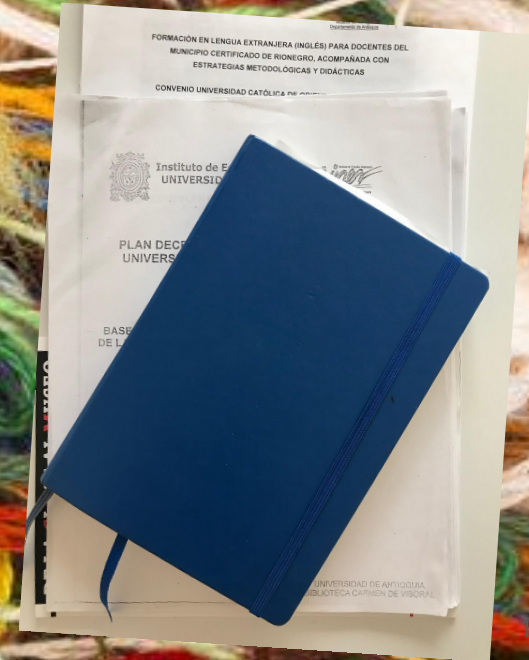
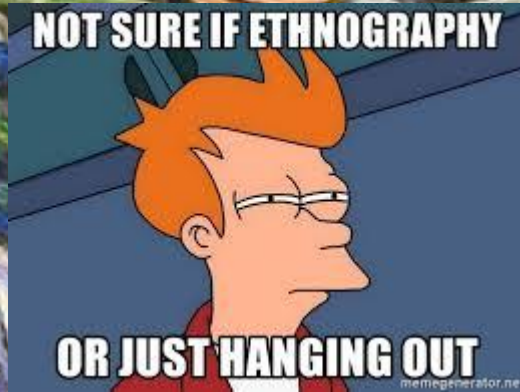
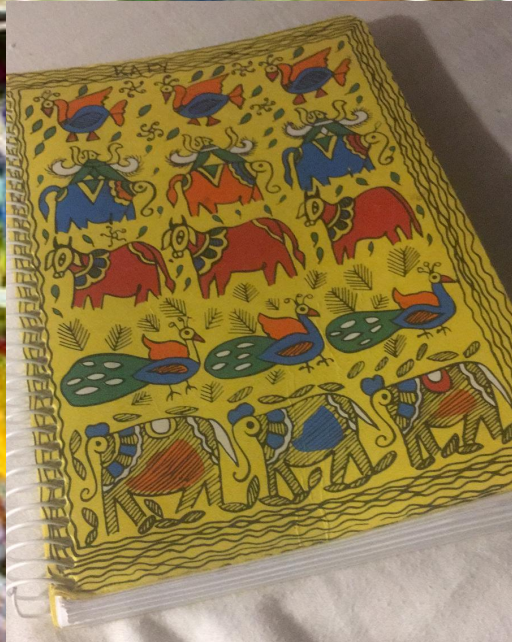


# Ethnography: a view from

# 'the field'

Katy & Peter



# Context - Katy

- 3 month ethnographically-informed research
- Educational NGO, New Delhi
- Participant observation, interviews with students and facilitators, interventions, exploration of 'wider context'
- Seeking to explore the impact of socio-economic background on perceptions of English in India



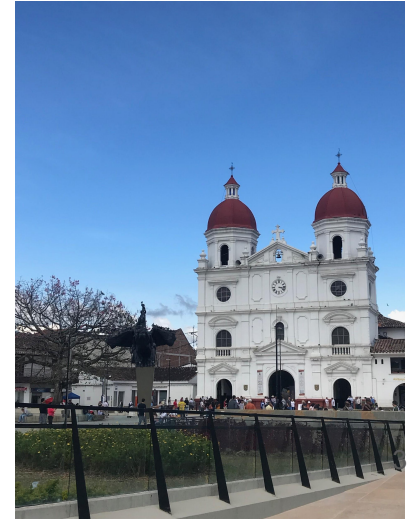


# Context - Peter

- 8 month ethnographic study of (English) language in education policy, in municipality of Rionegro, Colombia.
- I'm exploring the social transformations are enabled through this policy...
- ...by thinking about this policy an infrastructure of 'modernity'.



- P.Observation
- Informal interviews
- Material traces



# Why We Chose Ethnography...

## Peter

- Interest in day-to-day practices
- Uncover logics, discourses, practices - meaning making
- Ethnography as MORE than a method - orientation to research object

## Katy

- Micro AS macro
- “Bricolage”
- Allows us to notice differences in reported vs actual practice (see e.g. Blommaert and Jie 2010)
- Language as a local practice (Pennycook 2010)

# Challenges

- Messiness of data
- Ethics and Consent
- Positionality
- Moral Stance & Participant Observation

# Challenge - Messiness of Data

## *What was the challenge*

- What counts as data / am I doing (enough)?
- Waves of data

**MR. MESSY**  
*By Roger Hargreaves*



## *How we found solutions*

- Everything is potentially data
- Focus in/focus out (Heller et al.)
- Talking things out / with (locals) outsiders

*.... And remembering it's going to be okay*

(thanks to our more senior colleagues and supervisors)



# Challenge - Ethics + Consent



## *What was the challenge*

- Consent
  - Unexpected consent issues
  - Public office consent
  - Protecting participants
  - Limits of express consent sign / verbal
    - friends / taxi

## *How we found solutions*

- How you tell the story
- Ethics as an ongoing practice (which continues to completion of thesis & beyond)
- Practical solutions (taking advice from one another!)

# Challenge - Positionality

## *What was the challenge*

- Friends with research benefits
- Teacher > researcher
- 'Native speakers'
- Coloniality, whiteness



## *How we found solutions*

- Being aware
- Engaging out of the classroom
- Choice of language

[Redacted]



# Challenge - Moral Stance & Participant Observation

## *What was the challenge*

- “You cannot expect a donkey to become a horse”
- “How is my English?”
- “Aren’t we doing a great thing?”



## *How we found solutions*

- Reading group
- Reflection on what our role is / what are we doing here - ~~change the world?~~
- Describe and explain, hopefully / maybe 'understand'



# Challenges

- Messiness of data
- Ethics and Consent
- Positionality
- Moral Stance & Participant Observation

*... Any suggestions?*



# Practical Tips

- Transcribe immediately
- Have two recording devices
- Give yourself a break
  - Crappy TV
  - Exercise
  - Make friends
- Write EVERYTHING down
- Periodically look over notes and flesh out
- Label/document things clearly (page/file numbers, dates)
- Prepare for the unprepared (especially in India and Colombia)



## References

- Blommaert, D.J., Jie, D., 2010. *Ethnographic Fieldwork: A Beginner's Guide*. Multilingual Matters.
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धन्यवाद **Gracias**

Thank you

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