



The Interview

Asking

Types of Questions

Closed Questions

- like questions from application forms
- yield single phrase answers
- usually shut downs further talk

avoid using many of them bc they often lead to abbreviated answers and short answers

examples

- Where did you grow up?
- How many years have you been in school?
- Do you have a car?

Open Questions

- more conversational, help to elicit your informant's perspective
- go with the flow: listen, respond and follow informant's lead

examples:

- Tell me more about....
- Describe the people who are most influential in your life
- Tell me the story behind....

Expecting the Unexpected

you want to learn about informant's expertise, knowledge, beliefs and worldview

they are "teaching" you about themselves

example: necklace was only Anna's key, not a spiritual or political symbol

Zoe 101 connection !

example: Bonnie paralleled Ken's ideals with philosopher John Dewey at the end Ken stated he had never read him

was she just seeing this parallel bc she was reading Dewey?

Listening

How to be a "Good" Listener

- use attentive body language
 - eye contact, no eye wandering
 - no fiddling, no checking time or phone
- dont interrupt
- plan focused questions
 - but be able to change them as the conversation flows

make sure the informant knows your project plan ahead of time

Recording and Transcribing

obtain your equipment

what is appropriate for your research, what can you get

prepare your equipment

- check your batteries, make sure memory cards are not full
- carry extra/backup supplies

Be Prepared!!

plan to take notes

take fieldnotes for reference later on

organize your interview time

consider the time and place of your interview, make sure it is convenient for your informant and you are not taking up too much of his time

arrive early

keep track of time

organize time to listen to your audio

transcribe the interview

only transcribe the sections that are important to your interview

word for word, using parentheses or brackets for a pause, laugh or interruption etc

bringing your informants language to life

grammar should remain as spoken (even if grammatically incorrect)

demonstrate accents and little isms

share your transcript

make sure you give the informant the opportunity to read what you have written about them ; their consent for publication

edit the audio files