

## Searching the foreign world: creating a guide for finding non-English resources at Monash University Library

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Monash University Library has recently created a self-learning module to find non-English language resources in Library Search. The aim is to reduce difficulties finding resources for library users, and to develop a library guide with interactive resources to assist library users finding non-English language resources. Our E-learning project team has had a number of meetings with several foreign language experts. One of the general issues found was how to deal with non-English scripts as characters and different Romanization/Transliteration for each language. Up until recently, the library had specialised service points including the Asian Studies Research Collection service point. After the library refurbishment, these were consolidated into a single information point, and now centralised information is needed for users and Information Point staff.

Several surveys, interviews, forums and presentations were conducted with successful feedback. The advice and encouragement we found from our users and library colleagues have led to the launch of modules for Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Cyrillic languages which can be found here:

<http://guides.lib.monash.edu/finding-non-english-resources>

Being involved as one of the E-learning project members, I will write from my experience using the Japanese language module as an example.

When finding Japanese language resources, it is guided by the module set as shown in the following three basic ways of searching.

- input keywords using Japanese characters (Hiragana, Katakana, Kanji)
- input using Romanization (Roman script)
- input using English language

Each way of searching explains what the benefit is, and when it is best to use these different methods. There are many ways of searching, but we don't want the users to give up on finding what they are looking for. So by providing these three options as a starting point to search, we hope to simplify the process for users. We have also put in place some practice exercises on the tab labelled "Test yourself". These activities include "Using the IME (Input Method Editor)", "Input methods for Japanese" and "Japanese resources in Library Search".

- "Using the IME" for Windows, was developed from a request from user feedback that reminded our project that we needed to cover beginners to advanced Japanese language learners. The difficult part is explaining that the computer input Romanization is different to the Modified Hepburn Romanization System. We have included tips and a "Cheat sheet for Japanese" and links for both Windows and Mac users.

- “Input methods for Japanese” guides users to use Japanese characters for recent publications, and use the correct Modified Hepburn Romanization System for Romanization. Activities include questions such as multiple choice, true or false, fill in the blank, and matching exercises to familiarise users with the **Modified Hepburn Romanization System**. Inputting the correct Romanization and characters are the key to finding items quickly.
- “Japanese resources in Library Search” uses the guide-based method and navigates throughout the contents using all three basic methods of searching. Completing this module will make users confident when searching for Japanese resources from the Library Search.

One of the main reasons that it was decided to develop this module is that in the past non-English language resources have been much more difficult to search for than English language resources. Back in the 1960s when teaching and learning Japanese language was becoming popular, the library was proactive in collecting Japanese language resources. At that time, the library had been using Romanization for the Japanese language characters in the bibliographical records. It was only a decade ago that the library system became able to cope with inputting the Japanese language characters. Therefore, the resources from the 1960s onwards have been in need of constant upgrade of the bibliographical records to reach the current technology standards that allow for successful retrieval.

All of the recent publications now have both Romanization and Japanese characters input into bibliographical records so most of the Japanese collection should be much more discoverable and accessible. However, it is still a long way to go to update all of the item records that are missing the Japanese characters that we have in our collection. Without the Japanese characters it is very hard to translate the words and to identify the item if it is only in Romanization. It is a big challenge, time consuming and it becomes extremely important to update the records, especially when dealing with duplicate items and for sending Japanese language items to the Offsite Store

I am hoping that any level of Japanese language learners will be encouraged to use this self-learning module and that it provides the ability to find Japanese language resources in our library with much greater ease.