

Interviews

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Definition

“A meeting in which someone asks you a series of questions as part of a research project”

(Macmillan Dictionary)

Motivation

- Get insights into other viewpoints
- Get new ideas
- Get an overall idea of a research topic

Interview vs. Focus Group

Interview

- Single opinion
- Question & Answer
- Good for sensitive topics



Interviews

Focus Group

- Group norms
- Guided discussion



Types of Interviews

Quantitative research

- Structured interview

Qualitative research

- Unstructured interview
- Semi-structured interview



Structured Interview

“Spoken questionnaire”



- Standardization
- Processing answers



- Inflexible
- Less insight into the interviewee's point of view

Unstructured Interview

“Guided Conversation”



- Flexible
- Rich answers



- No comparability
- Loss of focus

Semi-structured Interview

“Good balance”

- Combines advantages of both
- List of questions but free order
- Follow-up questions possible

Interview Guide

“What do I need to know
in order to answer
each of the research questions
I’m interested in?”

My Sample Interview – Interview Guide

Date :
Participant:

Question 1

Can you tell me about your experiences with smartphones?

Question 2

Do you own a smartphone?

Interview Guide

- Certain amount of order
- Not too specific
- Comprehensible language
- No leading questions
- Ask for “face sheet” information



Kvale's 9 Types of Questions

1. Introducing questions

"Can you tell me about...?"

2. Follow-up questions

*"When you use ...
how do you ... ?"*

3. Probing questions

"Do you have further examples of this?"

Hint

Use open-ended questions.

Avoid "yes"/"no" questions.

Kvale's 9 Types of Questions

4. Specifying questions

"What did you actually do when...?"

5. Direct questions

"Have you ever...?"

6. Indirect Questions

"What do you think your colleagues think about...?"



Kvale's 9 Types of Questions

7. Structuring questions

"I would now like to move on to a different topic ..."

8. Silence

" ... "

9. Interpreting Questions

"Is it correct that you feel that ...?"



Tape Recording

- Limitations of our memory
- No distraction by taking notes
- Repeated examinations
- Opens data to public examination
- Reuse for other purposes



Tape Recording

- Participant is bothered
- Participant refuses
- Technical issues

Hint

*In all cases: Still
go ahead with the
interview!*



Tape Recording

Often, the most valuable parts of the interview are said after the recorder is switched off!

„Well, if you want to know what I really think ...“



Get the right People

- Important for good results
- Work outline should contain information about target group
- Ask “insider” to get in touch with groups

Ethical Guidelines

- Respect local laws and guidelines
- Explain purpose of interview
- Inform about possible risks
- Prove Confidentiality
 - Be prepared
 - Be punctual
 - Don't name or refer to other participants

Hint

Remember to clear the room from all previous surveys and questionnaires.

Reimbursements

- Should cover travel expenses
- Everyone should receive reimbursement
 - Even when they did not participate!



Consent

- Ask for local template
- Read it, understand it
- Explain it to participants
- Get signature before the interview



Preparation: Location

- Quiet
- Private
- Available

➔ Create a comfortable situation

Hint

If you can't think of a good location, ask the participant.

Right before the interview

- Be on time
- Be prepared (consents, recording device)
- Sit in a 90° angle



During the interview

Take brief notes during the interview

My Sample Interview – Interview Guide

Date : *21.05.2014 13:00*
Participant: *5*

Question 1

Can you tell me about your experiences with smartphones?

Surprised by question

Question 2

Do you own a smartphone?

Seemed very unsure

Evaluation

Expand field notes

My Sample Interview – Interview Guide

Date : *21.05.2014 13:00*
Participant: *5*

Question 1

Can you tell me about your experiences with smartphones?

Surprised by question

Participant answered very slowly and seemed unsure.

Question 2

Do you own a smartphone?

Seemed very unsure

*I saw the phone after the interview: old Nokia phone.
Not a smartphone.*

Evaluation

Transcribe recording and notes

My Sample Interview

Date: 21.05.2014

Participant: 5

Q1: Can you tell me about your experiences with smartphones?

A: *Well have used quite a lot of phones in the 90s.*

Participant seemed to be surprised by this question and answered very slowly.

Q2: Do you own a smartphone?

A: *Hm – yeah – I do.*

Participant was very unsure. After the interview he showed me

Evaluation

Define tags reoccurring answers

My Sample Interview

Date: 21.05.2014

Participant: 5

Q1: Can you tell me about your experiences with smartphones?

A: *Well have used quite a lot of phones in the 90s.*

ABC

Participant seemed to be surprised by this question and answered very slowly.

Q2: Do you own a smartphone?

A: *Hm – yeak – I do.*

CDE

Participant was very unsure. After the interview he showed me

Takeaway Message

A good interviewer ...

- is prepared
- is gentle and polite
- asks the right questions
- is a good listener
- records the interview
- respects ethical guidelines



Discussion

- What types of interviews did you conduct?
- Did you make a mistake and what have you learned from it?
- Did something go wrong and how could it have been prevented?
- Which situations are inappropriate for interviews?

Literature

- Seidman, I. Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences. Teachers college press, 2012
- Keats, D. Interviewing: A practical guide for students and professionals. UNSW Press, 1999.
- Kvale, S. An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing. London SAGE, 1999

