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应用语言学
研究方法 with 论文写作

Applied Linguistics

**RESEARCH METHODS
AND THESIS WRITING**

· 文秋芳 著 ·



外语教学与研究出版社
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Preface

“Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime.”

Doing research is a mystery to many graduate students and second language teachers in China. This book aims to demystify the process of carrying out research in the field of applied linguistics, particularly in the area of second language acquisition and teaching. This book is written for those who have no previous research experience at all or those who have done some research without formal training. It is particularly useful for graduate students of applied linguistics, second language teachers and teacher-trainers.

This book is concerned with both how to conduct research and how to write a thesis or a dissertation. Graduate students, I have found, face difficulties not only in actual research but also in writing up their theses/dissertations. This book addresses questions that have actually been experienced by myself and my students. For example: How can I select a suitable topic? Which research design should I employ? What is the best time for me to collect data and in which way? Should I analyze the data quantitatively or qualitatively? What is the difference between reporting a result and discussing a result? What should be covered by a literature review?

In response to these challenges, this book provides the readers with solutions, and with suggestions if there is no definite answer. Part I serves as a general introduction in which some basic concepts are explained; Part II focuses on the research process and covers different phases of a single study. Part III describes the overall structure of a thesis/dissertation and what is expected to be included or not included in different chapters.

This book is written in an accessible style and interactive manner so that the readers can follow the text without too much difficulty. The book has cited various examples from theses and papers written by Chinese scholars and graduate students in order to facilitate the

understanding of abstract terms and the research process. Moreover, unlike books on research methodology published in the Western context, this book has particularly focused on Chinese graduate students' difficulties and problems in their research and thesis writing. Therefore, this book can be used as a textbook for a course on research methods as part of postgraduate program as well as a reference book for completing a master's thesis or a doctoral dissertation.

A book such as this cannot be produced without the assistance of many people. First of all, I would like to extend my thanks to the students in Nanjing University who have survived the course in which early versions of this text were used. Their responses to the much of this text help me identify which part was well-written and which part needed clarification and elaboration.

I would also like to give my special thanks to Joanna Radwanska-Williams, Professor from the Chinese University of Hong Kong who carefully edited from Chapter One to Chapter Eleven and offered many invaluable comments as well as suggestions; Nancy Pine, Professor from Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, who patiently read the first six chapters of the manuscript and corrected a number of non-native expressions; and Kate Parry, Professor from Hunter College, New York, who skillfully copyedited the first five chapters of the manuscript and made constructive suggestions on improvement. Their kind and timely help has made the book better than it would have been otherwise.

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Wen Qiufang
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