**[Campbell Collaboration Best Practices:
Grey & International Literature](https://ktdrr.org/training/webcasts/webcast50/index.html)**

Presented by David Pickup, Concordia University

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ANN OUTLAW: Hello and welcome, everyone, to today's webcast entitled, Campbell Collaboration Best Practices: Grey and International Literature. I am Ann Outlaw from the American Institutes for Research, or AIR, who led the development of this webcast.

This webcast is offered through the Center on Knowledge Translation for Disability and Rehabilitation Research, or KTDRR, which is funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, NIDILRR. We have information that accompanies today's webcast on our website, and this includes a PDF of the PowerPoint slides and a text description of the training material.

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Today I am pleased to be introducing David Pickup to our audience. He is a librarian working as the Information Specialist for the Systematic Review Team at Concordia University's Center for Study of Learning and Performance.

For the past eight years, he has consulted with teams working on Campbell Collaboration systematic reviews, first as the trial search advisor for education coordinating group, and more recently, consulting with the disability coordinating group.

He routinely reviews the search strategies for collaboration protocols and finished reviews. Thank you so much for joining us, David.

DAVID PICKUP: Thank you for having me. As Ann mentioned, I've worked for about eight years now with the Campbell Collaboration in one capacity or other consulting on systematic reviews, and I do a lot of review and peer review of search strategies intended for final reviews, either through the protocol stage or actually finished reviews. And I'm here today mainly to share a couple of my insights, having done that for a number of years now, and hopefully, as you're intending to do, a systematic review for Campbell or for another group, you'll find the information presented today useful.

So today's presentation is focused on two main areas-- and they're areas that tend to be areas of weakness when I'm reviewing protocols-- often the search strategies for the databases can be quite detailed, but Campbell does require that researchers make an attempt to locate both grey literature and international sources of information. And often those strategies are either missing or just aren't very detailed.

So hopefully today I'll present a few different options for you to go out and find grey literature, and how to devise a proper, full strategy to locate it. And I'll share a number of international sources of information with you. We'll talk about that a little bit later, but specifically Canadian resources, Australian resources, and British resources.

When I review protocols for Campbell, I do have a checklist that they provided me that I worked my way through, and there are separate boxes for those three things-- British, Australian, and Canadian. So it is worth taking the time to try to address those needs. It will help sail through the protocol review process smoothly.

So we'll begin with grey literature. So what this term refers to is sort of a librarian term I suppose, but it basically refers to publications that don't go through the usual publication process. Basically, not commercially published by academic journals but made available through other means. So this includes mainly reports-- both publicly funded and privately funded research reports-- it also includes things like theses and dissertations, conference papers, manuscripts that are sort of works in progress, that kind of thing.

It also includes things like locally generated research. For example, working in education, sometimes you come across research projects that school boards have done and then published on their website. Sometimes that gets picked up and aired but not always. So we'll talk about how to go about finding all those kinds of information.

So there are a number of options. First off, there are a couple of databases that have been set up over the years that try to accumulate and organize grey literature. Probably the most prominent is OpenGrey.au. So this is a European database, so it also helps to address the issue of international sources that we will be getting to later.

This is a multi-disciplinary database, so it covers the sciences, social sciences and the humanities. The records are in English, though not all the full text items will be in English, and things you'll find here are things like technical or research reports, there will be doctoral dissertations from European countries, conference papers, and other types of grey literature.

It's great as a database. It's quite searchable and it's a pretty easy resource to get familiar with.

Our next item here-- ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. So this is a great database provided by the ProQuest platform. And it is the largest collection of doctoral dissertations and masters theses available online.

It indexes primarily papers produced by North American colleges and universities and there is a lot of PDF full-text access available. For older dissertations, not always, sometimes you have to request them through the inter-library loan to get them from their institutions, but for more modern current dissertations, they're usually available in PDF form.

Until a few years ago, the word global usually wasn't included in the title of this database. They have made an attempt in recent years to include non-American, non-North American dissertations, so there is more of that material in there. However, they still have a skew towards North American colleges and universities. But it is a great place to find dissertations and masters theses.

The next resource listed here, Conference Proceedings Citation Index, this is part of the offerings of the Web of Science or Web of Knowledge database. It's usually checked off by default when you search Web of Science, usually you're searching several collections and this is one of them.

Its main purpose is to offer cited reference searching, to see sort of what the full impact of a conference is. You can see how often papers from a conference are cited, which you might like to submit to for example. So from the standpoint of researchers doing a review, it can be a very useful source for identifying relevant conferences. You can find some conference papers here, obviously, but often once you've identified a good conference, it's sometimes necessary to then go to the conference websites, try to locate their proceedings or abstracts, and review them manually, or if they're searchable, go through the conference website itself.

But it is a good source for identifying conferences.

Next here, I have specialist websites/resources. So what I mean here are basically websites for things like research groups, think tanks, professional associations and societies, government agencies-- just various websites and online resources, which, depending on what the topic is you're researching, that will probably inform your choice.

But the Campbell Information Retrieval Guide, which I have referenced here at the bottom, this guide includes several appendices that have exhaustive lists of specialist websites that you might want to consult divided by geography and by topic area. So when you're setting out to do a review, we certainly suggest you consult this guide and consult this list and sort of identify resources that you can use as part of your grey literature strategy.

LearnTeachLib is a resource, an online library journal of publications and conference papers by the Association for the Advancement of Computing and Education. So they organized several conferences and they put all their conference papers and proceedings, as well as some journal articles into this library. So we've found it a very useful resource for a grey literature.

However, I would argue that probably the best resource for locating grey literature is simply Google. And I mean here just regular Google, not Google Scholar. If you go through Google Scholar, you will find probably relevant materials, however, you won't be finding grey literature, because most of what you'll be finding will be formally published journal articles.

But if you want to try to find grey literature, or just plain old Google can be very helpful, especially if you use Google's advanced search form, which don't broadcast or highlight very much, but it does exist. And it can be useful, at least in this situation.

So we're going to look briefly at the advanced search form and then I'm going to go there and demonstrate it, but there's basically two parts to the Google advanced search form. This is the top half of the form and we'll look at the bottom half in just a second.

The top half is not the most useful search form in the world. It does not have the same kind of functionality that you get with the big graphic databases and being exhumed for multiple fields including logic. It has a different style of search. So this top row here, all these words, that is basically doing a regular Google search. All the words you enter there will have to appear in the search results. So the more words you put, the less results you're going to get.

This exact word or phrase simply places quotation marks around whatever you enter in here. So something like, early childhood education, you put that in, when you click search, it would add quotation marks around it. So not the most useful field in the world here.

Any of these words basically allows you to enter some optional words. So Google will stick an or operator between all the words you enter here. So it's a way to sort of enter some optional words into your search.

None of these words, pretty self-explanatory. Any words you enter here, it'll remove any results that contain that word. Numbers ranging from-- basically you can enter a number range. You can try to use this to limit by year, but it worked entirely smoothly, it's not really intended for that purpose but it can be somewhat effective in doing so.

So this is the bottom half of the form, which is a bit more useful. So you can limit by language, by region-- which I'll talk about a little bit later-- but there are two that I want to draw your attention to right now, which is, first of all, this-- site or domain, and then file type.

So when you're narrowing your results by site or domain, basically it allows you to limit the results to a particular domain extension. So .edu will return only websites that are essentially American University websites. Limiting to .org will return organization websites, so NGOs non-profit organizations, that kind of thing. .Gov would return only US government websites. .Gc.ca would return Canadian government websites, for example.

And the other one I wanted to point out was file type. The main file type you might want to consider is PDF. So basically, if you limit your search to file type PDF, then all the results will be direct links to PDF files. So you're more likely to get actual publications and not just their general web sites.

So it's a lot quicker to search through them. You're more like they get something that is a final product rather than just a website. And I thought now we would go to the advanced search form, and I would just sort of demonstrate this.

All right, so hopefully you are now seeing my screen. So I'm just going to enter a fairly simple search just to demonstrate this form. So one thing you will need to accommodate when you're searching in Google is that there is really no way to do a single sort of master search the way you might do in a database. After you've done some trials, you might just finally enter all your keywords separated by Boolean logic, truncated, whatever you intended to do, one massive search in the database.

With Google, you should expect to have to do multiple searches. I normally do maybe 10 to 20 different searches as I try out different keyword combinations. And then we maintain a practice of say, going through the first 10 pages of results.

So this exact phrase, as I said will place quotation marks around whatever you enter here, so I'll just put professional development, but you can also just manually put the quotation marks in yourself. And in any of these words-- OK, well I've tried this earlier, so everything is pre-filing for me. So I'll just put special needs learning disability.

So when I click search, basically Google will insert an or in here between these two terms. None of these words are not going to use.

So I'll just click Advanced Search. Let's see what this comes up. So 820,000 results. That's quite a few. As I've said, that bottom half of the form is really where you start to really narrow your search nicely. So for example, if you say .edu here-- click Advanced Search-- all my results now will be you American university websites, so we will get a lot more theses and dissertations.

Often faculty members will upload conference papers, sometimes for future conferences, so you can get stuff that hasn't actually been published yet. Sometimes, if a university publishes a small e-journal that may not be indexed elsewhere, that will come up in this kind of search as well. So you get a lot less results-- we're down to 34,500-- and they're much more likely to be relevant to research.

If I do .org again, I'll see less results, and here we'll get a lot more research groups, nonprofit organizations, NGOs, that type of material.

I'm going to say .gov. And then as I mentioned for file type, you change this to PDF. So now, since I've limited to .gov and PDF, this will provide direct links to PDFs located on US government web sites. So you've got a lot more research reports.

Sometimes dissertations get picked up by this type of searching. But mainly it'll be research reports. As well, sometimes you'll pick up journal articles on the public version of the ERIC database since it's a .gov, but mainly these will be reports from various agencies of the US government.

So I think, typically when I work on projects and we figure out our grey literature strategy, we certainly use certain specialized databases like OpenGrey, like ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, but by far, most of what we find is found using just the regular Google Advanced Search form like I've been demonstrating here.

All right, so, moving right along. The second thing I wanted to discuss today was searching internationally. So the Campbell Collaboration methods encourage researchers to search for non-US information, the assumption being that most researchers are using North American databases that contain mainly American research. And so just to avoid any potential biases, they encourage researchers to look further afield.

And as I mentioned earlier, that checklist I use when going through protocols and reviews, there are check boxes for Canadian, Australian, and British research, whether or not the researchers attempted to locate any.

I suspect that this is largely because they assume most researchers for Campbell are operating in English and so these are English-speaking countries. But depending on the makeup of your team, or even depending on the topic that you're researching, other countries may be reasonable choices. But the main thing is to sort of search beyond the North American databases, try to find information from further afield.

So there are a couple of ways to do so. Again, there are specialized databases, so Canadian-specific databases, Australian-specific databases, and then there are special resources, online websites, that you might be able to use to find additional information.

So I haven't brought up an exhaustive list of these. I'm just going to highlight a couple of options for each of the three and then for broader international searching.

So before I do that, just a quick note-- so, when you're searching with the intent to find international information, it is important to remember that we don't all spell things the same way. So, in this case, in a sort of crossway, most Americans will spell socialization with a Z, most British people will spell it with an S. Most Brits will spell neighborhood with the O-U, and Americans of course just drop the U.

Canadians kind of do half and half, we spell socialization with the Z but neighborhood with the U.

So one way to sort of get around these alternate spellings is with skillful use of truncation. So just try to truncate the word in such a way that you match both spellings at the same time without having to search both words separately.

So in terms of Canadian resources, there are two main databases that you might want to consider. So Canadian Business & Current Affairs, CBCA, is a database and probably the most comprehensive database that's focused on Canada. It combines content from three subject-specific databases. Those are CBCA Business, CBCA Education, and CBCA Reference and Current Events.

They describe themselves as having broad coverage from a Canadian perspective spanning things such as agriculture, business, economics, education, government and politics, health, history, literature, medicine, social sciences, and many more subject areas. So it's very much a multidisciplinary database. You will find a bit of everything in there.

One point of caution. It does contain a lot of newspapers and magazines, particularly through the current events section. So it's usually advisable to use the filters to sort of remove those kinds of materials.

The Canadian Research Index, CRI, is another good database. It's usually provided by ProQuest. And this database is one that collects government-published information. So anything published by the federal government in Canada, like research reports, for example, provincial governments and territorial governments, so you'll find things like scientific and political reports, monographs and serials published by Statistics Canada, which I'll talk about in a second.

And so it is good it is a good database to use both for finding Canadian information and for finding grey literature, because what you find in here is mainly reports of things like that.

One thing to caution you with about the CRI is that they don't have a lot of full-text access. It's improving, but historically they provided access to materials through microforms. Most Canadian university libraries had a server microfiche section where they kept all these government reports. But increasingly they are being made available through PDFs.

So in terms of other resources, so Statistics Canada is the main research arm of the Canadian federal government. So they are responsible for the census, for example, in this country. They also compile and publish research reports and they are made freely and publicly available through their websites. So you can both search and browse stats can. Browsing often works quite nicely, they have a nice menu system that you can work your way through. But they do have search forms, obviously. And that's their only resource that you could consider.

One of the issues when it comes to searching internationally is often our institutions don't necessarily have access to international databases. But Stats Can is at least free and publicly available, so that certainly is an option that everyone can make use of.

And finally, the Canadian Public Policy Collection. This, at least at my institution, is provided by EBSCO. It's a rather large database, they claim they have over 43,000 documents. These are mainly monographs, so books and e-books, but also reports from Canadian Public Policy Institutes, government agencies, advocacy groups. They include things like stuff published by university research centers, think tanks, that kind of material. So if you have active access to this database, it's worth checking.

So in terms of Australian resources, I'm a little bit less familiar with these. I live in Canada, I'm Canadian, so I know those resources a bit better. But I do know the Australian Council for Education Research is an excellent group, at least in the domain of education.

They have put together several options for researchers. First and foremost, they compile and produce the Australian Education Index, which is, at least in education, probably the best resource for locating Australian materials. The database has over 200,000 entries related to educational research, policy, and practice. So Australian articles from leading Australian journals are certainly indexed there as well as other materials.

ACER, or the Australian Council for Educational Research, also produces the ed research online resource, which makes freely available many leading Australian journals. You won't get direct access to full text, but you can search there, and then either through interlibrary loan or checking on Google, you can see if you can track down the full-text articles. But this allows you to at least access the AEI materials online without a database subscription.

The Analysis & Policy Observatory, the APO, is an online resource mainly focused on policy. It contains about 32,000 resources at last count, according to their website. And they have a strong emphasis on grey literature reports. So again, this can kill two birds with one stone. You can both look for grey literature and for Australian resources.

So this resource is based at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne. They work with partners from various universities across Australia and various organizations and research groups as well as in New Zealand and elsewhere. Their search features are limited, but once you do a search, they do have some very nice post-search filter options which you can employ to focus and narrow your results.

So in terms of British resources, again, this is education-specific, but the British Education Index is a great database. It is quite large-- over 260,000 articles, mainly from the UK, but there are other journals in there as well. As well as 10,000 dissertations and theses from the United Kingdom. So it's also a source for that kind of material.

In terms of special resources, I listed two here-- both of them work in the area of systematic reviews. That's the EPPI-Centre and Cochrane Collaboration. The EPPI-Centre is the publisher of systematic reviews as well as primary research. You might find materials on their website, it's good for identifying existing reviews so you can see what they've done, you can also look at what studies were included and do some citations searching on those.

And the Cochrane Collaboration is, of course, a leader in the field of systematic review and meta analyses focused largely on health interventions, and again, they have a database that you can search to see what has been there previously and identify other reviews that might be worth looking at.

Overall, I'd say the Campbell searching for studies guide has a very good list of additional resources. As I mentioned, they are subdivided by region and by topic area. So if you're planning to do a review I would certainly have a look at that, go through that list, and try to identify some that seem appropriate for your research question and project.

So in terms of other international resources, so beyond Canada, Australia, Britain, here are a few that you might want to consider. So FRANCIS, up until I think 2015, the end of 2015, at least at my institution was offered through the EBSCO platform. However, they have since gone full open access.

So they're now publicly available online merged with PASCAL. And FRANCIS and PASCAL have a good focus on France, but also Europe more broadly.

I did do some trial searching earlier on their new freely available open access version, and I did find for the most recent years, there wasn't as much coverage. I don't know how much of that we have to maintain things going forward, but it remains a good option, especially now that it's freely available online. If your institution doesn't have access to anything else, then you should consider FRANCIS and PASCAL as options.

They have coverage of fields from basic and Applied Sciences, biomedical, humanities, and social sciences. So again, it's very multi-disciplinary and it indexes a large number of European journals, many of which aren't indexed elsewhere.

PAIS, or the PAIS index, is a large database-- over half a million journal articles, books, government documents, research reports, conference papers, and more-- their emphasis is very international in outlook. They have publications from over 120 different countries, included in a range of languages, so that's something you might want to consider. When you're doing your searches as limited to English here, often title and abstracts are translated but the full text will be in some other language.

The subject matter they cover is mainly within the realm of Public Affairs, policy and politics. But that touches obviously on a whole diverse array of topics.

So in terms of special resources, so the United Nations has a number of different resources online for researchers. The one I want to talk about today is the Dag Hammarskjold Library. So when you go to search this resource, there are two options that are presented to you. The first is what they called Dag Discovery.

This searches mainly journals, actually. They have quite a collection of journals and conference papers and such that they have included in a database. So that's an option.

However, if you're searching for, say, grey literature, then the second option might be a better one. The second option is what they call the UN Bibliographic Information System, or UNBISNET. So when you search using that second option, it searches only UN documents and publications, so UN-generated research and publications.

So for grey literature that's the better option, but if you're just searching broadly and you want to find traditional academic sources as well, then the BAG Discovery option certainly merits your time.

Next I have here the OECD library. So this is an online library presented by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. It features mainly books and monographs, although they do have papers and they often for reports separate out individual chapters.

The collection also contains content published by several other international organizations all in one spot. So you will find materials by the International Energy Agency, Nuclear Energy Agency, the OECD Development Center, the International Transport Forum, and the Program for International Student Assessment, PISA.

So as of 2017, they claim to index over 11,000 e-books, 59,000 separate book chapters, and over 5,000 working papers. So again, it's a good resource both for international information and for grey literature.

But the last option I want to mention for searching internationally is, once again, plain old regular Google. The Advanced Search form we looked at earlier, one of the filters at the bottom half of the page is Region. So I'm going to go back to the form just for a moment.

All right, so back here on the Advanced Search form-- so I glossed over this earlier, but there is this often here, this dropdown for region. So what this does is that it limits your search results to pages published within a particular region. So it's not perfect by any means. But if, for example, especially if your institution doesn't particularly have access to any international databases or Canadian databases, well this is one way that you could address that need for searching for, say, Canadian research, is just to go to the Google Advanced Search form. Limit to Canada. I'll remove the .gov, because that won't work for Canada, and just click Advanced Search.

So this is still limited to PDF. So this is finding PDFs that match our search that were published within Canada. So that's one way to address that need as well. And so you can do Australia, United Kingdom, whatever you like. So that can be very useful for addressing that particular need.

So to wrap up and conclude, it's important, I think, to articulate a detailed strategy for locating grey literature. Often when I'm looking at protocols and reviews, grey literature will be mentioned. Something like a throwaway line that we will search for grey literature, such as dissertations, etc. But very little detail is provided in terms of how the research is intended to go about that.

I think it is important to include as much detail for the grey literature search then is included for the database searches. Some things to consider is a specialist database like OpenGrey, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, list the places you intend to look. Certainly you want to identify some special resources, websites that you will consult.

This is where the searching for studies guide can be very helpful. You can go through that list and identify some key resources.

Conferences-- it's important, our practice that my team often-- once we've done our Google searches, if we start identifying conference papers, we will follow up and have a closer look at those conferences and see if there's other relevant materials that were presented at that same conference.

And then the Google Advanced Search form. Make use of the domain limits like .edu, .org, et cetera. Make use of that PDF limit. It will save you going from a lot of just sort of promotional websites and commercial web sites. You'll get direct access to publications.

And for international information, again, this is difficult. Often you are sort of limited in terms of what your institution actually subscribes to. You could try to consult a librarian at another university. In the past I've done searches of Canadian databases for researchers, for example. Hopefully that's something that we could expand on in the future.

But if you don't have access to those special geographic-limited databases, again the Google Advanced search form can be helpful here limiting by region. It at least gives you some manner to claim that you made an attempt to locate, say, Australian information.

And again, special resources-- consult the Campbell guide. So I think if you do those things, I certainly buy in to one that's reviewing your protocol and you've included these kinds of steps, I will be suitably impressed.

I do think it's something that researchers and systematic review should be more aware of, at least in terms of the need for detailed strategies not just stating that you will address it, but how you will address it.

So I hope that you found this brief presentation helpful. Thank you to Ann and the American Institute for Research for having me. Good luck with your research projects and happy searching.

ANN OUTLAW: Thank you so much David for such an informative presentation to our audience. I'm sure a lot of the researchers who are working on systematic reviews will appreciate the depth of the resources you shared about the grey and international literature for their work. And I'd like also to remind and encourage everyone to fill out the evaluation form following the link at the bottom of the slide. We'll email it to all of you who registered and you can also find it on our website which is ktdrr.org.

It helps us plan future events, and also you can ask your questions to David. Include your email address if you'd like to get your answers back to you. On a side note, I serve as the managing editor of the Disability Coordinating Group at the Campbell Collaboration. So if any of you are interested in working on a systematic review in disability research, please indicate this in your evaluation and I'll be in touch.

So, on a final note, I'd like to thank the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, or NIDILRR for providing funding for this webcast. And we would force your participation in our future events.

Thank you, David.