Example of Field Notes 3

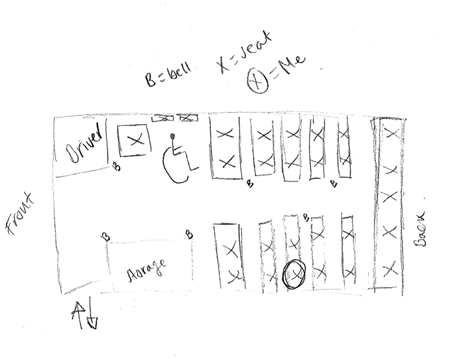
These notes were recorded using the template provided, writing notes in the box next to them by hand. These were typed up on exiting the field to aid analysis (but could be kept as the original written version for analysis too). During the observation, I positioned my template within a book for structure and so that I could close them if I wished.

Finding your Way: It is important to feel comfortable when taking field notes. Using props might be one technique to blend in, however be mindful of the ethical implications of all your actions.

Note that Example of Field Notes 3 is the best one, as it provides much richer detail and therefore will make analysis easier as you won’t have to try to remember information. The notes are still brief, but there is sufficient detail here to be able to be able to recall information and to begin to address the research question. The inclusion of a brief sketch also helps to prompt memory and could be included within the dissertation to ensure that key information is clear to the reader/marker.

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| To look for: | What am I seeing?  **Journey on 7/3/2019 at 8:30am** | Interesting because... |
| Space | I am on the 120 bus from Fulbank road to the city Centre. I got on the bus at 8:30am. The bus is a single decker and it is around half full when I get on. It is sunny outside (perhaps this influences the choice to take the bus).  I select a seat at a midway point of the bus, facing forward, so that I am able to see people get on and off easily. The bus is clean, though a little stuffy. An empty bottle rattles around on the floor, moving up and down the bus as we move. This is some of the only noise on the bus.  I am sat on my own for the duration of the journey, apart from when a young man sits next to me a few stops from the final destination. He uses his phone and does not interact with me. At this point the bus is almost full. | Most people are not looking around on the bus, instead they read a free newspaper or look at phones. I was making eye contact and so perhaps that acted as a deterrent to sit next to me!  Finding your Way: This is better as it provides details of the atmosphere, space, time, and how the bust is being used more clearly. |
| Actors | The bus is driven by a middle aged man (grey hair, glasses).  The other passengers on the bus appear to vary in age and ethnicity. Though there are no children or people with visible disabilities.  Most people are travelling alone.  Two people next to me got on together and chatted for the duration of the journey.  Most people are dressed smartly, looking like they are going to work. People mainly have small bags with them and most people have phones which they check at some point on the journey.  Initially people spread themselves out on the bus, with people sitting in empty seats before selecting a seat next to a person.  I notice people are choosing to sit next to a bell, or in reaching distance. People also avoid sitting in the disabled/child area.  Finding your Way: This is good as there is depth in terms of the detail provided. This information will help trigger memories for the analysis stage of the dissertation. |  |
| Acts | The bus gets busier as it approaches town. People all know to press the bell when they want to leave. Most people get off at the main city centre stop. People leave in a quiet and calm way. People are not talking.  During the journey people are not interacting with each other, apart from  when they move around. Instead people use their phones, listen to music or read.  There is also a shared understanding of letting people on and off, people nod or say excuse me to be let out of their seats if they are by a window.  When the bus stops for a prolonged period people look to see what is happening. Someone near me muttered ‘traffic again’ and some people nod. But there is no prolonged conversation. | Unspoken norms and rules can be seen. I wonder where these are learnt?  People using props to entertain themselves.  Finding your Way: These sections identify key moments and actions very clearly. These notes also begin to make some critical/analytical observations. |
| Activities | The journey runs smoothly and takes 30 minutes to reach the end destination in the city centre. Most people pay quickly or have travel passes. One young person holds up the queue at one point as they appear to look for more change to pay correctly. They seem confused by the price. The man seems flustered, but nobody comments and he finds a seat quickly.  Two people seem to know each other and this is the main sound on the bus. They are talking about their children and plans for the summer holidays.  One young person begins to have a very loud conversation with a person on their mobile phone about the events of a date they went on at the weekend. They are also very animated with their body language, waving their hands about as they talk. This conversation is about them being unsure if they like him or see a future. Perhaps they don’t know how loud they are. Other people seem interested, as people are looking in the direction and I notice some other people smiling at the story.  The two people in front of me must be listening as they say ‘I remember those days’.  Finding your Way: Good level of detail reported here which will ease analysis process. | Norms return quickly even when slightly disrupted.  People seem to relax or share small interactions as a result of the person speaking loudly on the phone. |
| Events | There is a bus ritual and etiquette which is followed by most people.  You get on the bus, pay, find a seat (mostly not next to anyone else), interact minimally with others, entertain yourself with phone/paper/book, get off peacefully.  Clothing, body language, and props: people look smart, mostly in formal clothes. People have lunch bags and drink from flask/cups.  Finding your Way: Clear descriptors of events which will help if there is a lapse in starting the data analysis, or if you return to the data at a later date. | Maybe there are some norms? |
| Goals | The bus is headed towards town. Everyone has the same goal of reaching the final destination and nobody disrupts this process. |  |
| Objects | People have bags, some have papers, books, lots of people use phones and headphones. People interact with these objects independently. People are not sharing or interacting with each other.  Finding your Way: Good observations of the subjects and behaviours. | Lots of people are using the same form of technology. Shows popular/norm in consumption habits. |
| Time | People get on and off when they ring the bell to signal they want to leave; there are specific stops and the bus stops regularly.  Everyone seems to know the system well. This is mostly a smooth process. | Shared understanding of the rules of how the bus works. |
| Feelings | The bus is quiet, people seem relatively happy as there is no conflict. No significant or extreme behaviours/events occur  I am comfortable undertaking research on the bus, people do not notice me writing, or don’t seem to care. |  |

Field note sketch of the bus to show/remember the configuration of space, layout, and my position:



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