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O'Leary, Z.: **The Essential Guide to Doing Research.** – Sage Publications, London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi – Singapore 2004 (reprinted 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007). ISBN 978-0-7619-4198-9, 978-0-7619-4199-6 (paperback). 226 pp.

Holliday, A.: **Doing and Writing Qualitative Research. 2nd Ed.** – Sage Publications, London – Thousand Oaks – New Delhi 2007. ISBN 1 4129 X, 1 4130 X, 978 1 4129 1129 0, 978 1 4129 1130 0. 199 pp.

Now and then, *Photosynthetica* publishes reviews on textbooks dealing with scientific communication, it is how to lecture and write papers in science. The topic books are always useful for teachers and their students in photosynthesis or related fields of natural science. The two books I mention this time are a pure exception: they deal with research done mainly in social science that is usually based on interviewing people, making qualitative observations of people in their native environment, *etc.* The only border field accessible also to natural science students may be some questions connected with ecology, environment, and sustainable development of life where collection of views of individual inhabitants may be the basis of conclusions of scientific or political importance. A very significant field of research the preparation of which and realization is explained in detail in the reviewed books is critical ethnography.

In the first textbook, the author shows how to select the topic, how to work with literature, prepare and articulate appropriate questions, articulate a good question checklist, how to make sampling, explore populations, how to argue, filter observations, manage and analyse data, what is the ethics of such research, *etc.* The basic information on statistics, selection of proper methods, recognition what the reached information means in Chapter 12 (interesting Table 12.2) might certainly be used even by some natural science students. And the text

ends with information how to prepare an article or thesis based on the results of the research (I like especially the sequence of preparing and reworking drafts till the production of a final one (pp. 210-213). Boxes bring important steps of doing research, selected examples, and references for further reading. Each chapter ends with a clear summary of most important facts. From the quotations presented in chapters I prefer these three: "Next week there can't be any crisis. My schedule is already full. – Henry Kissinger." "USA Today has come out with a new survey – apparently, three out of every four people make up 75% of the population. – David Letterman." "The pure and simple truth is rarely pure and never simple. – Oscar Wilde."

The second textbook shows research based on questioning people, observing situation in various countries and cultural surroundings, the description of which is based not only on interviews but also on photographs, films, radio and TV news, and other materials. Some examples are given, *e.g.* of shopkeeper research in an Iranian carpet shop (p. 142). A good idea is a list of topics for discussion (pp. 183-186) that enables repetition of all important facts.

Both books bring ample lists of references and carefully prepared indexes.

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