

Seminar 4 - Interviews and Mixed Methods

Purpose of the Week

This week covers two topics. First, we look at interviews as a tool for collecting qualitative data, including how to build questions and handle the data you have collected. We will begin to think about the position of the researcher and how this can alter the nature of the interview. We then look at the concept of mixed methods: how to combine questionnaires with interview material which includes working with both quantitative and qualitative data.

Tasks for the week

- Watch the lecture on Interviews by Dr Frances Clynes.
- Watch the lecture on Mixed Methods by Dr Dawn Collins.
- Read the discussion paper for this week.
- Do the required reading.
- As a practical task, spend the week focusing on becoming an attentive listener and, as you listen to people, ask questions of them and pay attention to their answers. In other words, practice informal 'interviewing'.

Discussion paper for this week:

Walter, Tony, and Helen Waterhouse, 'A Very Private Belief: Reincarnation in Contemporary England', in *Sociology of Religion*, 60 (1999), pp. 187-97.

Required Reading:

The reading this week focuses on the role of interviews in qualitative research. Bell will give you some good insights on planning interviews and Hennink, Hutter and Bailey discuss the structure and provide actual interview guides and examples. In addition, Bryman gives excellent insight into combining qualitative and quantitative data in his chapters 6 and 7.

The readings from Bernadette Brady's PhD show you interviews in practice – how this has been used to good effect in qualitative research. The Walter and Waterhouse paper (the discussion paper for this week) looks at another way of working with interviews.

Theory – course textbooks:

Bell, J. and S. Waters, *Doing Your Research Project* (New York: Open University Press/McGraw-Hill, 2017), 7th edition. Chapter 11 ('Planning and Conducting Interviews').

Hennink, M. M., Hutter, I. & Bailey, A., *Qualitative Research Methods*, Los Angeles; London: SAGE, 2011/2020). Chapters 6 and 7.

Bryman, A., *Quantity and Quality in Social Research* (London, Routledge 2001). Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. E-book.

Practice

Brady, B. (2012). *Theories of fate among present-day astrologers* PhD, UWTSU. Chapter 9 – Interviews with Professional Astrologers. MA CAA Online Library.

Optional Reading:

Fontana, Andrea and James H. Frey, 'Interviewing: The Art of Science', in Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds.), *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials* (London: Sage, 1998), chapter 2, pp. 47-78.

James, Nalita, and Hugh Busher, *Online interviewing* (Sage Publications Ltd, 2009). Chapter 3 – Online methods. This is an e-book and as such is available through the main library resources.