

Ethnographic Questions

Adapted from Ethnographic Interviews by Spradley
And Exploring the Land by Bennett

Types of Questions

Descriptive

Broad, experience, language

- Could you tell me what you do at Diwali Festival?
- Could you describe the role of a married Polynesian woman? Unmarried? Widowed?

A Poor Descriptive Question:

- Describe being Indian.

Types of Questions

Structural

The basic units, definitions and domains of a culture.

- What are the different holidays celebrated in Kenya?
- How do you calculate a taxi fare in Nairobi?
 - Followup: Are there any instances in which a fare would change and become higher or lower?
 - Can you think of any other reasons?

A Poor Structural Question

What are the different emotions you felt when..?

Types of Questions

Contrast

- What is the difference between a village chief and a senior elder?
- What is the difference between a player and a baseball player?

A Poor Contrast Question (when asked in Rwanda):

- What is the difference between a Rwandan army officer and an American army officer?

Domains for Ethnographic Study

- Birthing
- Naming
- Gender Roles
- Rite of Passage
- Marriage
- Taboos
- Death
- Religion
- Afterlife
- Family Structure
- Societal Structure
- Leadership
- Conflict
- Divorce
- Sexuality
- Ownership