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Janez Vogrinc and Blerim Saqipi, *Research in Education Sciences: Conceptual and Methodological Perspectives*, Albas Tiranë, 2019; 112 pp.: ISBN: 978-9928-282-69-9

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Scientific monographs pertaining to the discipline of pedagogical methodology are not scarce. However, they tend to be fixated upon only one paradigm, focusing on a narrow range of approaches, addressing selected chapters and meticulously delimiting individual research. Only rarely do they extend their reach across the spectrum. Vogrinc and Saqipi's work does not adhere to this logic of exhaustively tackling one or a few particular and distinct subject areas, as they admit in the introduction, stating that the book "is a mixture of summarising existing knowledge and providing critical views



on issues that need closer attention" (Vogrinc & Saqipi, 2019, p. 8). The result of their decision is a 112-page publication that discusses theoretical, quantitative and qualitative research, further elaborates what constitutes a case study and action research, and then concludes with a description of ethical standards in education research and research literacy in teacher education. Degrees of intensive specificity are seldom encountered throughout the book, yet we dare claim this was not the authors' objective. Their intention was rather to provide a comprehensive overview of what pedagogical methodology incorporates under various types of research and to offer referential material for subsequent explorations.

After the introductory paragraphs, the authors present theoretical research, promptly establishing the impression that theoretical research is in no way inferior to empirical research. This is quite significant, as theoretical research is elsewhere often neglected, merely mentioned or crudely explained

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as though it were a subpar variant. As the authors elucidate, the fundamental distinction between theoretical and empirical research does not revolve around some suppositional notion of quality, but relates to the source of data, ergo, what is employed in order to ultimately answer the posed research questions: literature analysis or field-amassed information. Despite perhaps not having such a rigidly prescribed process in contrast to other research types, theoretical research still adds new findings to the existing body of knowledge, and is thus a fully applicable and permissible option in education sciences, a fact that the authors continually emphasise. Moreover, Vogrinc and Saqipi detail the definition, typical structure and types of theoretical research, and provide clear guidelines about writing a report. The chapters referring to theoretical research are therefore structured in a way that avoids ambiguity in understanding and delivers all of the key elements required for implementation.

The authors then turn to quantitative research, first describing its philosophical origin, that is, positivism. The latter is delineated to supply context and to stress the corresponding importance of measurement, causality, generalisation and replication. The section reserved for quantitative research exhibits a gradual deconstruction of its linear steps, naturally commencing with how to formulate a research problem. Whether addressing the latter or dealing with sampling, criteria for assessing the quality of instruments, variables or statistical analysis, Vogrinc and Saqipi illustrate what each step in precisely devised quantitative research should encompass. Several constituent elements, such as inferential statistics, receive in-depth examination with the listing of suitable tests. These elements are not, however, explained in terms of exact usage, which is why we have argued that intensive specificity is not omnipresent throughout the book, nor should it be, considering the authors' aim was to establish a wider scope, in which auxiliary or ancillary commentaries might only thwart full content apprehension.

As was the case with quantitative research, the historical background of qualitative research receives attention, as well. The authors define it without any superfluous digressions, and then go on to indicate coexisting understandings of the definition of qualitative research, accentuating the main differences with quantitative research. It should be stressed that these chapters are composed in such a way that even students, prospective teachers, existing educators, etc. without an abundance of prior methodological knowledge would most likely be able to follow the content, as Vogrinc and Saqipi devote a great deal of time and space to the basics, as well as addressing more complex topics. The same can be said of the book as a whole, but it is even more apparent when it comes to the sections from qualitative research onwards. An example of this is their

simultaneous summaries, which compress the most vital information into a directly discernible and applicable format or scheme. The paragraphs on data collection and sampling in qualitative research provide enough descriptions for a systematic understanding, although the topic of qualitative data analysis, especially analytical induction, would benefit greatly from the addition of a specific example. The extenuating circumstances behind this “lack”, as the authors themselves explain, are that there are no uniform rules as to how to conduct qualitative data analysis, causing researchers to opt for one of the most frequent approaches, be it analytical induction, content analysis or another.

Although often recognised as a distinct form of qualitative research, Vogrinc and Saqipi decided to treat case studies as an independent method. Through several summarised categorisations, the authors familiarise us with the case study types proposed by Stake, Yin, Bogdan and Biklen, and Stenhouse, where the intent is not to discover similarities, but to become aware of underlying conceptual bases and determining factors. Regarding the steps in implementing a case study, Vogrinc and Saqipi specify that one should not be preoccupied with assembling a typical case, as unusual, deviant or extreme groupings might eventually yield a more profound insight into the situation. What we are trying to argue is that there is not a rigid rationale prohibiting malleability and manoeuvrability, rather a plethora of dimensions that ought to be considered upon tackling a case study. The authors have managed to convey this perception that case studies are not inflexible. They present specific suggestions (e.g., concerning data triangulation, subjects’ participation in interpretations, different modes of reporting) and list what should not be overlooked. Such guidelines are of crucial importance, particularly for new researchers, as interest in a certain educational phenomenon alone is not enough.

The last type of research presented by Vogrinc and Saqipi is action research. If we simplify the background rationale, educators will be more engaged if occupied by relevant professional problems. Such engagement frequently results in deep involvement and personal development, both conditioned by reflection. The latter is only one of four parts of the cycle, the others being the plan, action and observation, while the goal is to locate and implement a solution that would ultimately enhance one’s teaching practice. What the authors eloquently express after these crucial presumptions is that not just any quotidian problem-solving tactic can be casually and freely equated with action research. Naturally, it is in teachers’ interest to have as few issues as possible, to resolve difficulties that arise, but if specific situations do not receive a systematic confrontation that features a conceptualised design, we cannot discuss action research. In an effort to obviate confusion regarding what is and what is not

action research, the authors draw on many sources to multifacetedly outline the appropriate procedural inquiries and affiliated interventions. In other words, they provide an explicit framework that can be utilised in a specific situation.

As stated above, the presentation of research varieties concludes with action research, after which Vogrinc and Saqipi focus on matters that transcend an individual approach, but are integral parts of all explorations: ethical standards in education research. The inclusion of ethical dilemmas and requirements is, in our opinion, a valuable addition, as it explains exactly what the responsibilities of the researcher are in relation to the participants. By articulating and unequivocally demanding the preservation of participants' rights, nothing can be taken for granted or ignorantly omitted, while leaving no room for objecting culpability in breaches of conduct. As the authors indicate, this is particularly necessary when dealing with underage and developmentally disabled people: it is crucial to know precisely what to guarantee and how to preserve their integrity. Many ethical imperatives might incipiently seem self-explanatory, yet by studying them further, one can perceive how unintentionally and quickly they can become convoluted. Consequently, warnings and preventive measures, such as those described by Vogrinc and Saqipi, might help avert potential crises.

The monograph's last section addresses research literacy in teacher education. We agree with the authors that in order to maintain and improve the quality of education, students of pedagogical programmes need to be acquainted with research procedures, and to be competent and properly qualified to use the methods. Stemming from Vogrinc and Saqipi's presentation of how research affects teacher identity and motivation, as well as the ability to independently update one's knowledge, to enhance one's skillset, etc., we would recommend this book to both pre-service and in-service teachers, as it would either provide them with a neatly packaged assortment of fundamental concepts and indispensable clarifications, thus referring them to narrower but more exacting materials, or assist them in reviving existing knowledge, maintaining retention and stimulating ensuing investigations.