Book Reviews

Doing Replication Research in Applied Linguistics

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Doing Replication Research in Applied Linguistics is designed to explain the importance of replication research to the field of applied linguistics (AL) while also explaining how researchers can go about conducting their own replication studies. Both authors, Graeme Porte and Kevin McManus, teach AL at the University of Granada and the Pennsylvania State University, respectively. Porte previously edited another book on the topic of replication research in AL. This book, *Replication Research in Applied Linguistics*, was a collection of essays from different authors mainly discussing the merits of replication research (Porte, 2012). McManus (2022) also contributed a chapter about replication research to *Instructed Second Language Acquisition Methods*. This chapter is similar to *Doing Replication Research in Applied Linguistics* in scope; however, it is much less in depth as it is only a single chapter of a larger work on replication research in general. *Doing Replication Research in Applied Linguistics* on the other hand discusses the need for replication research and spends most of its page count providing a practical guide to conducting replication studies.

The first chapter, Introduction: Why Replication Research Matters, presents the authors' main argument for the importance of replication research in

AL. They believe that replication research is a vital part of the larger research process because through reexamining and testing previous studies, conclusions are made stronger, and gradually the collective knowledge of AL researchers is made greater. It is in this chapter that the book first introduces the reader to various actual studies for use as a reference. Actual studies are used to illustrate points and to complete activities for the rest of the book as well. This chapter is relatively brief but adequately lays the foundation for the rest of the book without unnecessarily dwelling on the pros and cons of replication research. The brevity of this chapter allows the remainder of the book to focus on explaining the practical methods of carrying out a replication study, such as selecting an appropriate study for replication and publishing one's findings.

The remaining chapters of the book walk the reader through how to carry out a replication study. First in Chapter 2, Finding a Study to Replicate: Background Research, the authors give pointers on how to choose an appropriate study to replicate. A study's continued relevance in the field, and ease of access to the original study's data and materials are given as important factors to consider when choosing a study for replication. The authors further suggest considering if a study has an unexpected outcome and one's familiarity with the study's methods. The final factor the authors mention is the quality of the original source publication while looking for a study. In Chapter 3 Planning Your Replication Research Project, Chapter 4 What Kind of Replication Should You Do? From the Inside Looking Out: Initial Critique and Internal Replication,and Chapter 5 What Kind of Replication Should You Do? From the Outside Looking In, the authors explain how to design your replication. One important point that the authors make at this point is, exact replications are not possible in AL because most AL research is not conducted in a laboratory setting, making it unfeasible to adequately control for all variables. Instead, they suggest doing either a close, approximate, or conceptual replication. Chapter 6, Executing and Writing up Your Replication Study: Research Questions and Methodology, and Chapter7, Executing and Writing up Your Replication Study: Analysis, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion, both focus on how to write up a replication study. How to write up the research questions, methodology, analysis, results, discussion, and

conclusion of a replication are all explored in great detail. At first glance, this section of the book is similar to general how-to research guides. However, the authors focus on elements that are unique to writing up a replication study. For example, they point out that a replication study's research questions need to refer back to the original study. Chapter 8, Disseminating Your Research, covers how to share the findings of a replication. Two main options are presented here: publishing an article in an academic journal or presenting at a conference. The authors' description of the publishing and presenting processes are serviceable though not groundbreaking. Chapter 9, titled Epilogue, briefly reiterates the importance of replication research presented in the introduction.

I was first drawn to this title, because I was curious about trying to carry out a replication study, but I needed a thorough introduction to the topic. One of the things that impressed me most while reading the book is how much material the authors are able to cover in depth in a relatively short page count. This coverage is achieved by being laser focused on the task at hand which keeps the book very practical. As soon as the introduction is finished, the authors waste no time in getting into the nuts and bolts of how to conduct replication research. Another aspect of the book that lends to its practicality is the inclusion of links to actual published studies, both replication and original, for the various exercises in the book. Some examples of activities include reading a replication study and trying to determine which variables were changed from the original study, and examining the results of a study to determine how it could best be replicated. While some might find it troublesome to constantly look up journal articles, the use of real-world materials greatly helps give the reader a sense of what replication research actually looks like. Also, as this book has been published recently, all the links provided were still active at the time of this review.

One potential drawback of the book is that it requires a certain base level familiarity with statistical analysis methods and terminology such as homoscedasticity and normal distribution. This relatively steep learning curve could prove to be a hurdle to any readers who are new to statistical analysis. For this reason, it might be best read after an introductory volume on statistical analysis, particularly one focused on the field of applied linguistics, such as

Turner's (2014) *Using Statistics in Small-Scale Research: Focus on Non-Parametric Data*. Another possible oversight of the book is that Chapter 7, which explains how to write up a replication study, does not include any mention of the literature review. In fact, there are only two brief mentions of literature reviews in the whole book, and neither go into detail. Only mentioning literature reviews in passing could leave the reader to question if there are any major differences between a standard literature review and one for a replication study, and how to best approach writing one. I for one am still curious about literature reviews for replication studies even after reading the book. Perhaps the authors felt that the literature review was basic enough to not merit mentioning, or perhaps they hoped that the example studies provided could be used as a guide. In either case this is a small nitpick that does little to derail an otherwise exemplary resource.

The authors two main goals are to explain the need for replication research in the field of AL, and to lay out the process of conducting replication research so that after reading the book the reader will have the skills necessary to do their own replication. I believe that the authors were able to adequately meet this goal. I found the arguments for the necessity and benefits of replication research to be compelling, and I was even more satisfied with the step-by-step research process that the authors present.

Overall, I found this book to be a very good guide to conducting replication research. I am personally going to use it as a road map as I begin planning a replication study of my own. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in getting started in replication research. The book could also serve well as a textbook for use in a research methods course in a Master's program. The book has enough content that a whole course could be constructed around it. The only type of reader who I would not recommend read this book is one who is not yet ready to conduct replication research. In other words, this title may not be the best book for readers who are unfamiliar with research or statistical analysis. They may find certain sections of the book to be difficult to get through. However, they should certainly keep it in mind and return to it after learning more about general research methods.

References

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