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Buckingham, Louisa. 2016. *Doing a research project in English studies: A guide for students*. London and New York: Routledge, 204 pages, ISBN: 978-1-138-84691-7 (pbk).

Doing a research project in English studies is a book that outlines the process of carrying out a research project in all aspects of English studies (English language, education, translation or literature). Its 204 pages are divided into 9 chapters and include five appendices as well as an answer key, a list of 47 references and a subject index.

The chapters contain descriptions and explanations of the most important aspects of a research project, frequently illustrated with relevant examples from literature or other researchers' experience. This is reinforced through a set of well-designed exercises that are related to specific issues of conducting research. In addition, all chapters contain tips that are based on real problems and are immediately relevant.

The first chapter, *Introduction*, introduces the reader to the structure of the book, describes the necessary skills required for doing a research project and lists the stepping stones of a research project.

Chapter 2 *Preliminaries* focuses on the very first step in doing a research project, i.e. choosing a topic, which seems to be one of the notoriously difficult tasks for a lot of students. A number of sources of potential topics are listed and discussed, after which the reader is guided through the process of narrowing down the topic, drafting a research project proposal and developing a research plan.

Chapter 3 discusses the topic that is often neglected in similar books, namely the relationship between the student and his or her supervisor. It stresses the interactional and collaborative aspect of a research project and addresses the issues such as how to write appropriate e-mails or communicate in person.

The next chapter, *Finding literature*, describes how and where literature for the research project can and should be found. It first states what are – and, more importantly, what are not – academic sources and then goes on to explain why it is essential to use authoritative sources, how to evaluate internet sources and how to browse library catalogues. Finally, it gives guidelines as to how to record bibliographic information.



Chapter 5 looks at strategies for reading journal articles, books and other academic publications. It stresses the differences between reading academic material and other text types. One section of the chapter is devoted to understanding complex noun phrases that may be particularly problematic to non-native users of English.

The following chapters, from 6 through to 8, aim at steering the reader through his or her own research study. In chapter 6 ways of collecting and analysing data are detailed. The following topics are covered: ethical issues, selection of participants, data collection instruments (in particular questionnaires, interviews, observations, and think-aloud protocols).

Chapter 7 presents guidelines on how to write a project chapter by chapter (from introduction to conclusion). In addition to describing what each chapter should contain, it also outlines their form and lists phrases typically used to express a particular idea or meaning (e.g. stressing the controversy in the field or inadequacies of previous studies). Several sections are dedicated to appropriate ways of presenting both qualitative and quantitative results which are amply illustrated.

Chapter 8 discusses the features of academic writing, such as paraphrasing, quoting, citing the authors, avoiding plagiarism, use of academic language (e.g. linking words). Also, the importance of using the language of the discipline and hedging is highlighted.

The final chapter, *Research logistics*, focuses on time management and revisions of the written work. Parts of this chapter should be worked through before beginning the research project, because they raise students' awareness of these two important issues.

This book is intended for students in their senior years who are required to write a research paper. It is an excellent guide and a reference source because it offers answers to questions that (not only) inexperienced or novice researchers undoubtedly seek, such as *How do I choose my research topic? Am I allowed to use the pronoun I? or Can I use this web page?*.

There are many books that deal with this topic, one might rightly observe. However, there are several qualities that single out the present volume: a) it is applicable to all fields of English studies, b) it is especially suitable for non-native users of English – it tackles the language issue as an important aspect of scientific discourse by presenting phrases typically used; and c) it is written in a student-friendly way: not too technical yet precise enough.

Following the book from cover to cover, doing the exercises and analysing the examples, and applying the tips offered in all chapters will, I am convinced, make a highly demanding and time consuming task of preparing, conducting and translating a research project into a scientific text less frustrating and confusing, and more successful and enjoyable. The book can be used by individuals as a guide but also as a textbook for a course that requires students to conduct research and write research reports. Finally, although this is primarily a guide for students, I am sure that many supervisors will find it useful as well – if nothing else, then as a reminder of what needs to be conveyed to students and as a practical checklist.