There is an internet behind the Internet, an ‘invisible web’, or a ‘deep web’ as it is commonly called. In fact, Google and other search engines can access only 4% of the whole Internet, while 96% is hidden from us. The article attempts to solve this problem by compiling selected hidden “deep web” sites that are extremely useful for researchers of linguistics, ELT, and literature. Such sites help researchers in getting potential research titles, bibliographies, academic reviews, e-books, and journal articles. The article is thus a call for language research writers to go beyond the misleading Google, and adopt the practice of consulting the “deep web” whenever they begin to write any research paper, be it a graduate research project, an MA thesis, or a doctoral dissertation.



1. Introduction

The main argument of this article is that it is misleading for many language research writers to always consult Google for almost any piece of information they intend to find out. For, the best and most valuable academic part of the Internet is hidden from traditional search engines like Google and Yahoo. There is an internet behind the Internet, an 'invisible web', or a 'deep web' as is commonly called. In fact, Google and other search engines can access only 4% of the whole Internet, while 96% is hidden from us.

This article answers the main question: if a language research writer thinks of writing a research paper (be it a graduation project or an MA or PhD thesis), what are the alternative top-quality 'invisible' 'beyond-Google' sites that he/she can use to write a 'better' research paper? The following sub-questions are also answered: Where to go first for potential research titles? Which site can contain numerous top-quality encyclopedias and specialized dictionaries (i.e. with just one click)? Where to get academic reviews? What to consult for high quality journal articles, critical essays, e-companions and handbooks?

Thus, writers of language research papers are strongly advised to go 'beyond' Google and use the mentioned deep web academic databases. This research paper is hoped to be a 'quick' modest reference guide for all language research writers.

2. "Deep Web": Definitions

Whenever many Linguistics and Literature research writers look up any piece of information on the Internet, they often google it (i.e. they directly go to Google). But that is misleading, at least from the viewpoint of the writer of this article. For, if someone thinks that Google is the Internet, he/she is completely mistaken on this



point. In fact, there are numerous academic websites on Linguistics and Literature that Google cannot grasp. There is an Internet behind the Internet, an 'invisible web', or a "deep web" as it is commonly called. Michael Bergman is credited with coining the term "deep web" in 2001. What is the size of the "deep web" compared to the surface web? According to Bergman's study, Google and other search engines can access only 4% of the whole Internet, while 96% is hidden. Denis Shestakov makes an analogy between the "deep web" and the iceberg, and estimates the "deep web" to be 400 to 550 times larger than the "surface web" (76). The author of this article assumes the "deep web" to be presently larger than this number since more sites are being added almost every hour.

Sherman and Price define the "deep web" as "text pages, files, or other often high-quality authoritative information available via the World Wide Web that general-purpose search engines cannot, due to technical limitations, or will not, due to deliberate choice, add to their indices of Web pages" (57). Bergman too explains that traditional search engines cannot "see" or retrieve content in the deep Web. Yet the deep web includes many very common uses such as email, online banking, and paid-for services such as video-on-demand. A related, yet different, term is "dark web" which came about in 2009 to refer to illegal and criminal online activities (Chen, 3).

3. Why is the deep web hidden?

There is a number of reasons why the "deep web" is hidden. There are sites that require registration and login (password-protected resources). There are also sites that intentionally limit access to their pages such as military ones. In addition, there are files in the "deep web" which cannot be grasped by traditional search engines like Google. Add to that, a certain content of the "deep web" is accessible only with special software. *Tor* is an example of a programme (like Internet Explorer, Firefox,



or Chrome) which is mainly used to access the "deep web" as it which hides the user's IP address.

4. Access Academic Deep Web via Locked Databases

For our academic purposes, the best way to get the "deep web" is to search specific 'databases. This is why this research is a compilation of a number of databases that are extremely useful for writers of research papers in linguistics, ELT, and literature. The compiled databases are an attempt to answer such questions as: if I am expected to write a research paper, where to go first for potential research titles? What is the next step (encyclopedias or bibliography?) Where to get academic reviews? Where to go for top-quality journal articles?

4.1 For Potential Research Topics

The point of this section is that if one wants to find out a potential research topic, he/she should not depend on Google or other traditional search engines. Instead, they can go to specific databases. In this regard, three academic databases are useful for those who look for potential research topics in linguistics and literature. The first database is *Conference Proceedings Citation Index* which allows accessing the most significant conferences, symposia, seminars, colloquia, workshops, and conventions worldwide. It covers the sciences and social sciences from 1990 to present. The second database is *Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA)* which contains abstracts and indexing for articles, books, and other scholarly materials related to linguistics and its sub-disciplines. The coverage is from 1973 to the present. The third one is *Humanities Abstracts and Retrospective* which provides indexing for journals in linguistics, literature, and some other social sciences. The coverage is from 1907 to the present.



4.2 For Bibliographies

Supposed to have arrived at a potential research topic, what is the next step then? A good place is bibliography (a list of references), which is also helpful to conduct a literature review. To repeat, do not consult Google – go to specific databases, instead. An excellent place to get a good bibliography is the academic database, *MLA International Bibliography* which indexes articles, books, and other scholarship related to literature, language, linguistics and folklore. It contains more than 2.7 million records that are constantly updated by scholars in the field. Students at all levels rely on the bibliography to lead them to the journals, books, Web sites, and other publications they need to succeed in their research projects. The coverage is from 1926 to the present.

4.3 For Encyclopedias and Specialized Dictionaries

Having compiled a 'good' bibliography as outlined above, researchers need to have a general idea about the topic they selected. A good place to start is a specialized encyclopedia as well as specialized dictionaries. Again, do not go to Google; instead, consult *Credo Reference*, which features content from hundreds of reference books in a broad range of subjects. Via Credo Reference, the following eleven 'general' dictionaries can be accessed: *The American Heritage(R) Dictionary of the English Language*, *The American Heritage Abbreviations Dictionary*, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, *American Heritage Roget's Thesaurus*, *The American Heritage Student Science Dictionary*, *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate(R) Dictionary*, *The Chambers Dictionary*, *Collins English Dictionary*, *The Dictionary of Alternatives*, *Dictionary of Eponyms*, and *The Macquarie Dictionary*. Via *Credo Reference*, too, the following 'general' encyclopedias can be accessed: *Britannica Concise Encyclopedia*, *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, *The Macmillan Encyclopedia*, and *Philip's*



Encyclopedia. Moreover, *Credo Reference* includes the following top-quality dictionaries and encyclopedias in Linguistics:

The Cambridge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition, Concise Encyclopedia of Sociolinguistic,; Dictionary of Contemporary Slang, Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics, A Dictionary of Sociolinguistics, Dictionary of Untranslatables, Dictionary of Visual Discourse: A Dialectical Lexicon of Terms, Good Word Guide, Key Ideas in Linguistics and the Philosophy of Language, Key Thinkers in Linguistics and the Philosophy of Language, and Rawson's Dictionary of Euphemisms and Other Doubletalk. *Credo Reference* is also useful to literature scholars who can access the following 23 literary references: *The Encyclopedia of Literary and Cultural Theory*, *Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature*, *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, *Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century*, *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Literature*, *Key Terms in Literary Theory*, *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, *The Cambridge Guide to Literature in English*, *Chambers Dictionary of Literary Characters*, *Continuum Encyclopedia of Children's Literature*, *Encyclopedia of Latin American and Caribbean Literature*, *The Literature of War*, *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, *Brewer's Dictionary of Modern Phrase and Fable*, *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, *The Cambridge Guide to Women's Writing in English*, *Chambers Classic Speeches*, *A Historical Companion to Postcolonial Literatures*, *Holocaust Literature: An Encyclopedia of Writers and Their Work*, *The Homer Encyclopedia*, *Keywords for Children's Literature*, and *The Literature of Propaganda*. *Credo Reference* is also helpful to researchers looking up quotations via the following dictionaries: *Bloomsbury Biographical Dictionary of Quotations*, *Bloomsbury Thematic Dictionary of Quotations*, *Chambers Dictionary of Great Quotations*, *Collins Dictionary of*



Quotations, Rawson's Dictionary of American Quotations, and Simpson's Contemporary Quotations.

The second place for general and specialized information about language is *Gale Virtual Reference Library* which contains searchable full text of various subject encyclopedias. A third place is *Gale Directory Library* which provides access to a number of standard reference sources, including the *Encyclopedia of Associations: International, Market Share Reporter, and Ward's Business Directory*. A fourth valuable database is [Oxford Reference Online which contains](#) two million digitized entries across Oxford's Dictionaries, Companions and Encyclopedias, spanning 25 different subject areas. A fifth invaluable database is Cambridge Companions, a collection of full-text, scholarly reviewed essay anthologies on a range of topics in literature, the classics, philosophy, culture and religion. The collection is best for searching on particular authors, movements, eras and works.

A sixth resource is *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, an encyclopedia of literary figures with strongest coverage of those working in English. Entries interweave author biography with a discussion of their works and include substantial references for further research. The resource also includes entries for notable screenwriters, journalists, publishers and children's authors.

4.4 For Book Reviews

During the process of 'reviewing literature' (i.e. a survey of the most relevant writings on the research topic), researchers inevitably need to write reviews of a number of books. Again, it is advisable not go to Google; instead, use the two 'hidden' databases: The first, *Book Review Digest and Retrospective*, provides references to more than two million fiction and nonfiction books, covering contents



from 1905 to the present. The second, *Books in Print*, helps to find information about every book currently in print.

4.5 E-Books

To get reliable electronic textbooks and criticism, go directly to six databases as follows: *Oxford Scholarship Online* offers [complete](#) texts of over 1,800 Oxford books including Classical Studies titles; *Ebscohost* and *Ebrary* are databases of full text books on all subjects; [Education Research Complete](#) is the most comprehensive resource for education research; [ERIC](#) provides access to journal articles, conferences, meetings, government documents, theses, dissertations, reports, audiovisual media, bibliographies, directories, and books; [Google Books](#) searches the full text of millions of books, some of which are available in full-text; *Early English Books Online (EEBO)* contains over 100,000 English texts first published in the 15th through 17th centuries.

4.6 For Critical Essays

Two databases are suggested here: *Literature Criticism Online* and *Literature Online*. The former includes full-text biographical and critical essays on major poets, playwrights, novelists and other writing through history and across language. Emphasis is on Western authors writing in English. All materials come from the *Gale Literature Criticism* series. The latter provides full-text, searchable access to a wide range of English language literary works, criticism, and reference sources. Robust searching allows users to find authors by nationality, ethnicity, movement and period. As for Shakespearean criticism, an excellent source is the annual collection, *Shakespeare Survey*. Each volume is organized around a particular theme.



4.7 For Academic Journal Articles

During the research process, researchers inevitably need to read academically refereed journal articles. The following fourteen 'hidden' databases are extremely useful:

1. *JSTOR* provides the searchable full text of the back files of many of the core research and academic society published journals in almost all subject areas, but its emphasis is on the humanities and social sciences. The majority of JSTOR's content is academic and peer-reviewed. One can get e-books too via *JSTOR*.
2. [*Project Muse*](#) provides full-text access to a selection of prestigious humanities and social sciences journals.
3. [*ProQuest Education Journals*](#) covers the literature on primary, secondary, and higher education, as well as special education, home schooling, adult education, and hundreds of related topics. It includes 640 full text journals and its coverage is from 1991 to the present.
4. [*Literature Resource Center*](#) includes full text access to a wide range of sources for literary research, including peer-reviewed journal articles, book reviews, biographical and topical overview essays and poetry and short fiction from contemporary literary magazines.
5. [*Education Research Complete*](#) is the most comprehensive resource for education research. One can find articles (including full text and scholarly articles), books, and conference papers in all areas of education. Includes information about books and articles written in the last 100 years.
6. [*Academic OneFile*](#) features articles from a variety of disciplines, including linguistics and literature.



7. [Academic Search Premier](#) is a giant database that covers more than 8,000 journals, nearly 3,900 peer-reviewed titles.
8. [Cambridge Journals Online](#) is a collection of well-respected and peer reviewed journals which represent a wide variety of subject areas from Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Sciences.
9. [Wiley Online Library](#) offers full text articles and other information about various topics, especially medicine, science, and technology.
10. [Sage Journals](#) allows researchers to find full-text articles in journals published by Sage in the fields of communications, criminology, education, health sciences, materials science, management, political science, psychology, sociology, and urban studies, from 1879 to the present.
11. [ERIC](#) (Educational Resources Information Center) database is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. It provides access to journal articles, conferences, meetings, government documents, theses, dissertations, reports, audiovisual media, bibliographies, directories, and books.
12. [Essay and General Literature Index](#) provides references to more than 335,000 essays in anthologies and collections. Its coverage is from 1900 to the present.
13. [Periodicals Archives Online](#) is a major archive of the back files of scholarly periodicals in the arts, humanities and social sciences, providing access to the searchable full text of hundreds of titles. The database spans more than two centuries of content, 37 key subject areas, and multiple languages.
14. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context* is a rich resource for debaters as it includes both contrary viewpoints (for and against) a controversial topic, such as "co-education" or "democracy". Specific titles include *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *Foreign Policy*, *American Scientist*, and *Education Week*.



5. Alternative-to-Google Deep Web Search Engines

The following is a list of deep-web search engines that are alternative to Google: Swoogle, Tor, Torch, DuckDuckGo, Onion URL Repository, The WWW Virtual Library, notEvil, ParaZite, TorLinks, Touchgraph, Ahmia.fi, Yippy, BASE-Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals), Google Deeper Web Search , Internet Archive (Including the Way Back Machine), Internet Public Library, The Labyrinth , MagPortal , Voice of the Shuttle (VoS), Yovisto: Academic Videos, Virtual Private Library, Research Resources Online Guide , Bright Planet , Copernic, and HighWire Press.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to change the practice of researchers in linguistics, ELT, and literature who wrongly think that Google *is* the Internet. The article calls all language researchers to go 'beyond' Google and, instead, consult the 'hidden' 'deep web' which yields more relevant and accurate results of far higher quality ever. It is an annotated compilation of selected invisible academic databases that are of immense help to language researchers in getting potential research topics, academic reviews, e-books, critical essays, and journal articles.

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