

The most thought provoking inquiry form in this course was the most recent form of inquiry that we learned, ethnographic participant observation. This approach was taught very effectively with having us watch Whale Rider, then analyze as if we were a member of the community and then comparing that to if we were an outsider like Niki Caro, the director and writer of the story, was. With this inquiry process, the researcher is able to observe something and then use their background knowledge or technology to explain what they are seeing.

Ethnographic participant observation can apply to every topic I teach in chemistry. I could have the class perform a lab or I could show them a demonstration, and then make them record their observations and try to come up with an explanation. The observations are similar to us acting as if we were people in the community and the explanations is like us trying to put reasoning behind what we were seeing happen in the community.

While I was thinking about this process I recalled something that I had to do in one of my undergraduate classes. We were talking about how to evaluate and reflect on how a lesson went and our instructor started talking about how doctors use SOAP notes. A SOAP note requires the person to have subjective and objective data, assessment, and a plan. The process of ethnographic participant observation reminds me very much of this. It is not the same because a SOAP note does not always have to do with culture, but similar. The objective data are the vitals of the patient, which is what you are observing when you are in the community and the assessment is a list of possible other diagnosis, or in the case of this process what you interpret as an outsider.

Another connection that I was able to make while watching Whale Rider was the fact that the community had two schools, which could be said about the school system that I teach in. With the new standards that require students with IEPs to be in a traditional classroom for a certain percentage of the school day. It makes it necessary for me to teach a class with two sets of curriculums, which are similar but need to be adjusted for certain students. My version of ethnographic participant observations would make teaching a wide range of students easier because I would still have them record what they see and then expect a different level of explanation from the different groups of students in my classroom.

The labs that we perform in chemistry require groups of 2 students, which usually try to pair up a higher achieving student with a lower achieving student. Bateson mentions in Peripheral Visions something that will help me defend why I pick their groups. She states "what is miraculous is how often it is possible to work together to sustain joint performances in spite of different beliefs" (Bateson, pg 23). With having a difference in group members will allow for the students to work with students that come from different backgrounds and have different background knowledge. The partners should be able to come up with better explanations together.

An example of when I use my version of ethnographic participant observations is when I am teaching Gas Laws in Chemistry. I set up 6 different demonstrations around the lab and we walk around as a class performing the demonstrations. The students write down their observations and then we go back in the classroom and they try to write an explanation for what they saw. It seems to work very well

in class. A problem I run into is if the student is not able to make a connection between background knowledge and what they are seeing.

Sometimes, background knowledge is not enough so we use technology to gain knowledge. From the quiz that we took in Unit 6, I am an ambivalent networker according to the "What Kind of Tech User Are You". I want to take some time to talk about the positives and negatives of how technology could be useful with the ethnographic participant inquiry process.

Connecting to background knowledge is important and if they do not have the background knowledge I could allow them to use technology to research for it. With the use of mobile devices in today's society students are able to access information 24/7. I could take the time and help them decipher what is a reliable source or useful information that applies to what they are looking for. Google is a great resource to find information, but it is what the students do with the information and which source they use to find the information. Some youth today just search in Google what they want and pick the first link and use the information on that site. Most of the time, the first link on the search is a wiki page that has information that was contributed by some other person. I would introduce the students to Kevin Kelley's idea of a universal library of information, which includes scholarly books.

Technology is such a great thing when it is used correctly and at the right time. In Unit 6 it was stated how technology is making children evolve into more of a multi-tasker than before. With the evolution of children, it should make it easier for them to think as if they were an outsider while they were actually in one place. Technology is not only making children evolve when it comes to multi-tasking, but it is causing a new species of people due to the unending data supply at their fingertips. Is this new species a good change or a bad change? The answer to this question depends on the person that is answering the question, and some positives are listed in the previous paragraph. In a way I think it is harmful to society due to what I see in school. Students are unable to do things without their phone, they have conversations with friends strictly with texting without talking face to face. Some students are unable to perform simple arithmetic without the help of a calculator or their phone. Zittrain feels that the internet is not helping society and he thinks that we need to stop the direction we are going. Another thing I think is a problem with the technology is students do not know to limit the amount of information they share in a social network.

Participant observations can be used by all in the educational society. Each person is able to see what is happening and then taking a step back to reflect as if they were an outsider in the conversation. For administrators, I think it would be useful for them when they are meeting with a student. The meeting could be about discipline or talking about the student's life. The administrator could use a recording device to make sure they remember all of the details that were presented to them by the student. The same process could be used by counselors at the school.

Teachers could use a system similar to what Paley described in the *Girl with the Brown Crayon* to make sure the information that was told the students was accurate and to keep track of what was said to each class. I teach the same class 4 times in a day and I feel like I tell every class a piece of important information about quizzes or tests, but the student's claim that I did not. If I had a tape of the class I

would know for sure if I did or did not. The recorder would allow me to act as if I was a student in the classroom to know why something is confusing and to help with the explanation of what was happening in the classroom.

Most importantly this inquiry process would be beneficial for the students in any class. It is useful for all of the things that have been previously mentioned earlier in this paper. According to Bateson, "what is learned then becomes a part of that system of self-definition that filters all future perceptions" (Bateson, pg 79), which allows for change. With this process it will allow each student the opportunity to learn, which "will change people."