

Interviewing Basics

What is the difference between an interview and a conversation?

March 28, 2016

ITF Workshop

Why do we do interviews?

Start with a practice interview

- Pair up with someone in the class that you don't know that well
- YOUR INTERVIEW GOAL: Try to elicit from them their immigration story.
- Try to strike a balance between them talking the entire time and you asking questions.
- Ask probing questions to make them provide more details, anecdotes, emotions.
- Try to make it more of an interview than a conversation.

What did you learn about the interview process? What worked? What didn't work?

Types of Interviews

- **Ethnographic Interviews**

- Qualitative
- Structured, Semi-Structured, Unstructured

- **Surveys**

- Usually Quantitative
- Routinized questions that can be compiled

- **Oral History Interviewing**

- Slightly different template; really designed to draw out long stories

Interview Questions

Avoid yes-no questions

- Use: how, why, what?

Ask mostly non-directive questions

- “How did it make you feel?” vs. “You must have been so angry, right?”
- Keep it open-ended
- Ask follow-ups

Oral History model: start as far back as you can

Interview Guide

All interviews require a plan (even unstructured interviews!)

Start with warm-up questions, let your subject get comfortable with you!

Interview Guide

Your guide might include:

- Goals of interview
- Criteria for selecting interviewees
- Ethical Issues
- Context (including physical setting, materials)
- Questions or Prompts that you want to use and the goal of each

Question or Prompt:	What I hope to learn:
<p>To finish the map, put a star next to things that you like, or that you think are important – and an X next to places you don't like.</p> <p>After completion, ask each child to explain the various marks.</p>	<p>What stands out as positive, important, or negative to the children. Secondly, I want to see if dynamics regarding the dual-language program and other programs come up.</p>
<p>If someone new came to your school, what would you show them? What would you tell them that they need to know?</p>	<p>This question is designed to move from visual to abstract thinking – while still operating with the map/tour idea in mind. Here I hope to learn if there are “warnings” or praise about spatial dynamics.</p>

Active Listening

- Eye contact
- Nodding
 - “Hmmm” and “really?” not for video
- Repeat a word in order to ask more about it
- Open-ended follow up questions
 - “How did that happen?”
 - “What did that feel like?”

Special Considerations for Film

- Avoid yes/no questions.
 - “Say more about that...”
- Keep your active listening silent!
- Keep the camera rolling
- Have your subject re-state your question

Videography

- Framing
- Light
- Steady Camera
 - Use tripod or other support
 - Avoid zooming
- Eye contact (not direct into the lens)

Audio

- Setting
- Background noise
- Good microphone