

Some common contrasts between quantitative and qualitative research	
Quantitative	Qualitative
Numbers	Words
Point of view of researcher	Point of view of participants
Research distance	Researcher close
Theory testing	Theory emergent
Static	Process
Structured	Unstructured
Generalization	Contextual understanding
Hard, reliable data	Rich, deep data
Macro	Micro
Behaviour	Meaning
Artificial settings	Natural settings

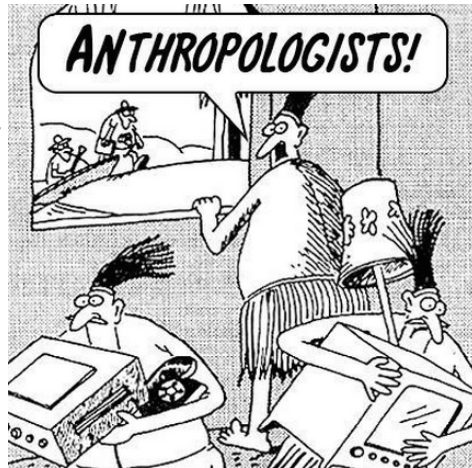
Bryman, 2008

## Ethnography & Participant Observation

- Often used **interchangeably** (preference for 'ethnography' since 'participant observation' seems to imply just observation, though observers do more than simply observe)
- Ethnographer/participant observer **immerses** him or herself in a group for an extended period of time, observing behavior, listening to what is said, and asking questions.
- Ethnography tends to refer to a study in which participant observation is the prevalent method, but that also has a specific focus on the **culture of the group** being studied.

## Types of Ethnography

- Overt ethnography
- Covert ethnography



## Interviews

- Structured interviews (survey design)
- Semi-structured interviews
- Unstructured interviews

**Qualitative  
Interviews**

## Qualitative Interviews

### **Interview Guide:**

- Semi-structured: list of questions (open-ended and closed-ended) or topics
- Unstructured: list of prompts

## Qualitative Interviews

- Flexible
- Rich/detailed answers
- Interest in the interviewee's point of view (meanings, motivations, contexts)
- Central role of the interviewer

## Issues in Qualitative Interview

- **Clear** way of introducing the research to interviewees
- Interview **guide** has to relate to **RQ(s)**
- **Pilot** the interview guide (language is clear, free of jargon, etc.)
- Design questions to elicit **reflective** discussions (no Y/N questions, no leading questions)
- Questions have to offer a real prospect of seeing the world from the **interviewees' point of view** (don't impose your frame of reference)
- How will you **present yourself** in the interview? (dress code, posture, body language etc.)

