

Michelle Berman

INFO 244, Spring 2025

Exercise 1 - Introduction to Dialog

February 17, 2025

Exercise #1 Search Questions

Question No. 4

- Locate an item record for the William Badke article read in Weeks 1, “The Path of Least Resistance.” Use **two different strategies** searching on different aspects of the article to find the item record (e.g., (1) title search or (2) some combination of elements of what is known to you). Provide the bibliographic information for the item.

The Path of Least Resistance

Badke, William. Online Searcher 37.1: 65-67. Information Today, Inc. (Jan/Feb 2013)

- Next, review your results for the requested item. Is the full text available on Dialog?
Yes, in PDF format from the ABI/INFORM database.

Search Answer Template

Databases: ABI/INFORM® Professional Advanced, APA PsycInfo®, Australian Education Index, British Library Inside Conferences, Business & Industry, ERIC, Gale Group Trade & Industry Database™, Social SciSearch®

Set#	Searched for	Results
S4	ti("The Path of Least Resistance")	117°
S5	au.exact("badke, william" OR "badke, william e") AND ab(search*)	59°

A. Search Planning:

Question Number: __4__

Search Plan

For the first strategy, I will begin by selecting a set of databases that seem like they might contain the article, a mix of educational and social science-specific databases with business and trade journals, and then conduct a search for the exact title in the title field. For the second strategy, I will use the same databases, but instead search for the

author's name and the keyword "search" in the abstract, since I remember search being the subject of the article.

Database (e.g., specific or by industry group):

ABI/INFORM® Professional Advanced Trial, APA PsycInfo®, Australian Education Index, British Library Inside Conferences, Business & Industry, ERIC, Gale Group Trade & Industry Database™, Social SciSearch®

Fields or other limiters (author, dates, document types, etc.):

First search: ti("The Path of Least Resistance")

Second search: au,exact("badke, william" OR "badke, William e") AND ab(search*)

Contingency planning (what to do if I retrieve too little or too much?):

Too little: Expand databases searched to full set available on Dialog

Too much: Filter using other search terms related to the content of the article

B. Evaluation of Search Results:

Despite the somewhat generic nature of the title, finding the correct article was much easier using the exact title search: it was the sixth result, even though there were more results overall compared to the second search. Luckily there were only 13 articles with the same exact title in the databases I searched, and those were ranked before those that contained additional words. The second search, which combined the author's name with the term "search" in the abstract field, returned 59 results, but I didn't find the correct article until the 42nd result, on the third and last page of results. This is perhaps unsurprising, since William Badke has a lot of publications about search! I think using a more specific term, like "Google," or combining author with other pieces of information, like journal title or date, might have been more effective at narrowing down the results.

C. Reflection on the Overall Search Experience:

Performing a known-item search with limited information can be difficult. Marcia Bates (1979) describes a search tactic she calls CUT, which involves selecting "the option that cuts out, eliminates, the largest part of the search domain at once" (p. 209). I decided to answer this question without refreshing my memory by looking at the Badke article

again, so my choice of options was limited. If I had remembered that the article discussed Google and searched for that term in the abstract field instead of the more generic “search,” the query would have only returned 38 results, and the correct article would have appeared higher in those results. And if I had remembered that the article was published in 2013, that would have only returned only six results. It seems important to assess which pieces of information you have are most specific and will return the fewest false positives. Article titles should be helpful in this regard, at least if you know an exact phrase and not just a few words that might appear in many document titles. Author name should also be helpful, but some authors are so prolific that there will still be many results to look through. Knowing where to look is also important; if I had searched the document title in the full set of databases, I would have gotten 374 records instead of 117, although Badke’s article still appears on the first page of results.

References

Bates, M. J. (1979). Information search tactics. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 30(4), 205–214.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.4630300406>

Question No. 3

- A faculty member visits you at the reference desk to request assistance locating a scholarly article published within the last two years that examines the factors influencing adult learners’ sustained participation in online learning environments. The faculty member cannot remember the publication source but believes it was published in an academic journal, and the article they have in mind discussed how perceived interactivity and perceived added value impacted the adult learners’ satisfaction. Your help is needed to locate a relevant item. Provide the bibliographic information, any abstract, and indexing for the item you believe most adequately meets the research need. Briefly summarize why your selected article best fulfills the faculty member’s request.

Author: Shatila, Suzanne N.

Article Title: Not Alone When I'm Feeling Stressed: Online Adult Learner Connection and Retention

Journal: Adult Education Quarterly: A Journal of Research and Theory 74.1: 43-61

Publication Year: 2024

Abstract: Increasingly, nontraditional students (over age 25, employed, parenting) are enrolling in universities offering online options. Online programs appeal to those needing flexible educational options, yet attrition remains high for adult learners and students enrolled in online education. Building on previous research, this study examines relationships between social location, role identity, social connectedness, and academic perseverance among online adult learners. Survey results from students (n = 254) enrolled in online programs were analyzed, examining relationships between social connectedness and self-reported academic outcomes. Results showed that participants were confident in their ability to navigate school and competing priorities but recognized peer connection's value in supporting better academic

outcomes; as perceptions about social connection's value increased, so too did the perception that connection fostered better academic outcomes. Implications for fostering nontraditional student social connectedness in online learning are discussed.

Indexing terms: Adult Learning; Electronic Learning; Nontraditional Students; Geographic Location; Role; Social Environment; Academic Persistence; Peer Relationship; Interaction; Academic Achievement; Student Satisfaction; Stress Variables; Student Participation; Private Colleges; Catholic Schools; College Students

This article was published in a scholarly journal within the last two years, and concerns reducing attrition rates among adult students enrolled in online education. It discusses the relationship between “social connectedness and self-reported academic outcomes,” as well as student perceptions of the value of connection with peers. Between the abstract and indexing terms, all the concepts mentioned in the faculty member’s request are covered, though sometimes the exact terminology used differs: adult students, online learning, interactivity (social connectedness), student satisfaction, sustained participation (perseverance), and perceptions of value. I added the highlighting to draw out the similarities between the query and the record.

Search Answer Template

Databases: APA PsycInfo®, ERIC

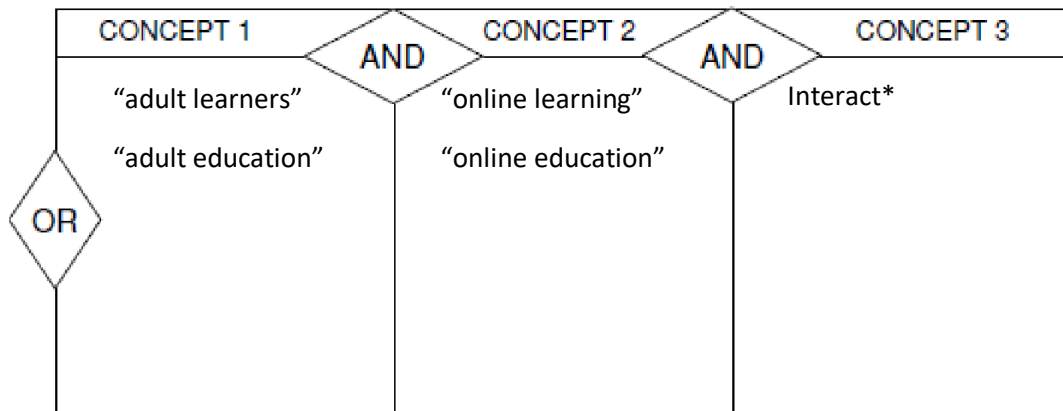
<u>Set#</u>	<u>Searched for</u>	<u>Results</u>
<u>S1</u>	<u>((("adult learners" OR "adult education")) AND ("online learning" OR "online education")) AND interact*</u>	<u>219°</u>
<u>S2</u>	<u>((("adult learners" OR "adult education")) AND ("online learning" OR "online education")) AND interact*) and (stype.exact("Scholarly Journals"))</u>	<u>121°</u>
<u>S3</u>	<u>((("adult learners" OR "adult education")) AND ("online learning" OR "online education")) AND interact*) and (stype.exact("Scholarly Journals") AND pd(20230101-20251231))</u>	<u>17°</u>

A. Search Planning:

Question Number: ____3____

Search Plan

Important Ideas:



Database (e.g., specific or by industry group):

ERIC & APA PsycInfo

Fields or other limiters (author, dates, document types, etc.):

2023-2025, source type: scholarly journals

Contingency planning (what to do if I retrieve too little or too much?):

Too little: Expand dates, expand source types, examine thesaurus terms for better matches to the query concepts

Too much: Add value, satisfaction, and/or participation as additional terms

B. Evaluation of Search Results:

Adding filters for date and scholarly journal quickly brought my search results down to 17, a very manageable number to quickly scan. The article I selected happened to be the number one result, but only the top ten results were highly relevant to the query. Luckily, the faculty member's memory of the publication date and journal type seem to have been accurate.

A. Reflection on the Overall Search Experience:

This search ended up being simpler than I initially expected. I was worried that my original query might not be specific enough, since I did not include concepts like value,

satisfaction, or participation, but when I discovered that all three terms were included in either the abstract or the indexing terms, it increased my confidence that I had discovered the correct article. I could see this type of search being more difficult and prolonged if the requester had misremembered the date, journal type, or other important information used in filtering results. Also, I could have included more variants of my search terms, like “adult students” and “electronic learning,” but in this case the terms I used proved sufficient.