

Howe, S., Hendriksson, K.: **PhraseBook for Writing Papers and Research.** 2nd Ed. – Whole World Company Press, Cambridge 2001. ISBN 1-903384-00-1. Download and CD-ROM. GBP 34.95.

Especially we, whose mother tongue is not English, have sometimes a problem how to find a proper phrase or expression. This holds for both writing papers and preparing lectures. Therefore this material, prepared by experienced editors, is certainly very useful. They (an Englishman and a Swedish lady who studied and works in Europe and the USA) compiled the book for university and research writing, avoiding colloquial and jargon phrases (cf. the comparison of some stylistic differences on pp. 40-41). The material is prepared for both PC and Mac, for use of Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat, or Word Perfect. Planned are new revised editions and upgrades.

The material is published only on a CD-ROM, even if it has a form of a book (270 pp.). For the users whose computer is continuously working, it may be an advantage. I would prefer to have also a paper version because I do not like to start the computer only to look for one word or phrase. Nevertheless, I agree that the electronic version is certainly better for a search of individual words.

In the introductory part the user finds general information, end user licence, detailed contents, and information how to install the Phrase Book on computer and how to use it.

Phrases are then grouped according to the part of paper where they are usually used. Presented are phrases dealing with acknowledgements and preface, information about the author, introduction of a study, aim and scope of the study, methods and approaches, definitions and terminology, presenting data, giving examples, relationship and referring to other work, reviewing other work, expression of agreement and disagreement, arguing the case and against it, analysis and discussion, explanation, qualifying and quantifying, hypotheses and probability, rhetorical questions, comparison and contrast, tying a text together, presenting results, interpreting findings, writing conclusions, showing contribution to knowledge, and summarising the work. I think that especially some simple, even if not so polite, phrases are missing, such as "I thank..." in the segment on acknowledgements. I also would welcome recommendations which of the phrases is preferred or which is the most used at present. For example, in the segment on referring to oneself I miss any support of the briefest active subjective form using I (in a paper of one author) or We (in a co-authored paper) that is at present common especially in medical and biological papers.

In the "Thesaurus" (pp. 203-228) synonyms and antonyms (terms of opposite meaning) to the often used words (such as consider, decide, good, idea, look at, *etc.*) are given. Unfortunately, not all the synonyms presented here have exactly the same meaning and therefore the user should use a dictionary in some cases (e.g. "level" should not be used instead of "amount"). A glossary for

university and research (pp. 231-242) gives the most often used terms derived from Latin and Greek, together with some abbreviations. Greek and Latin morphemes (word building blocks derived from another language) are given on pp. 256-264. Greek alphabet, Roman numerals, Greek and Latin numerical affixes, SI prefixes, and comparison of SI and British-American units are also supplemented. I welcome that both the GB and US forms are compared—the differences in both spellings are shown on pp. 243-251.

Another part of this material is windows with colour underlay entitled 'Writing Help'. These windows bring general information on varieties of English, spelling and grammar, style, referring to oneself, punctuation, hyphenation, use of he and she, citing, quotations, references, capitalisation, avoiding contracted forms, clichés, tautology, numbers, time, and confusing words. Computer help in Microsoft Word is always included. I only do not understand why all this information is not concentrated into one place. For example, punctuation is on pp. 51-52, 61-62, 72-73, and 77-79, confusing words on pp. 157-158, 164-165, 172-173, 179, 184-185, and 190-191.

In addition to expected positive influences of using this PhraseBook, also some negatives may result. This collection of words and phrases presented in parallel, without any recommendation might lead to some talkativeness of future texts. A warning should be given that a scientific text of the 21st century must be as brief as possible. Why the authors give phrases such as "It is well known that ..." or "As is well known" (p. 80) that only hedge the paper? Phrases similar to "Their work has yielded a number of promising new avenues of research" (p. 83), "Rather than adding yet another explanation for ... we would like instead to focus on ..." (p. 84), "It is by no means an exaggeration to state that ..." (p. 113), "There is some evidence to suggest that ..." (p. 125), "It is worth bearing in mind that ..." (p. 133), "This finding has prompted the plausible speculation that ..." (p. 161), "has drawn attention to a number of problem areas in existing theory" (p. 193), *etc. etc.* are unnecessarily talkative. Why to say "My own view" (p. 108, 113)—do you have another view than own?

Another problem is writing 3%, 50g (p. 37) – in such combination the numeral and the unit should, according to my opinion, be always separated by a space. Some information was surprising to me, e.g. that the word "affect" has especially a negative meaning. I also did not know the term "*in silico*" (p. 237).

To buy the CD-ROM accepting the End User Licence Agreement, contact: www.wholeworldcompany.com or e-mail: info@wholeworldcompany.com. I hope that use of this PhraseBook will be reflected in a better (not more talkative) style of most scientific papers in *Photosynthetica*.

Z. ŠESTÁK (*Praha*)