

SIRPA LAPPALAINEN, PIIRKKO HYNNINEN, TARJA KANKKUNEN, ELINA LAHELMA, TARJA TOLONEN (eds). *Etnografia metodologiana. Lähtökohtana koulutuksen tutkimus*. Vastapaino: Tampere, 2007. Pp. 283. ISBN 978-951-768-201-5 (paper).

*Etnografia metodologiana* (Ethnography as a method) is a well compiled collection of articles written in Finnish from a feminist perspective. While the book introduces several important aspects of ethnography, it also invites one to reflect one's own understanding of it. Although it is based on several fieldwork projects carried out primarily in schools and kindergartens, it is not only aimed at or useful for educationalists. The data collection processes described in the book are representative of the challenges of 'doing' ethnography, which is a physically and emotionally demanding, as well as a time-consuming, methodology. Increasing its challenge is the fact that every ethnographer must construct her own way of doing research as no strict rules exist on how to do proper ethnography. Consequently researchers often have to tolerate uncertainty and criticism. Ethnographic research demands the patience to work for years, with the output (research report) available only at the very end. Due to all of these factors, as the authors acknowledge, ethnography fails to fit the current expectations of the academic world which are based on short-term projects and rapid results.

The book is divided into four parts with an introduction. In the latter Sirpa Lappalainen emphasizes how in ethnographic research data analysis, interpretation, and theorizing take place hand in hand. The first part offers an overview by Elina Lahelma and Tuula Gordon of the field of educational ethnographic research, with an introduction to relevant scholarship, both Finnish and international. In the second part Tuula Gordon, Pirkko Hynninen, Elina Lahelma, Tuija Metso, Tarja Palmu and Tarja Tolonen present their experiences of ethnographic data collection in schools. They emphasize collectivity and discuss how it becomes possible to collect ethnographic data in a large research group whose participants have varying intellectual interests and often attend to different things in everyday school life.

In her article Sirpa Lappalainen concentrates on the boundaries of ethnographic research, recounting her experiences of data collection among small children in kindergartens. She explains how she positioned herself in the children's world, thus allowing her to accumulate valuable data from them. In their chapter, Tarja Tolonen and Tarja Palmu discuss the ethnographic interview as a data collection method, concluding that an ethnographic interview differs from a thematically-orientated interview because of the researcher's relationship to her informants: in ethnographic interviews one is familiar with one's informants, knowing in advance whom one is interviewing. The section ends with another article by Sirpa Lappalainen, explaining how ethnographic observations can be transformed into a written paper.

The third part concentrates on data analysis, beginning with an article by Tarja Palmu, who points out how fieldwork, the writing process and data analysis converge. In her article Reetta Mietola continues the theme, illustrating the convergence between ethnographic interviews and their analyses. She emphasizes the diversity within the ethnographic research method, noting that the multiple ways of collecting data help provide its strength as they allow a comprehensive view of the examined phenomena. The last article of this part, written by Tarja Kankkunen, pays attention to the different ways the results of ethnographic research can be presented. The article focuses on multimedia (Kank-

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kunen also utilizes the Finnish expression *monimediaisuus*) with Kankkunen contemplating how it would be useful to present ethnographies in various formats instead of a mere research report or an art exhibition.

The fourth section guides readers in processing knowledge in the ethnographic sense. In their article Katariina Hakala and Pirkko Hynninen explain how their understanding of ethnographic knowledge is based on the idea of a dialogue between researcher(s) and informants. Consequently ethnographic knowledge is constructed jointly by the ethnographer and her informants. The last article by Ulla-Maija Salo concentrates on the challenges of writing an ethnographic research report. Her advice to aspiring ethnographers is that one only becomes a good writer by writing a lot, and all the time. She also encourages researchers to write in different forums as this facilitates one finding one's own style of ethnographic writing.

To summarize, the book strengthens the assumption that ethnography is a tolerant and flexible research method. The book is widely useful despite its examples discussing primarily research on educational experiences in schools and kindergartens. For me, a feminist social politician, it was most illustrative in demonstrating concretely how the structures of societies, not only individuals, can also be studied ethnographically. Although most of the book's content is common property for anthropologist and cultural scientists, it offers also novel information through its feminist perspective which emphasizes that ethnography—data collection, analysis and the writing process—is inevitably bodywork. This book is an excellent guide for Finnish-speaking researchers in all disciplinary fields who consider using ethnography as a research method.

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