

86110 Ethnographic Research and Worldview Identification
Spring 2005
Tuesdays 1:30 Norton 013

Dr. David Sills
Norton 271

502-897-4324
dsills@sbts.edu

I. Seminar Description

Ethnographic qualitative research focuses on understanding and describing, rather than predicting or controlling, human cultures and intercultural interaction. It contrasts with traditional experimental, empirical, and statistical (quantitative) research. Most missionary anthropologists find that these qualitative research methods are more appropriate to the study of human life and cultures in context. The central purpose of the course will be to come to understand various methods, resources, and tools for ethnographic research and worldview identification in order to make the most effective use of them in fulfilling the Great Commission.

II. Objectives

1. To develop in the student an awareness of the various methods for studying other cultures through bibliographic research as well as in context.
2. To acquaint the student with software and Internet tools that are available for ethnographic research and their applications for culture study.
3. To understand the necessity of and instruments for studying the worldview of a people group for the purposes of evangelism, culture transformation, and discipleship.
4. To develop in the student a greater awareness of the various schools of thought regarding data collection in field research, the analysis of the data gathered, and its strategic implementation in strategies for missions.
5. To acquaint the student with the disciplines of qualitative research and data analysis of classical empirical investigation as well as grounded theory approaches to the formulation of ethnographic descriptions of people groups.
6. The student will also investigate the ethical issues that pertain to the ways in which the identities of research subjects are protected and their rights are safeguarded.

III. Seminar Requirements. The requirements for this course consist of seminar preparation, in-class participation and a seminar paper.

IMPORTANT: In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorder, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or test-taking needs, etc.) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.

A. Seminar Preparation:

1. Required textbooks.

Each student will read the textbooks in their entirety and prepare a one-page overview of each book, which will consist of a one paragraph annotation of the book and a brief explanation of the book's value for missions. The completion of the reading and the one-page overview are due on the day that the reading is scheduled to be discussed in class.

Each student will prepare a **formal book review** on John W. Creswell's *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998. This should be prepared according to the book review guideline available on the STBS Ecampus website in the "handouts" section for this course. The review is **due April 14** in Dr. Sills' box in the Faculty Secretary's office by 5:00 PM.

Required textbooks:

Creswell, John W. *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998.

Fetterman, David M. *Ethnography: Step by step*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998.

Rubin, Herbert J., and Irene S. Rubin. *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995.

Spradley, James P. *The ethnographic interview*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1979.

_____. *Participant observation*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1980.

Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet Corbin. *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1998.

Unpublished articles, worldview instruments, and weblinks to be provided on the Ecampus class webpage.

Suggested reading:

Alasuutari, Pertti. *Researching culture: Qualitative method and cultural studies*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995.

Creswell, John W. *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1994.

Fielding, Nigel and Raymond Lee. *Using computers in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1991.

Gall, Meredith D., Walter R. Borg, and Joyce P. Gall. *Educational research: An introduction*. 6th ed. White Plains, NY: Longman, 1996.

Glaser, Barney G. and Anselm L. Strauss. *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1967.

LeCompte, Margaret D., Jean J. Schensul, Margaret R. Weeks, Marrill Singer. *Ethnographer's Toolkit, Volumes 1-6*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 1999.

Leedy, Paul D. *Practical research: Planning and design*. 5th ed. New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, 1993.

McKinney, Carol V. *Globe-Trotting in Sandals: A field guide to cultural research*. Dallas: SIL International, 2000.

Patton, Michael Quinn. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newberry Park, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990.

Williamson, John B., David A. Karp, John R. Dalphin, and Paul S. Gray. *The research craft: An introduction to social research methods*. Fairfax: TechBooks, 1982.

2. **Topical Paper.** Many aspects of ethnographic research and worldview identification are essential to the proper understanding of Missiology and the extension of the kingdom. From the list below, each student will choose one topic and prepare an eight to ten page paper that:
- describes the issue, aspect, or method
 - explains the significance of that issue for ethnographic research and worldview identification, and
 - describes the current trends of research and investigative application related to the issue. You will present your paper to the class according to the schedule. Be prepared to deliver a 40-minute oral presentation utilizing PowerPoint. Distribute an electronic copy of your paper to each of the students and both an electronic copy and a hard copy to Dr. Sills the week prior to your scheduled presentation. You must “clear” your choice of topic with Dr. Sills to avoid duplication in the class.

TOPICS FOR PAPER:

1. Instruments for Worldview Identification
2. Participant Observation
3. Key Informants
4. Conversations and Interviews
5. Focus Groups
6. Ethnography & Worldview in Business
7. Questionnaires & Surveys
8. Biography & Case Study Methods
9. Analysis of Symbols, Rituals, and Myths
10. Traditional research design vs. Grounded theory
11. Ethnosemantics & Genealogical methods
12. Selection, Sampling, and Statistical Analysis
13. Linguistic Relativism and Linguistic Determinism

B. In-class/campus work. Due to the intense nature of Ph.D. seminars and the amount of material covered each week, attendance at each class is essential. Absence from more than one week will require additional work.

CLASS PARTICIPATION. Because each student has insight to offer from his/her ministry context and experience, students are expected to participate fully in seminar discussions. The professor reserves the right to ask questions of each student in order to facilitate discussion.

C. Seminar paper. Each student will choose a people group that is present in sufficient strength in Kentuckiana to conduct ethnographic research using a minimum of three field research methods (five would be better). The goal of the research is to approximate their worldview as much as possible. Each research method used in the research should be documented and presented in the paper with a review of its history, strengths and weaknesses, major proponents, etc. The seminar paper should be 20-25 pages in length, double-spaced, and written in accordance with the SBTS style guide. The student will draw from required class readings and presented research topics. Additional discussion and direction for the paper will be given during the seminar.

IV. Grading. The student's final grade for the course will be determined according to the following:

Book overviews	10%
Book Review	10%
Topical paper/Presentation	30%
Class participation/discussion	10%
Worldview Identification paper	<u>40%</u>
	100%

NOTE: According to seminary policy, a student must receive a final grade of B- or above in order to receive credit for this seminar.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the course description, course objectives, general content, grading criteria, course requirements, attendance requirements, and other information necessary for students to appraise the course. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary.

WEEK	LECTURE & TEXTBOOKS	TOPIC	PRESENTER
Week 1	Introduction of course and syllabus. Organization of presentation schedule.	Issues in Orality	Dr. Sills
Week 2	Fetterman Ch.4, Strauss & Corbin, <i>Basics of Qualitative Research</i>	Instruments for Worldview Identification	
Week 3	Spradley, <i>Participation Observation</i>	Participant Observation	
Week 4		Key Informants	
Week 5	Spradley, <i>The Ethnographic Interview</i>	Conversations and Interviews	
Week 6	Rubin & Rubin, <i>Qualitative Interviewing</i>	Focus Groups	
Week 7	Fetterman, <i>Ethnography</i>	Ethnography & Worldview in Business	

Week 8		Questionnaires & Surveys	
Week 9		Biography & Case Study Methods	
Week 10		Analysis of Symbols, Rituals, and Myths	
Week 11	Creswell, <i>Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among five traditions</i>	Traditional research design vs. Grounded theory	
Week 12	READING DAYS	READING	DAYS
Week 13 Formal book reviews due		Ethnosemantics & Genealogical methods	
Week 14		Selection, Sampling, and Statistical Analysis	
Week 15		Linguistic Relativism and Linguistic Determinism	

General Guidelines for Class Presentations

Some general observations:

1. The catalog description of the Ph.D. degree, along with the rigorous admission requirements, reflects the high level of academic and classroom production that is expected of students involved in this program of study.
2. As graduates holding the Ph.D., you will be expected to provide leadership and direction in missions. People will be looking to you for answers, resources, ideas and responses. Your present course of study is designed to instill in you these types of leadership capabilities. When you are presenting in class, it is not the faculty's or your fellow students' responsibility to lead the class. It is yours!
3. As you move through the Ph.D. program, you do so alongside cohorts. Your academic work is not done merely for the professor's approval and a high grade. You are providing soundly researched and well presented materials to benefit your fellow students. From this perspective, you are dependent upon one another for genuine learning. In other words, you are not merely completing an assignment, you are teaching. You must have as your goal the presentation and explanation of concepts, resources, trends, issues, etc. that will enhance the educational experience of all persons involved in the seminar. You must raise pertinent issues. You must be able to respond to questions from the seminar participants and be able to refer them to additional resources. In short, when your fellow students leave the seminar, they should be able to say to themselves, "I have learned something today."

Specific guidelines for leading the discussion of textbook material:

1. At the beginning of the class, you will distribute your one page overview of the material. You will **not read** from prepared material in your presentation, though you may refer to the overview or other notes or use a PowerPoint presentation.
2. Because everyone will have already read the book, in about 20-25 minutes, you should:
 - Provide a brief oral summary of the material.
 - Set the book in the context of historical and contemporary missiological/anthropological studies. (The author is indebted to whom? The present work is related to what other writings, and in what manner? Are the author's findings part of a trend(s) in missions? What new or distinctive contribution(s) does the author provide in the book? Etc.
 - Did you generally agree with the author's approach? Would you recommend this book to someone else? Etc.

NOTE: These goals might appear a bit ambitious for a short presentation. However, you must learn to provide this information clearly and succinctly. Then, you may follow up on any of these issues in the ensuing class discussion.

3. During your presentation, you are responsible for moving the conversation and discussion along. You must be sufficiently familiar with the immediate work, related resources, and the general field of the topic so that, in the case of a lull or pause, you are able to encourage the conversation to move forward or to move the dialogue to another matter.