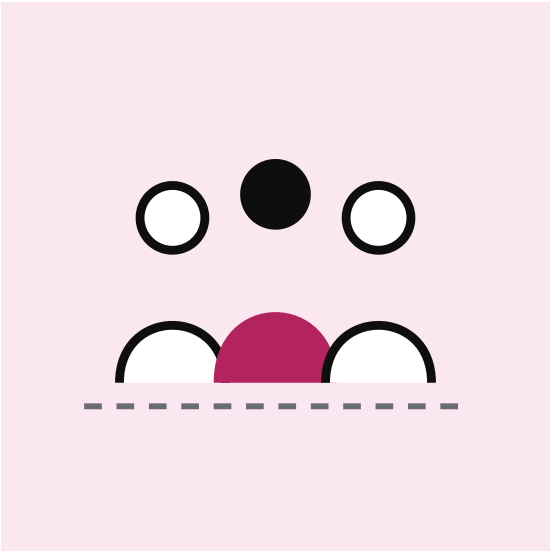
Field

Anthropology

Studies human beings in their culture: how they live, what they believe, how they organize themselves and what they do with objects.



In Spanish

Antropología

Origin

Malinowski (1922) consolidated participant observation; there was earlier fieldwork

What it studies

How to understand people whose lives are not ours. It brings ethnography and a focus on material culture to design.

Principles

Being there

You learn by living alongside and observing, not just by asking.

From the inside

Understand things as the people who live them see them.

Objects tell stories

What people use reveals how they live.

Applications in design

✓ Use it like this

Observe people in their context before designing for them.

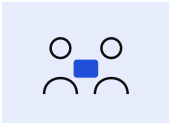
✗ Avoid

Calling a one-hour interview ethnography.

👁 Don't fall for it

Your culture is a culture too: question what you take as normal.

Theories and concepts



Specialty

Design anthropology

Joins anthropological research and design to intervene and co-create, not just observe.

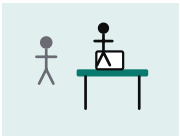
Methods and tools



Method

Ethnography

Spending time in people's world to understand their daily life and culture from the inside.



Method

Contextual inquiry

Observing and asking people questions while they do their work, in their own setting.



Method

Generative tools

Materials for people to make something, such as a collage, and express what is hard to put into words.

Connections

Used in

- Design research

Authors and works

1922	**Bronisław Malinowski**	Made long-term living alongside a group the core method of anthropology.
1987	**Lucy Suchman**	Brought the anthropological lens to the study of how we use machines.

Sources

Original sources

- Malinowski, B. (1922). Argonauts of the Western Pacific. Routledge.
- Suchman, L. A. (1987). Plans and situated actions: The problem of human-machine communication. Cambridge University Press.

Last reviewed: October 26, 2026

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