

# WEB-BASED ACCESS TO CHINESE LANGUAGE ELECTRONIC RESOURCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE LIBRARY

Bick-har Yeung  
East Asian Librarian, University of Melbourne  
e-mail: bhy@unimelb.edu.au

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(Included slide show, Chinese Databases Demonstration)

## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the East Asian Collection "Buddy", an in-house web-based gateway of the University of Melbourne Library providing access to the University Library's selected, quality on-line and networked Chinese language electronic resources, including CD-ROMs, electronic journals, electronic and Internet databases, exam papers, library catalogues and web sites. A demonstration of sample searches will be conducted during the presentation. Issues of the East Asian Collection Buddy will also be addressed.

## Introduction

The information technology (IT) revolution in the past decades has great impact on the printing industry. With the advent of the Internet, electronic full text of the print equivalent now uses digitising techniques for distribution purposes. E-journals, e-books, databases are mushrooming. They are available online, on the Web and in CD-ROM format. To keep abreast of the rapidly changing IT environment and information, many libraries develop in-house gateways to make effective use of technology to improve access to electronic resources for research purposes. This approach provides access to information regardless of location and time.

The University of Melbourne Library started a web-based application to provide access to networked and standalone databases in 1995. This web-based application was replaced by web-based Buddy in 1998. Buddy serves as a gateway to access Internet sites, documents in PDF format, networking CD-ROMs and standalone CD-ROMs. Standalone CD-ROMs are accessible through the loading of application software to each Buddy workstation at the Buddy site where the CD-ROMs are available. There are 13 Buddy sites in the University Libraries system, and each site maintains its own profile. The East Asian Buddy is a component part of the Buddy system, which was established in 2000. Currently there are more than 200 East Asian Buddy records in the Buddy database, the majority of which are Chinese Studies electronic resources.

## System specification


The East Asian Buddy runs on Windows 98 using Internet Explorer as the web browser. Each Buddy workstation has three Chinese-Japanese-Korean (CJK) software packages installed, namely: WinMASS CJK 2000, Netscape Communicator and Richwin 2000. These CJK software enable customers to view CJK characters and input

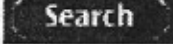
characters as search terms while accessing electronic databases which were encoded in different characters sets, such as Unicode, EACC, Chinese simplified Characters (GB), Chinese traditional Characters (Big 5), Japanese JIS code, Japanese EUC, Korean KSC code, etc. Application software for Chinese standalone CD-ROMs is installed on each workstation.

## Features of the East Asian Buddy

The development of the East Asian Buddy is in line with other Buddy sites. It is subject-focussed. Below are described the features of the East Asian Buddy.

*Main menu* (Figure 1) - The main menu covers 31 broad subject areas and each subject has its own sub-menu.

*Sub-menu* (Figure 2 & 3) - Each subject sub-menu groups CD-ROMs, online databases and selected Internet free databases relating to its subject discipline in one page. Chinese Buddy title adopts Pinyin romanisation and follows the National CJK Service romanisation guidelines. Buddy titles link to web-based electronic databases, networking electronic databases, application software of standalone CD-ROM and selected Internet electronic databases. Each Buddy title is assigned subject descriptors and allocated to a 'standard subdivision' (catalogue, full text, index, statistics, directory, Web site) for database searching purposes. Each Buddy title also has an information button  providing more information related to the Buddy record, such as other title information, "software coding", location and "online search guide" (Figure 4). "Software coding" is linked to an East Asian Library homepage (<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/asian/cjk-softwares.html>) enabling Buddy users who wants to access the East Asian Buddy at home to download CJK demonstration software. "Online search Guide" (Figure 5) is a Power Point show demonstrating how to use the electronic resource.

*Search Button* - On the top of each Buddy page, there is a search button  which allows Buddy users to perform key word or title searches in the Buddy database. Searching help (Figure 6) is available via the Buddy main page providing a series of searching technique assisting Buddy users to use Buddy effectively.

*Access* - All East Asian Buddy records are loaded onto the Library's INNOPAC bibliographic database. They can be access via the web Opac, the Buddy homepage and the East Asian Buddy home page. University of Melbourne IP is required if users want to access the East Asian Buddy from home.

## User education

The East Asian Library conducts hands-on information literacy classes for the usage of the East Asian Buddy, ranging from general classes to specific electronic databases. Target audiences are academics and postgraduates. Buddy classes take place at the Percy Baxter Computer Laboratory of the Baillieu Library, offering an overview of accessing Chinese language resources from desktop and the East Asian Buddy workstation. Users learn how to download CJK software from the Internet, search CJK catalogues worldwide and how to find Chinese electronic journals and newspaper articles (for more information of these classes, please refer to the Chinese Studies Library Research Skills and Methods homepage). Classes for specific CD-ROM

products with application software are taken place at the East Asian Library. Online booking for East Asian Buddy classes (Figure 7) is available from the Library's Information Literacy Classes home page (<<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cgi-bin/libclass>>). All classes are advertised via the East Asian Users e-mail list group and the University's Postgraduate news bulletin.

## **Buddy usage**

Since the implementation of the East Asian Buddy, feedback from users has been very positive and encouraging. Users find the system very easy to use. The electronic databases are rich and comprehensive. Online help and printed search guides for using the e-product are adequate. Usage statistics can be generated from the Buddy system by the Buddy site, by period, date and title. The most frequently used East Asian buddy resources are Chinese full text journal databases, full text newspapers, journal indexes and worldwide CJK catalogues. Of these databases, the most heavily used Buddy title is the *Chinese Academic Journal CD*, which contains more than 1600 titles of full text Chinese journals. This CD title also attracts CAVAL users from other Universities in Victoria to use the East Asian Buddy.

## **Problem solving**

### *Application software installation*

The East Asian Library collection holds more than 400 Chinese CD-ROMs. All these CD-ROM products have application software to install and the installation guides are written in Chinese. The Buddy programmer doesn't read Chinese and the East Asian staff do not have the IT skills to install the software onto Buddy. The application software installation was a joint effort of the East Asian Buddy Team. A master East Asian Buddy workstation is set up at the Buddy Project Office for testing and installation purposes. Each application program is linked to individual Buddy titles after installation. The image of the applications are then copied to the East Asian Buddy workstations.

### *CJK coding and software issues*

The East Asian Buddy has WinMASS CJK, Njstar and Richwin installed. These software packages support different the character sets required by Internet documents and CD-ROM products. The East Asian Buddy permits one CJK software application to be open at one time. Opening two or more CJK software will crash the system. How to advise users which CJK software is required for a specific Buddy title? It is solved by programming a popup screen for each Buddy CD-ROM title advising users which software to open. All CD-ROM Online Search Guides have demonstrated this feature to the Buddy users.

### *Incompatibility with some CD-ROM products*

The East Asian Buddy runs on Windows 98. Some Chinese CD-ROM products are running on Windows 95, DOS with Chinese system or Chinese Windows. The application software of these CD-ROMs is not compatible with the Buddy platform. To tackle this problem, we have the incompatible CD-ROMs installed onto a separate CD-ROM workstation running Windows 95. Buddy titles are created redirecting

Buddy users to access these CD-ROMs at the CD-ROM Workstation in the East Asian Office. (Figure 8)

### *Buddy printing*

Each Buddy workstation is connected to the charging software - Smart print software and a Buddy printer. The Smart print software calculates the cost of each printed document and deducted money from the charging machine. The Buddy printer was found not to support CJK character printing. To solve this problem, we installed a postscript driver onto the Buddy printer.

### *Internet broken links*

Internet gratis electronic databases change their URLs frequently. Our Buddy programmer has written a program for the Buddy system to check broken links automatically. The system e-mails broken links information to Buddy site maintainers for updating.

## **Future development**

### *Remote access of CD-ROM products*

The ideal of the East Asian Buddy system is to provide access to electronic resources to Buddy users regardless of location and time. The limitation of the existing East Asian Buddy is that it doesn't support remote access to CD-ROM products. To provide Buddy users access to East Asian Stand alone CD-ROMs from home or wherever could be achieved by login to a Windows NT4 Terminal server, using a Citrix Meta frame, which can run any application software on a local machine. Users would not need any special software installed for searching East Asian databases. However, the networking licence agreement of CD-ROM has to be sorted out beforehand. The Buddy system can control the number of persons to use the CD-ROM product at one time according to the licence agreement.

### *Electronic book*

There is an increased number of electronic books being published in China. The electronic books come with the printed version and they are in html format, which can be recognized by Buddy. It becomes a burden to us to create Buddy records and install application software. It raises the issue of which materials should be mounted on Buddy and which materials should be available for loan. A policy on this matter will have to be sorted out in the future.

### *Windows 2000*

Windows 2000 is a platform provides better support of CD-ROM products and dealing better with languages and script. Hopefully the migration to Windows 2000 in the future will provide better services for Buddy users.

Figure 1. East Asian Buddy main menu

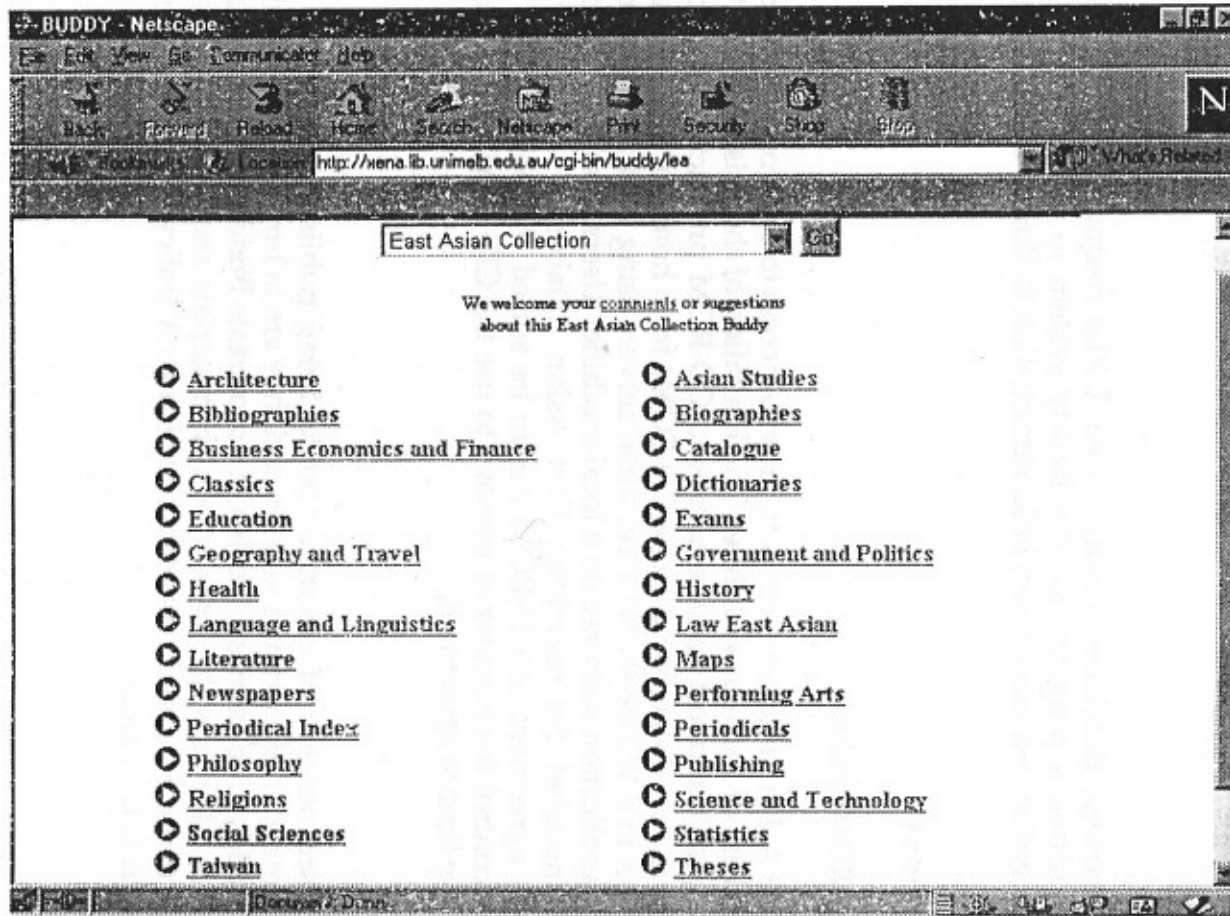


Figure 2: East Asian Buddy Sub-menu: Periodical index

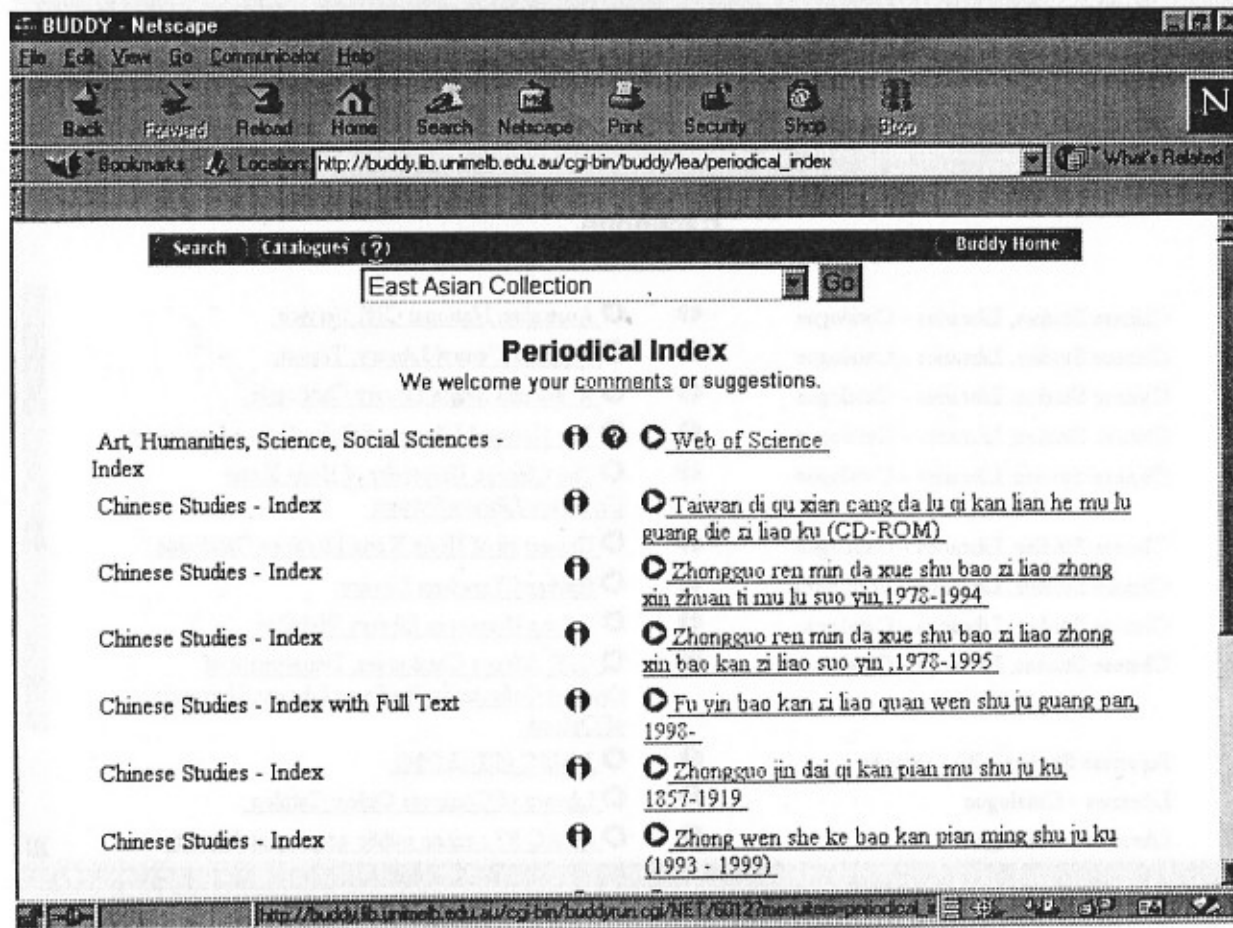


Figure 3: East Asian Sub-menu: Catalogue

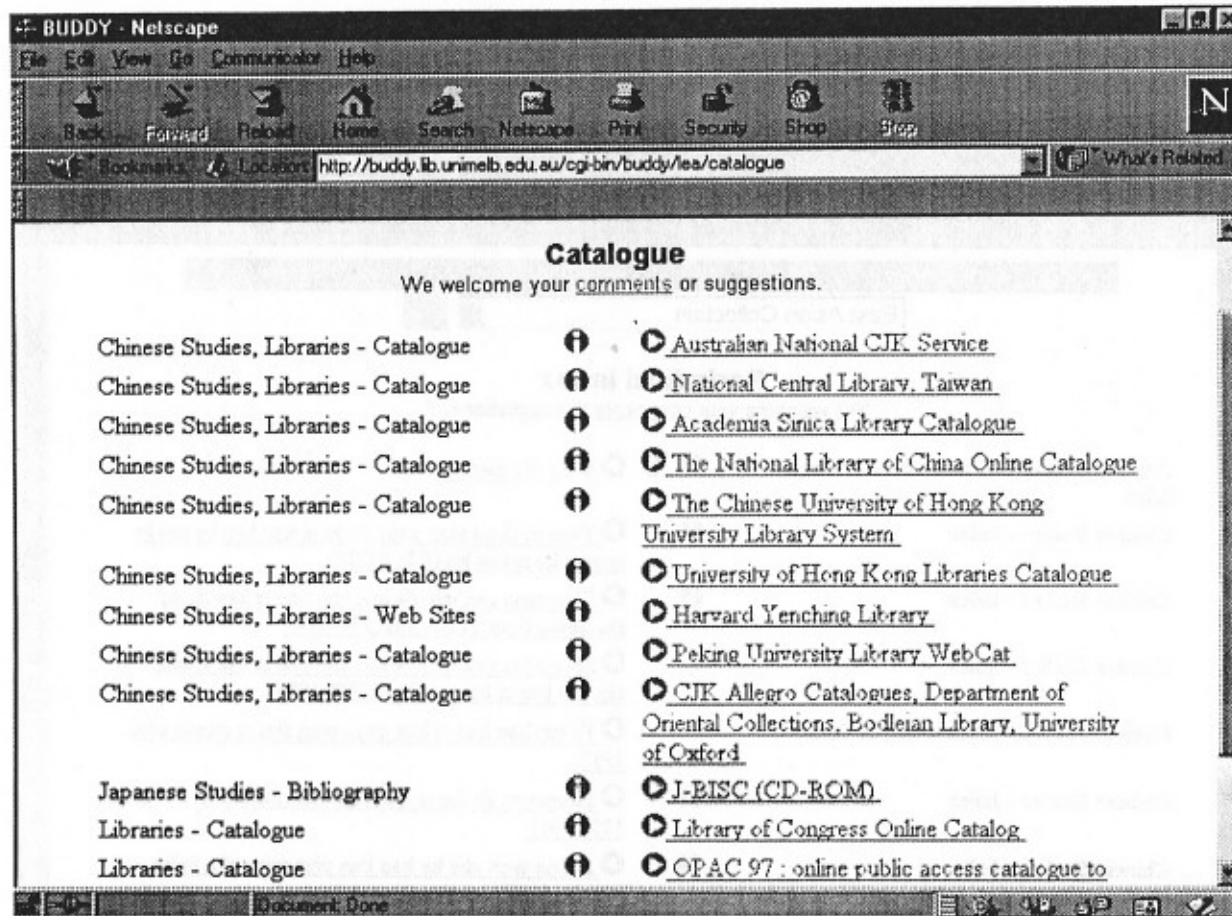


Figure 4: Information of a Buddy resource.

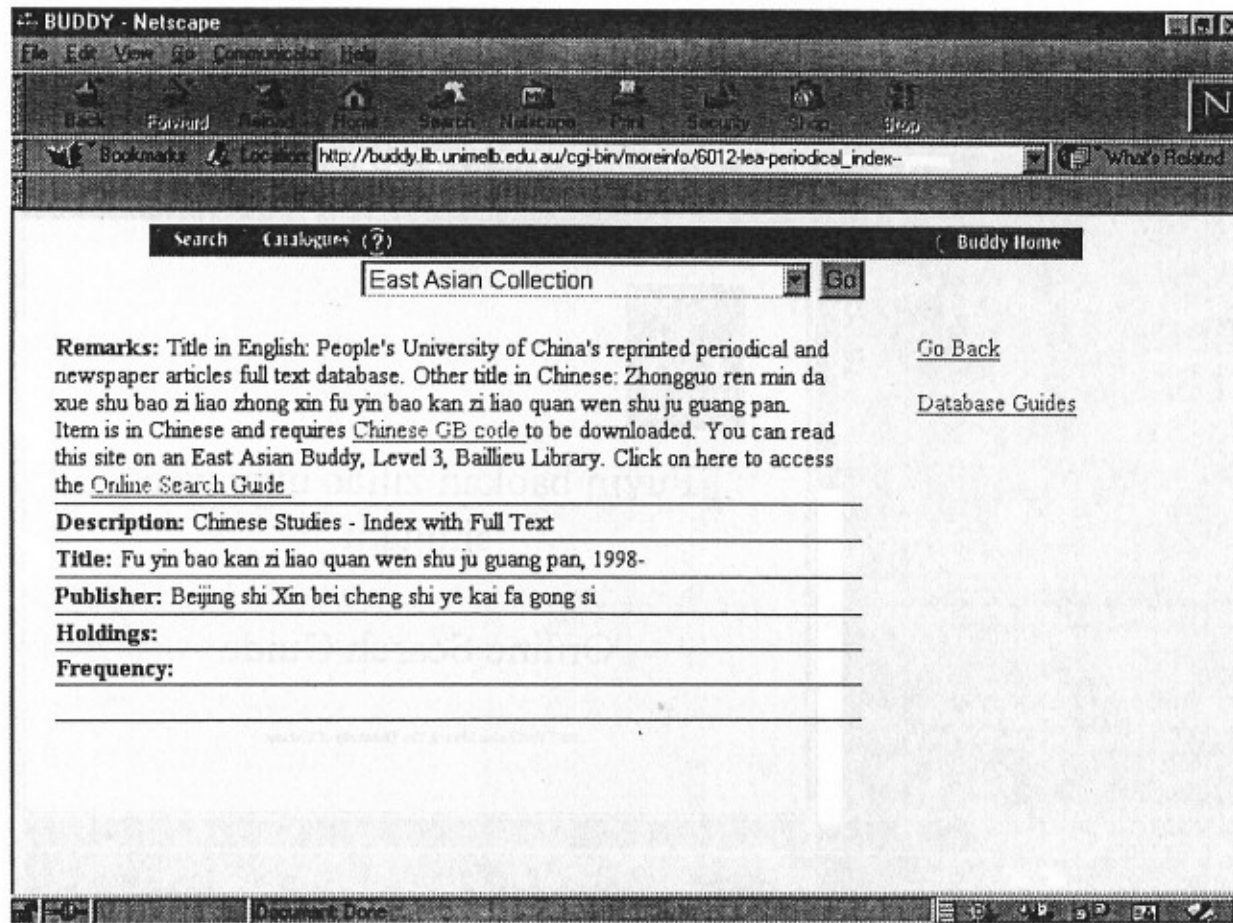


Figure 5: Online search Guide sample

<<http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/asian/FuYinBaoKanQuanWen.html>>

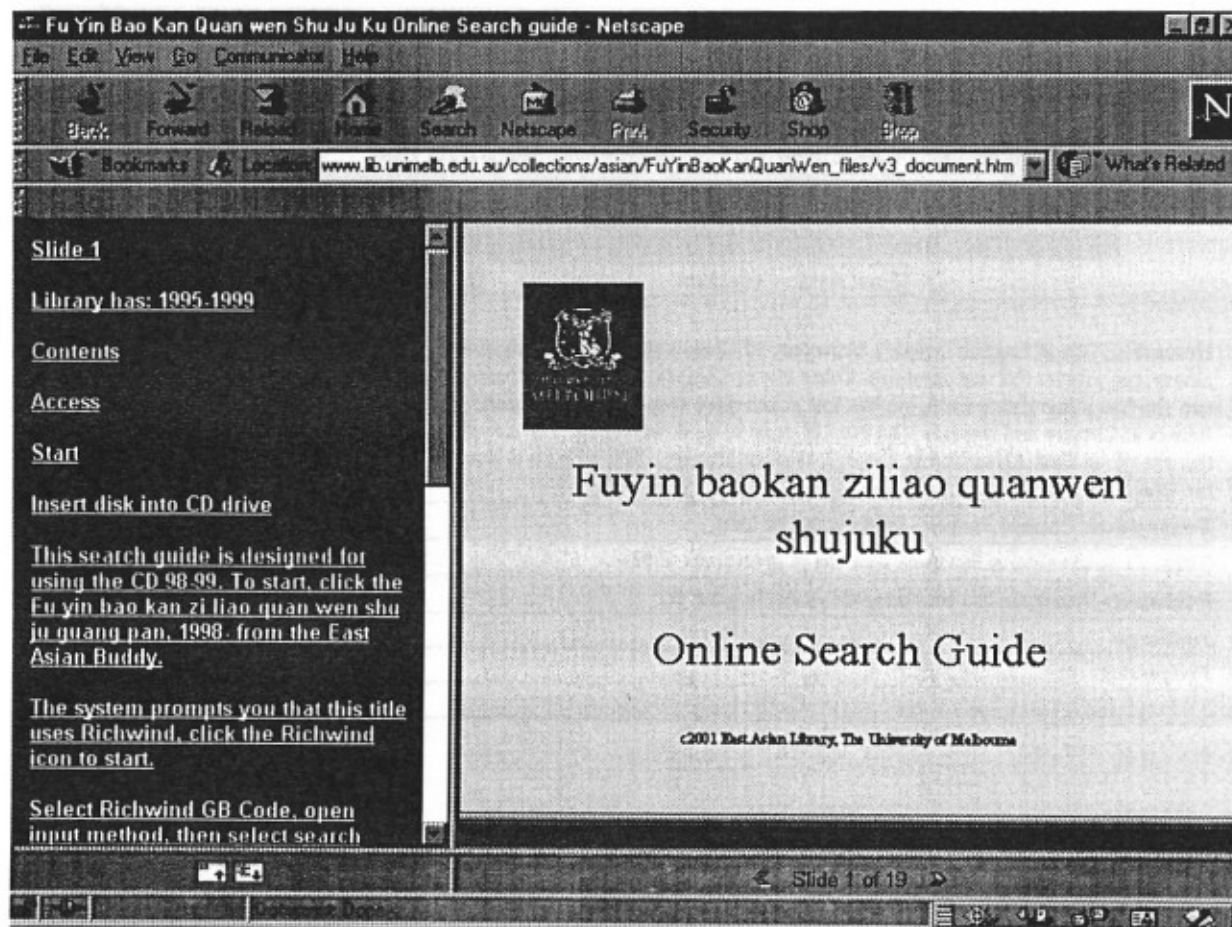


Figure 6: Buddy searching help

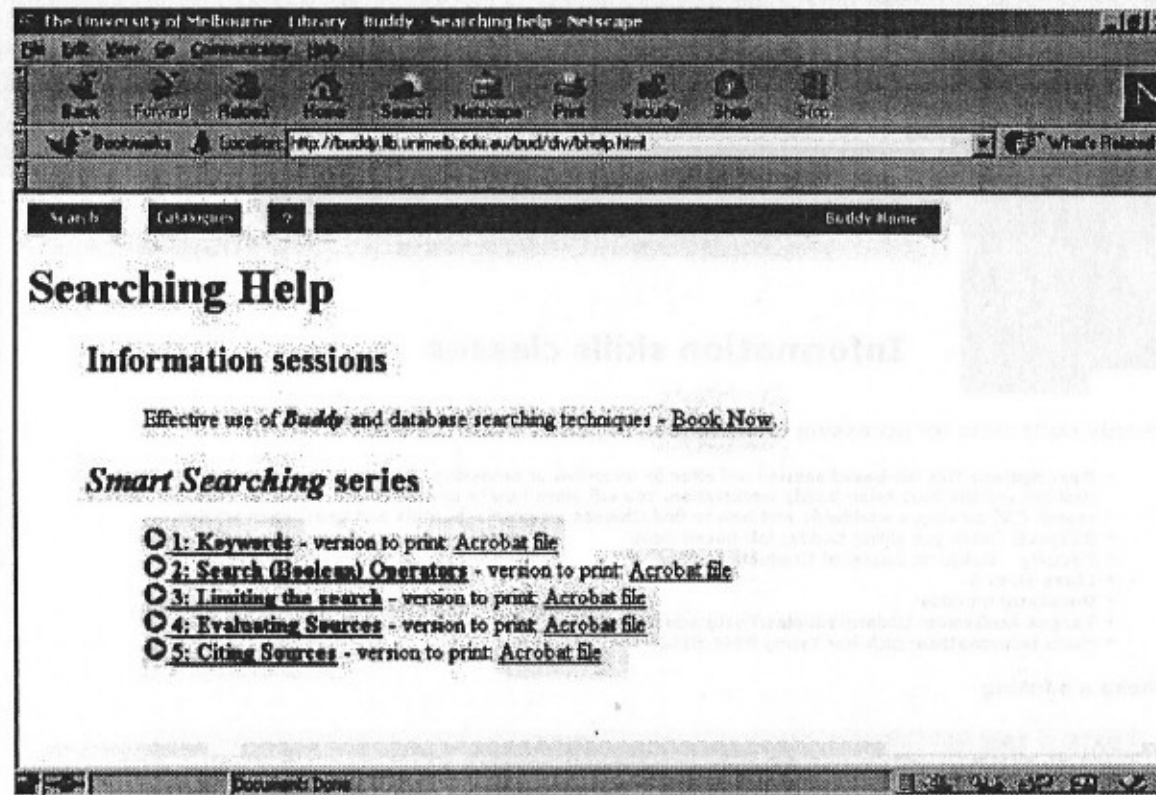


Figure 7: Sample - Online Booking of Buddy Skills class

The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window with the title "The University of Melbourne Library - Information skills classes - Netscape". The address bar contains the URL "http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/cgi-bin/libclass?get\_title=490". The page content includes the University of Melbourne logo and the heading "Information skills classes". Below this, the class title "Buddy skills class for accessing Chinese language electronic resources" is displayed. A list of details follows: Description, Subject, Faculty - subject, Class size, Duration, Target Audience, and More information. A "Make a booking" section contains a table with columns for DATE, TIME, and VENUE. The table lists a booking for 07/09/2001 at 1000 in Training Room 2, Percy Baxter collaborative Learning Centre (first floor, Baillieu Library). Below the table is a "Lastname:" label and an empty text input field.

The University of Melbourne Library

## Information skills classes

**Buddy skills class for accessing Chinese language electronic resources**

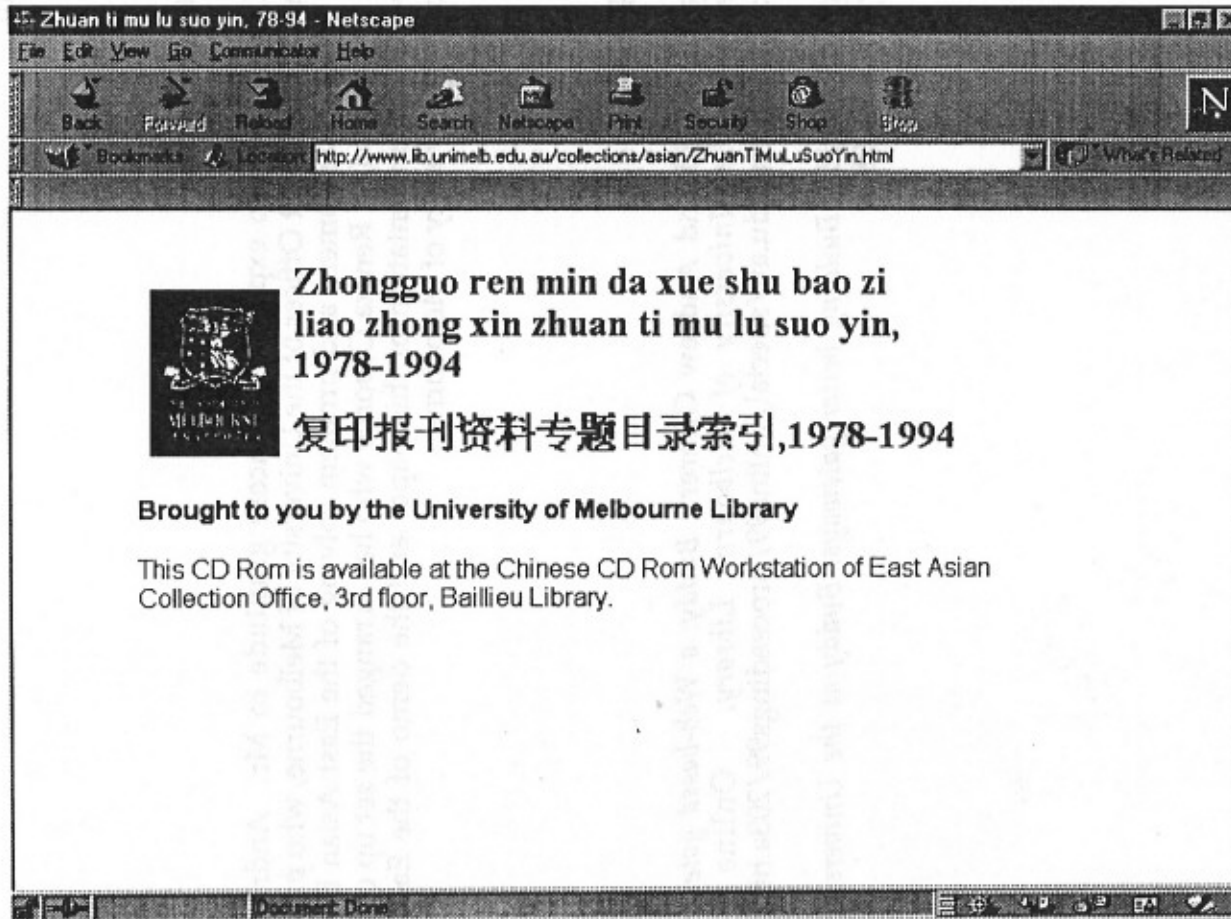
- **Description:** This lab-based session will offer an overview of accessing Chinese language resources from your desktop and the East Asian Buddy workstation. You will learn how to download CJK software from the internet, search CJK catalogue worldwide and how to find Chinese electronic journals and newspaper articles.
- **Subject:** Catalogue skills; Buddy; lab-based class
- **Faculty - subject:** School of Graduate Studies
- **Class size:** 8
- **Duration:** minutes
- **Target Audience:** Undergraduates/Postgraduates
- **More information:** Bick-har Yeung 8344-5362

**Make a booking**

DATE	TIME	VENUE
07/09/2001	1000	Training Room 2, Percy Baxter collaborative Learning Centre (first floor, Baillieu Library)

Lastname:

Figure 8: Sample - Redirecting Buddy users to use another workstation to view CD ROM products



## Conclusion

During the past two years, we have encountered so many problems when establishing the East Asian Buddy. Problems were solved by trial and error. However, the feedback from our users has proven that it is a successful gateway to East Asian electronic resources. In this digital age, it is difficult to keep pace with the rapid development of web and e-resources. The East Asian Library will certainly keep an eye on and monitor future developments in these areas. This is an on ongoing task for us to fulfil.

## Acknowledgment

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Mr. Andrew Gfrerer, the Technical Development Officer of the University of Melbourne, who provides constant support to the development and problem solving of the East Asian Buddy. I would also like to thank Mrs. Renata Osborne who has arranged the set up of equipment for the Power Point presentation of this paper and the demo of the East Asian Buddy System of the University of Melbourne.

## Bibliography

Cunnington, David and Andrew Gfrerer. *Buddy: a Web-based gateway to electronic resources at the University of Melbourne Library*. Online On Disc 99. <<http://www.csu.edu.au/special/online99/proceedings99/203a.htm>>

Cunnington, David. *Building better gateways: Buddy at the University of Melbourne Library*. VALA 98.