

## **Defining ethnography**

Ethnography is the study of social interaction and culture groups, whether these groups are defined as societies, communities, organizations or teams. The term ethnography comes from the Greek words *ethnos* (people) and *graphei* (to write). The central aim of ethnography is to provide rich, holistic insights into peoples' world views and actions, as well as the nature of the location they inhabit (Hughes 1992). As Hammersley (1985) stated, "the task [of ethnographers] is to document the culture, the perspectives and practices of the people in these settings. The aim is to 'get inside' the way each group of people sees the world" (p152).

Since its conception in the early twentieth century, ethnography has evolved into a diverse set of methodological practices used across many academic disciplines, including anthropology, sociology and education. The diversity of ethnographic approaches across multiple disciplines has contributed to the growing challenge in defining ethnography without reducing its complexity or bounding its multitude of conceptualisations. However, as outlined by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), there are several key features that set ethnographic research apart from other qualitative research methodologies