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Book Review Article

Understanding QRPs and Blatant Misconduct in Applied Linguistics Research: A Book Review of Addressing Questionable Research Practices in Applied Linguistics: A Practical Guide
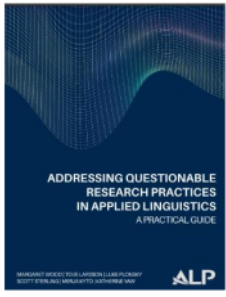
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	Author(s)	_Margaret Wood, Tove Larsson, Luke Plonsky, Scott Sterling, Merja Kytö, and Katherine Yaw_
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INTRODUCTION

This book explores the ethical gray area of *Questionable Research Practices (QRPs)*, including its similarities and differences (Butler et al., 2017; Ravn & Sørensen, 2021). It lies between responsible research conduct and clear misconduct like falsification, fabrication, plagiarism. It helps *Applied Linguistics* (henceforth AL) researchers to carry out ethical research which addresses the ambiguity and debate surrounding certain practices, such as data sharing and outlier management. They are often not well covered in traditional research ethics training. There is a need for AL researcher to identify the good, the bad, and the ugly in the research practices (Banks *et al.*, 2016). To enhance understanding and ethical decision-making, the book provides a taxonomy of 58 QRPs, lesson plans, suggested readings, and discussion scenarios for use in research methods courses and workshops.

BOOK CONTENTS

This book aims to provide a comprehensive guide to understanding and navigating Questionable Research Practices (QRPs), which occupy the ambiguous space between responsible conduct of research and blatant misconduct. Divided into three main parts, the book begins with an introduction to the concept of QRPs and their implications for research integrity. Part 2 presents a detailed taxonomy of 58 QRPs, complete with descriptions and video links, categorized across four key stages of the research process: funding, design and data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and write-up and dissemination. Part 3 offers practical resources for educators and researchers, including sample lesson plans, an activity bank, scenarios for discussion, and suggested readings, all designed to enhance ethical decision-making and research quality.

Section 1 of Part 2 delves into the complexities of funding, highlighting eleven unethical practices in AL research. These include biased data collection through cherry-picking[3] samples, studies influenced by sponsors for their benefit, and undisclosed conflicts of interest. Additionally, the section addresses misrepresented or false qualifications and exaggerated project impacts, alongside issues such as excessive funding requests and incomplete project outcomes. It also examines instances of improper fund allocation, biased literature reviews, unexpected project relocations, and undisclosed influences from funders on research decisions. These practices put an emphasis on the ethical challenges researchers face in navigating funding influences. Therefore, understanding and addressing these issues is crucial for maintaining integrity in research endeavors.

Section 2 of Part 2 delves into the ethical aspects in research design and data collection, highlighting eleven unethical practices. These include the researchers' attitude in

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[3] Cherry-picking is selectively choosing data that supports an argument while ignoring contradictory evidence, leading to biased conclusions (Morse, 2009)

electing research variables, convenience-driven instrument selection that favors the researchers' convenience, defaulted methodology, invalid measurement choice, lack of transparency in data collection, biased outcome orientation, design influence oversight, unacknowledged variables, fishing for data, lengthy data gathering process, and forced participation solicitation. Recognizing and addressing these practices is essential for maintaining research integrity and ensuring meaningful contributions to knowledge and society at large. Researchers must strive to uphold rigorous ethical standards to foster trust and reliability in scientific inquiry.

Section 3 of Part 2 delves into data analysis and interpretation, emphasizing fourteen ethical issues in AL research. It includes data manipulation, improper outlier management, lack of transparency in data processing procedures, lack of clarity on analysis strategy, hypothesizing after results, partial data examination, hypothesis-supportive analysis, significance-seeking analysis, neglecting alternative hypotheses, manipulative data substitution, biased variable grouping, inadequate correction for multiple comparisons, improper statistical procedures, and misinterpreted statistical findings.

Section 4 of the guidelines focuses on crucial aspects of research write-up and dissemination practices. First, failing to reference relevant work by other authors is not only frowned upon but also risks being seen as a questionable research practice (QRP). It's essential to acknowledge and cite relevant studies, regardless of whether one agrees with their perspectives, to maintain scholarly integrity and completeness in literature reviews. Second, inadequate description of data analyses or procedures is another QRP. Insufficiently detailed methodological explanations hinder reproducibility and thorough assessment of study outcomes, undermining the study's credibility. Third, not providing adequate data and results description, such as omitting p-values or standard deviations, limits readers' ability to fully grasp study findings and their implications. These practices, though common, detract from transparent and rigorous research dissemination.

Part three of this book provides several examples of lesson plans with various durations, ranging from short workshops to comprehensive research methods. These lesson plans are designed to facilitate effective teaching and learning about Questionable Research Practices (QRPs), offering instructors flexibility to tailor content to specific educational contexts. Additionally, the activity bank within this section provides diverse exercises and discussions to engage learners in critical thinking and ethical decision-making related to research practices. Accompanied by scenarios and QRP examples, as well as suggested readings for further exploration, this section aims to deepen readers' comprehension of QRPs and promote ethical conduct in research.

AUTHORS' ARGUMENTATION

Conducting ethical research involves navigating through numerous decision-making processes, considering colleagues' perspectives, and managing external influences (Larsson et al., 2023). As AL researchers engaged with research ethics and the integrity of scholarly inquiry, this book on QRPs offers a timely and essential resource for both educators and researchers in the field. The detailed taxonomy presented in Part 2 illuminates the multifaceted ethical challenges embedded within each stage of the research process—from funding to write-up and dissemination. The identification of unethical practices such as biased data collection, improper fund allocation, and selective reporting of outcomes highlights the pervasive nature of QRPs and the critical need for vigilance in maintaining research integrity (Xie et al., 2021).

One of the book's strengths lies in its practical approach in Part 3, where it provides AL researchers with a repertoire of lesson plans, activities, and scenarios designed to foster ethical decision-making among students and researchers. By offering diverse teaching materials that cater to various educational settings, including workshops and research methods courses, the book equips researchers with tools to engage learners in meaningful discussions about ethical dilemmas in research. Furthermore, the emphasis on transparency and thoroughness in research write-up and dissemination practices in Section 4 serves as a crucial reminder of the researchers bear in accurately documenting their methods and findings. This book also emphasizes the dos and don'ts for AL researchers in conducting professional investigations, highlighting the importance of ethical considerations and behaviors in fostering integrity, honesty, and accountability (De Costa et al., 2021; Sterling & Gass, 2017; Yaw et al., 2023).

In light of the complexities highlighted across these sections, it becomes evident that fostering a culture of ethical research practices is not only about adhering to guidelines but also about cultivating a mindset that values intellectual honesty and accountability (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012). As readers engage with this comprehensive guide, they are encouraged to critically reflect on their own research practices and actively contribute to upholding the highest standards of integrity in applied linguistics and beyond.

CONCLUSION

This book serves as an indispensable resource for applied linguistics researchers striving to uphold ethical standards in their work. By systematically dissecting QRPs and providing concrete examples across funding, design, data collection, analysis, and dissemination phases, it equips readers with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate ethical challenges effectively. Moving forward, it is imperative for AL researchers to embrace a proactive approach to ethical research conduct. This includes cultivating a robust understanding of QRPs, consistently integrating transparent and rigorous methodologies in

their studies, and fostering a culture of open dialogue about ethical dilemmas within academic communities. By adhering to these principles and leveraging the insights offered in this book, researchers can contribute meaningfully to advancing knowledge in applied linguistics while maintaining the trust and credibility essential to scholarly inquiry.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Conflict of Interest Reported by the Authors

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Research Interest	*Reading, Listening, Literature in English Teaching, and Translation.*	

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9   Daniel R. Isbell, Peter I. De Costa. "Ethics in applied linguistics research: Evidence and action", Research Methods in Applied Linguistics, 2024
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10 James A. Grand, Steven G. Rogelberg, Tammy D. Allen, Ronald S. Landis et al. "A Systems-Based Approach to Fostering Robust Science in Industrial-Organizational Psychology", Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2017
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Possessive You may need to use an apostrophe to show possession.

Prep. You may be using the wrong preposition.

Article Error You may need to use an article before this word. Consider using the article **a**.

S/V This subject and verb may not agree. Proofread the sentence to make sure the subject agrees with the verb.

Article Error You may need to use an article before this word.

Missing "," You may need to place a comma after this word.

Article Error You may need to use an article before this word. Consider using the article **a**.

Proofread This part of the sentence contains a grammatical error or misspelled word that makes your meaning unclear.

Wrong Article You may have used the wrong article or pronoun. Proofread the sentence to make sure that the article or pronoun agrees with the word it describes.

Prep. You may be using the wrong preposition.

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