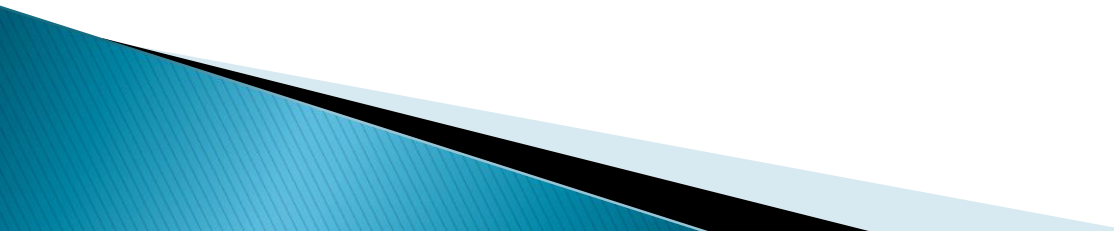


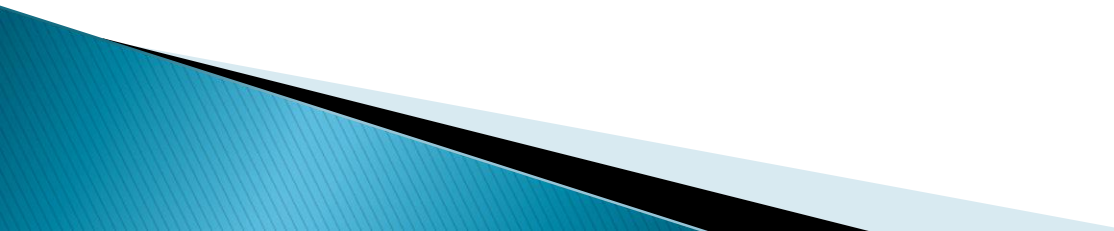
# Field Research

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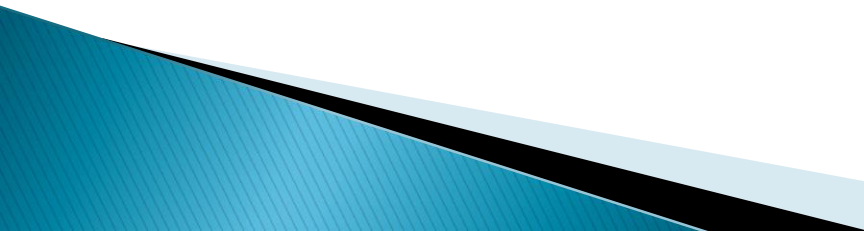
# Field Research

- ▶ What is field research?
  - ▶ What is ethnography?
  - ▶ What is ethnomethodology?
  - ▶ What do field researchers do?
  - ▶ What are the steps in field research?
  - ▶ What is a field interview?
  - ▶ What is the role of informants?
  - ▶ What are the advantages of focus groups?  
What are the disadvantages of focus groups?
  - ▶ What are some ethical dilemmas for field researchers?
- 

# What is Field Research?

- ▶ Field research is the study of people in their natural settings.
  - ▶ It is also the study of people by directly interacting with them.
  - ▶ Field research helps us to gain an understanding of various communities or subcultures and make theoretical statements about the perspectives of those who live there.
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# What is Ethnography?

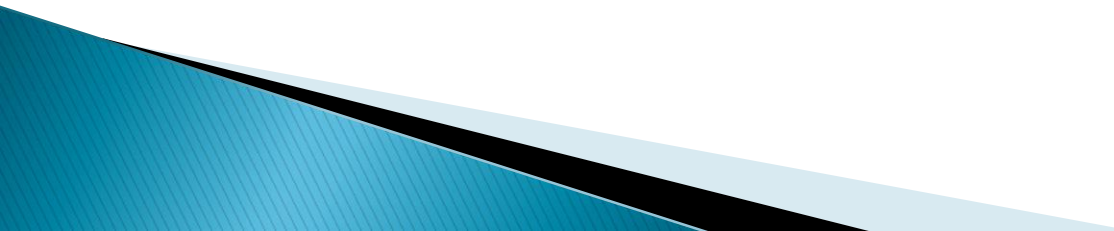
- ▶ **Ethnography** comes from cultural anthropology. *Ethno*- means folk, and -*graphy* refers to describing something.
  - ▶ Ethnography means “folk-study”, or the study of a group or culture to understand a way of life from the local or native point of view.
  - ▶ **Thick description** - used by ethnographers to describe in great detail all of the minute events and meanings of any situation and setting - is a critical part of ethnography.
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# Types of Ethnography

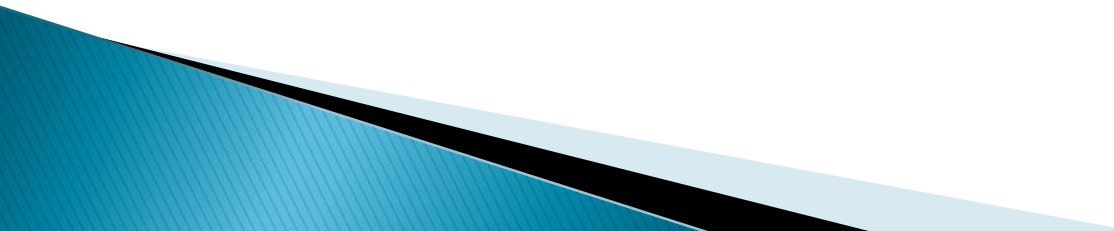
- ▶ 2 Types

1. A Realist Ethnography: It reflects a particular stance taken by the researcher toward the individuals being studied.
2. Critical Ethnography: Incorporating a critical approach including an advocacy perspective.

# Procedure in Conducting a Ethnography

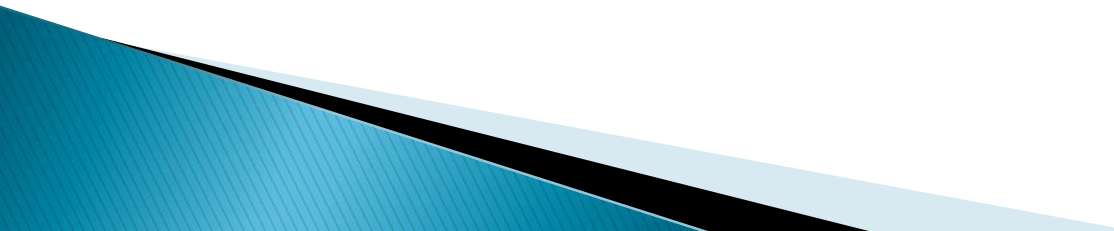
- ▶ Study a culture-sharing group
  - ▶ Locate a setting in which to study this group
  - ▶ Ask questions about the shared patterns of behaviour, beliefs, and language
  - ▶ Develop a description of the culture-sharing group and analyse data for themes that indicate shared patterns
- 

# What is Ethnomethodology?

- ▶ Ethnomethodology is the study of commonsense knowledge by observing its creation and use in a ongoing interaction within its natural settings.
  - ▶ Ethnomethodology is a radical or extreme form of research, based on phenomenology and the social constructivist approach.
  - ▶ It assumes that all meanings are fragile and fluid, not fixed, stable or solid, and are constantly being created and re-created.
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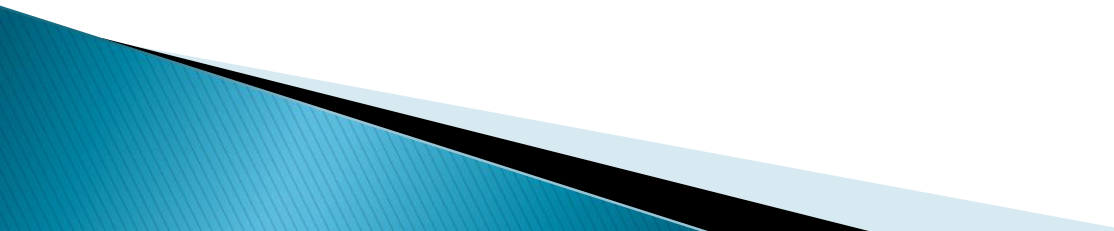
# Basic Principles of Ethnomethodology

The Ethnomethodology is based on the following principles:

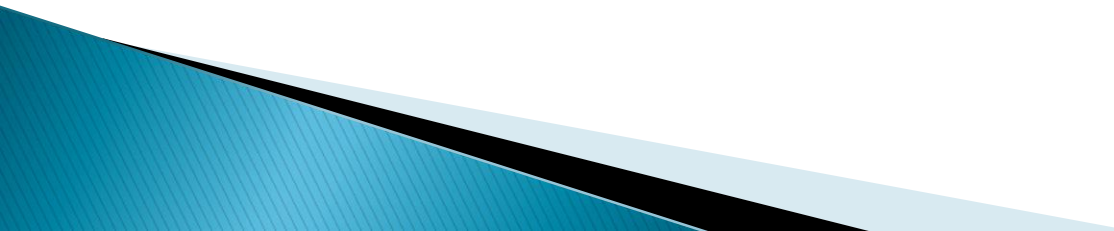
1. Common people method
  2. Et cetra principle
  3. Documentary method
  4. Breaching experiment
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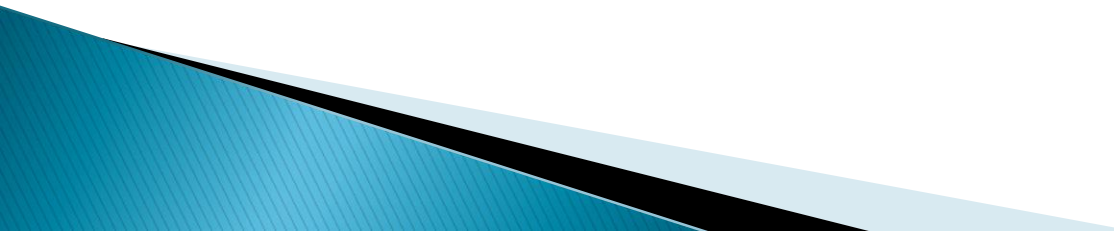
# What do Field Researchers Do?

- ▶ observe ordinary events in natural settings.
  - ▶ directly involved in the daily life of the setting.
  - ▶ acquire an insider's point of view.
  - ▶ use a variety of techniques in a flexible manner.
  - ▶ develop extensive written notes on the setting they study.
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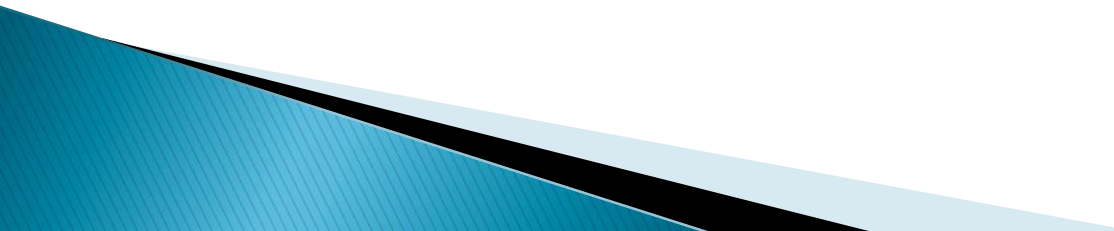
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- ▶ see events holistically.
  - ▶ understand and develop empathy for members of the setting.
  - ▶ notice both explicit (recognized) and tacit (implicit) aspects of setting.
  - ▶ observe without upsetting or disrupting (except as noted).
  - ▶ cope with stress, ambiguity and uncertainty.
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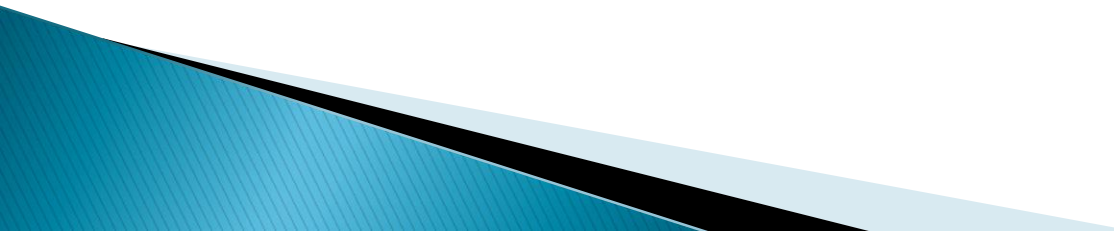
# What are the steps in Field Research?

- ▶ Prepare oneself by reading the literature and focus.
  - ▶ Select a site and gain access.
  - ▶ Enter the field and establish relationships in the setting.
  - ▶ Adopt a social role and learn the ropes of that role.
  - ▶ Watch, listen and collect quality data.
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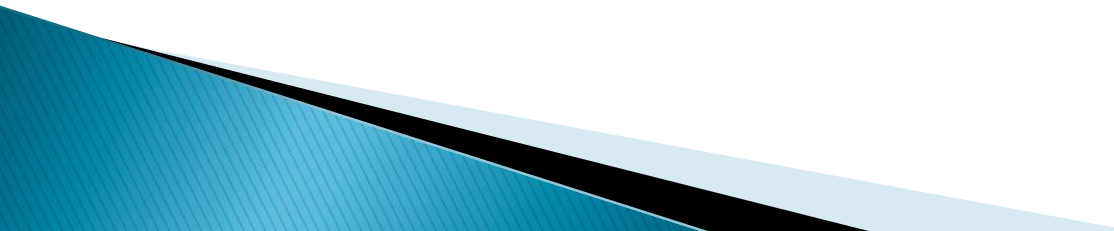
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- ▶ Begin to analyze data and evaluate working hypotheses about the setting.
  - ▶ While focusing on specific aspects of setting, use theoretical sampling.
  - ▶ Conduct interviews with member informants.
  - ▶ Disengage and physically leave the setting.
  - ▶ Contemplate the analysis and write your report.
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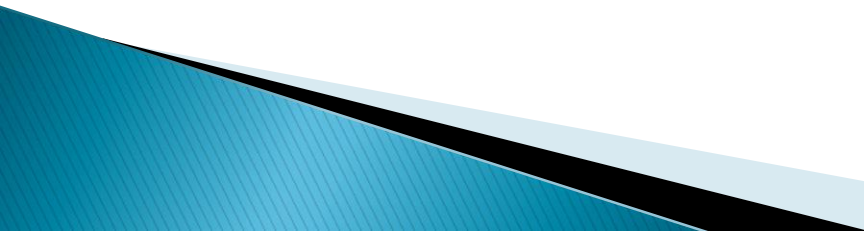
# What is a Field Interview?

- ▶ Typically the beginning and end are not clear.
  - ▶ The questioning and question order can be rearranged.
  - ▶ An interviewer shows interest, encourages elaboration.
  - ▶ It should be a friendly conversation.
  - ▶ It can occur in group or individual settings.
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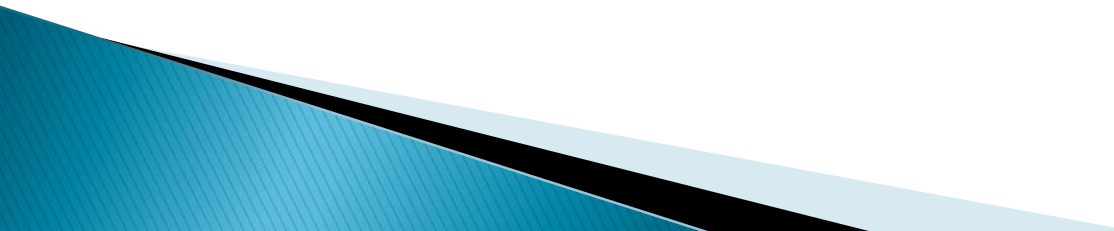
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- ▶ It can be interspersed with jokes.
  - ▶ It should be open ended with many probes.
  - ▶ The pace is controlled by all participants.
  - ▶ The social context is critical and recorded by researcher.
  - ▶ An interviewer adjusts to member norms and language.
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# What is the role of Informants?

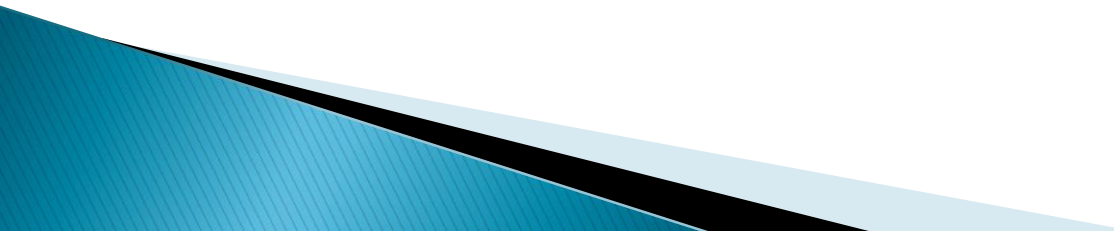
- ▶ A key actor who is a member who tells about and informs the researcher.
  - ▶ Good informants are familiar with the subculture, engage in daily routines of setting, and can spend time and energy to assist the researcher.
  - ▶ Good informants are familiar with local culture, they know and use and can talk about folk theory and pragmatic common sense in context.
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# What are the advantages of focused groups?

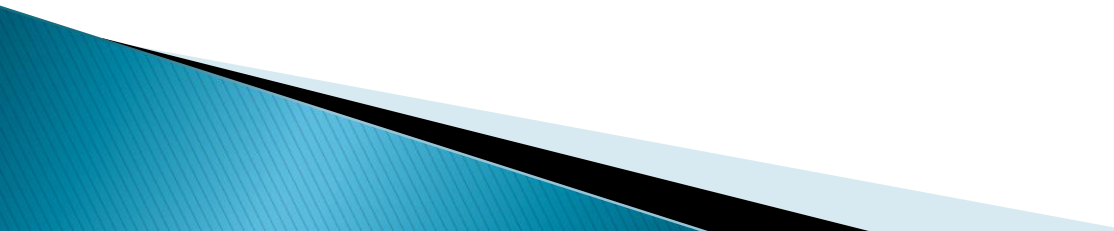
- ▶ Allows free expression in natural setting especially for those otherwise marginalized.
  - ▶ Participants tend to feel empowered, especially in action-oriented settings.
  - ▶ Provides a window into how people talk about settings.
  - ▶ Interpretation of quantitative results may be facilitated.
  - ▶ Participants may query one another.
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# What are the disadvantages of focused groups?

- ▶ subject to the polarization effect, where attitudes tend to become even more extreme.
  - ▶ limited to only one or two topics.
  - ▶ A moderator may limit expression and participants may express fewer ideas.
  - ▶ It may be difficult to reconcile any differences between individual and group–context responses.
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# What are some ethical dilemmas for field researchers?

- ▶ **Deception**
  - ▶ **Confidentiality**
  - ▶ **Illegal subcultures**
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# Your turn

Questions/Comments

Thanks

