Chapter 5

Methods in Cultural Anthropology

Multiple-Choice

1. Anthropologists rely on fieldwork to

a. describe and explain diverse cultures.

b. study how people think rather than how they behave.

c avoiding having to test hypotheses.

d. all of the above

ANS: A

PG: 89

2. Anthropological fieldwork involves

a. living with the people being studied.

b. asking questions, and observing the every day behaviors of the people being studied.

c. surveying the environment and material possessions of the people being studied.

d. all of the above

ANS: D

PG: 89

3. Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data are all part of

a. selecting a research problem.

b. formulating a research design.

c. the preliminary preparation for anthropological fieldwork.

d. conducting field research.

ANS: D

PG: 92-94

4. Learning another language is

a. seldom part of the anthropologist's preparation for fieldwork.

b. always accomplished before the anthropologist enters the field site.

c. necessary only when an interpreter cannot be found.

d. an important part of the tradition of anthropological fieldwork.

ANS: D

PG: 92

5. Anthropologists usually obtain funding from agencies that give research grants

a. awarded on a highly competitive basis.

b. to all students in graduate programs of anthropology.

c. but few anthropologists actually do research overseas today.

d. b and c

ANS: A

PG: 91

6. Permission or clearance from a host government must be obtained for fieldwork,

a. although anthropologists are always allowed to work in any part of the world.

b. although few countries pay much attention to the research interests of anthropologists.

c. because most countries want to make sure the research will not be embarrassing or politically sensitive.

d. a and b

ANS: C

PG: 91-92

7. Anthropological fieldwork in recent decades has

a. produced mostly general ethnographies.

b. been more focused and specific than in earlier times.

c. been more problem-oriented than in earlier times.

d. b and c

ANS: D

PG: 92

8. The theory that was tested in the Kenya Kinship Study was

a. neoevolutionary.

b. that urbanization lessens ties with distant kin and emphasizes the nuclear family.

c. that urbanization leads to high rates of crime.

d. that urbanization strengthens ties to distant kin.

ANS: B

PG: 92

9. In the Kenya Kinship Study, the dependent variable was

a. rural to urban migration.

b. urbanization.

c. family interaction.

d. urban employment.

ANS: C

PG: 93

10. Principle method(s) of collecting data in the Kenya Kinship Study included

a. day histories.

b. focus groups.

c. participant-observation.

d. a and c

ANS: D

PG: 93

11. Factors responsible for the importance of extended kinship interaction in Nairobi, Kenya include the

a. security of land tenure in rural areas.

b. uncertainty of urban employment.

c. easy availability of jobs for well-educated Kenyans.

d. a and b only

ANS: D

PG: 94

12. According to Ferraro, family interaction in both urban and rural Kenya can be understood largely in terms of lack of

a. knowledge of modernization.

b. political knowledge.

c. both money and economic security.

d. knowledge about employment and social security.

ANS: C

PG: 94

13. The Kenya Kinship Study allowed anthropologists to conclude that

a. urban life in Nairobi does not by itself lead to the truncation of extended kinship ties.

b. the extended kinship ties of rural Kenyans are stronger than those of urban residents.

c. urban experience in Nairobi leads to the truncation of extended kinship ties.

d. rural life in Kenya itself eventually led to the truncation of extended kinship ties.

ANS: A

PG: 94

14. When conducting fieldwork among the Kikuyu, Ferraro

a. never told the local people about his profession in the United States.

b. told them he was interested in farming practices when he really was studying kinship.

c. told them he was a government official.

d. told them he was a teacher, wanting to learn more about Kikuyu culture so he could teach his students.

ANS: D

PG: 96-97

15. Which statement about data collection used in anthropology is correct?

a. Participant-observation always is appropriate for cross-cultural research.

b. Methods that work in one culture might not be appropriate for a neighboring culture.

c. Photography is always appropriate in public settings.

d. Structured interviews should always be used early in the fieldwork.

ANS: B

PG: 94-95

16. The data-gathering technique used most often by anthropologists is

a. structured interview.

b. mailed questionnaires.

c. participant-observation.

d. document analysis.

ANS: C

PG: 95

17. Which of the following **is not** part of the advice that Ferraro gives for conducting participant-observation fieldwork?

a. Proceed slowly.

b. Secure permission from the top down in the political hierarchy.

c. Never eat the local food unless you've seen it prepared.

d. Be consistent in how you explain who you are.

ANS: C

PG: 96-97

18. Project Camelot was conducted

a. with funding from United States anthropologists.

b. in the United States in the 1960s.

c. with funding from the U.S. Army to study the causes of civil violence in countries in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Europe.

d. as a model for correct ethical behavior on the part of United States anthropologists.

ANS: C

PG: 110

19. A disadvantage of participant-observation is that

a. only a small sample can be studied.

b. nonverbal behavior can be observed.

c. rapport is enhanced.

d. actual behavior can be distinguished from expected behavior.

ANS: A

PG: 99

20. Participant-observation has the advantage of

a. providing a large sample size.

b. ease of recording of data.

c. being an unobtrusive data gathering technique.

d. enabling fieldworkers to distinguish actual from expected behavior.

ANS: D

PG: 99

21. The ethnographic interview is different from the sociological or psychological interview because the

a. interviewer and the subject almost always speak different first languages.

b. ethnographic interview is much more narrow in scope.

c. ethnographic interview always focuses on the experiences of a single individual.

d. ethnographic interview is typically used alone without other sources of data.

ANS: A

PG: 100

22. Photography

a. can provide a record of land-use patterns.

b. can document the technology of the culture and how it is used.

c. can provide information on patterns of interaction.

d. all of the above

ANS: D

PG: 103

23. Unstructured interviews

a. seldom provide useful or accurate data.

b. should only be used at the end of one’s fieldwork.

c. contain open-ended questions and are paced by the interviewees.

d. are all very short in duration.

ANS: C

PG: 100

24. Anthropologists have a responsibility to

a. their subjects.

b. their discipline.

c. their colleagues.

d. all of the above

ANS: D

PG: 111

25. Cultural anthropologists use document analysis in addition to interviewing and observation because

a. people can never be trusted to tell the truth.

b. it can produce large quantities of data.

c. it is relatively inexpensive.

d. b and c

ANS: D

PG: 101-102

26. Culture shock includes the following symptom(s):

a. a sense of confidence about the proper way to behave.

b. a loss of self-esteem.

c. a sense of being accepted by members of the other culture.

d. a feeling of having total control over the situation.

e. all of the above

ANS: B

PG: 106

27. The validity of anthropological data can be checked by

a. never asking more than one person the same question.

b. asking a single individual the same question repeatedly over a period of time.

c. comparing people's answers to questions to their actual behavior.

d. b and c

ANS: D

PG. 101

28. When conducting ethnographic interviews, you should

a. use simple, unambiguous questions

b. obtain informed consent after the interview is completed

c. leave the more controversial questions for the end of the interview

d. a and c only

ANS: D

PG: 101

29. Anthropologists collect information on all the relatives(kin) of the informant by

a. mapping.

b. the genealogical method.

c. proxemic analysis.

d. document analysis.

ANS: B

PG: 102

30. Biculturalism means

a. a loss of understanding of one's own culture.

b. a capacity to function effectively in two or more cultures.

c. an inability to shift gears between one's own and another culture.

d. extreme homesickness.

ANS: B

PG: 106-107

31. Discussions of anthropological field techniques used in research

a. seldom were published before the 1960s.

b. have always been an important part of publications based on field research.

c. always explained how the anthropologist felt about doing their fieldwork.

d. always explained how many people were interviewed and observed.

ANS: A

PG: 90

32. One anthropologist studying the same village at two different times

a. will always have a harder time on her or his second trip because the people will have learned how to avoid the anthropologist.

b. would experience two different fieldwork situations, because both the anthropologist and the people under analysis will have changed.

c. would experience almost identical fieldwork situations if she or he had done good ethnographic research the first time.

d. will always have an easier time on his or her second trip because the people will have learned that the anthropologist is harmless.

ANS: B

PG: 91

33. A researcher's complimenting and touching a Malaysian child on the head

a. violated the sacred part of the child's body.

b. helped the anthropologist establish rapport.

c. invited bad fortune on the child.

d. a and c

ANS: D

PG: 95

34. When teaching, anthropologists should be

a. fair, candid, and nonexploitive in their dealing with students.

b. sure to minimize the importance of ethics in anthropological research.

c. careful to keep students away from their research and writing for publication.

d. a and b

ANS: A

PG: 111

35. An anthropologist decides on which techniques to use based on

a. the nature of the problem being studied.

b. a realistic appraisal of what he/she can get away with.

c. the reception of the people being studied.

d. a and c

ANS: D

PG: 105

36. "Narrative ethnography" is concerned

a. with traditional notions of scientific objectivity.

b. with co-producing ethnographic knowledge by focusing on the interaction between anthropologists and their informants.

c. analyzing informant’s information in light of the political structure.

d. with avoiding the influence of the personality of the anthropologist.

ANS: B

PG: 107-108

37. Ethnographic fieldwork is different from research in a chemistry or physics laboratory because

a. observers must interact with their subjects, which introduces subjectivity.

b. subjects have a free will and can behave in an atypical manner.

c. relationships with ethnographers cam cause informants to behave differently.

d. all of the above.

ANS: D

PG: 111

38. Anthropologists receiving support from their sponsors must

a. reflect upon the purposes of the sponsoring organizations and the potential uses to which the findings will be put.

b. never reveal their sources of information to their sponsors.

c. never accept more money than to meet their research expenses.

d. accept the fact that their sponsors have the right to make all ethical decisions.

ANS: A

PG: 111

39. In her study in Senegal, Renaud worked with registered prostitutes and found that

a. approximately four of every 10 registered prostitutes were HIV positive.

b. almost all prostitutes enforced condom use among their clients.

c. the prostitutes required their boyfriends to use condoms only 71 per cent of the time.

d. all of the above

ANS: D

PG: 98-99

40. Many anthropologists working in foreign countries

a. seldom are able to be as honest with their host government as they could be with their own government.

b. often compromise their professional standards in order to get a research clearance.

c. should be honest with both their own and the host governments.

d. may engage in clandestine research for their own or their host government.

ANS: C

PG: 111

True-False

1. For anthropologists, fieldwork is experiential.

ANS: T

PG: 89

2. After the difficult steps of the research process (collecting data), the interpretation of anthropological findings is easy.

ANS: F

PG: 93-94

3. The popular image of the cultural anthropologist in the field has often been overly romanticized.

ANS: T

PG: 91

4. Participant-observation requires that anthropologists enter into the daily life of people and forget their own cultures for the duration of their fieldwork.

ANS: F

PG: 95

5. Most anthropologists are very dependent on an interpreter because most native languages are extremely difficult to learn.

ANS: F

PG: 92

6. Anthropologists, unlike other researchers, do not have to develop hypotheses and identify independent and dependent variables.

ANS: F

PG: 92

7. When living in cities, people always put greater emphasis on the nuclear family than on more distant kin.

ANS: F

PG: 94

8. As a general rule, one should start formal data collection immediately when doing fieldwork.

ANS: F

PG: 97

9. As a general rule, structured interviews should be used before unstructured interviews.

ANS: F

PG: 100

10. Since “a picture is worth a thousand words,” ethnographers always need to document certain features of a culture by taking photographs.

ANS: F

PG: 103

Short Answer

1. What must an anthropologist do to prepare for fieldwork?

ANS: make preparations before leaving home, gain acceptance into the community, select appropriate data-gathering techniques, understand how to operate within the local political structure, take precautions against investigator bias, choose knowledgeable informants, cope with culture shock, learn a new language, re-evaluate findings based on new evidence

PG: 91-92

2. How do ethnographic and survey methods differ?

ANS: ethnographic methods are more holistic, are more likely to be experiential, and are usually used in preliterate societies.

PG: 91

3. Name 3 data gathering techniques used primarily by applied anthropologists.

ANS: Rapid Ethnographic Assessment; Surveys; Focus Groups

PG: 103-104

4. What are some general guidelines applicable to most participant-observation fieldwork?

ANS: work one’s way down the political hierarchy, select one role and use it consistently, proceed slowly, communicate to the local people that she or he is a student, wanting to learn more about a subject on which they are the experts

PG: 95-98

5. What are some of the disadvantages of participant-observation?

ANS: precludes a large sample size, data are often hard to code or categorize, may be difficult to record notes at the same time as observing, has an obtrusive effect on the thing that is being studied

PG: 99

6. What is the difference between unstructured and structured interviews?

ANS: Unstructured interviews involve a minimum of control, use open ended questions, and allow interviewees to respond at their own pace using their own words. Structured interviews use the same set of questions for all informants, in the same sequence, and preferably under the same set of conditions.

PG: 100

7. List four other techniques for the collection of cultural data.

ANS: census taking, mapping, document analysis, genealogies, and photography

PG: 101-103

8. What are the methodological advantages of photography?

ANS: allows us to see without fatigue, not selective - captures everything in any particular frame, easier and less time-consuming mode of data collection than written description

PG: 103

9. What are some of the symptoms of culture shock?

ANS: homesickness, boredom, withdrawal, need for excessive amounts of sleep, compulsive eating or drinking, irritability, marital stress, stereotyping of host nationals, hostility toward host nationals, loss of ability to work effectively, physical ailments, unexplainable fits of weeping, exaggerated cleanliness

PG: 106

10. What is meant by “existential shock?”

ANS: a disorientation about boundaries between life and death.

PG: 106

Essay

1. How important is it for an anthropologist to be able to cope with change and with the unknown? Explain your answer.

2. Why is direct fieldwork so important in cultural anthropology? Why is it important for anthropologists to write about their experiences in the field?

3. What are the characteristics of each of the five basic stages of anthropological research?

4. What must anthropologists do in order to establish good relationships with their host government and the community or population with which they will work?

5. What is participant-observation? What demands does this method make on the anthropologist and the population with which she or he is working?