

# **Design Thinking: Ideation** **Interviews with Experts**

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# What are interviews with experts?

- Gathering data from experts
- As qualitative, partly standardised question-based inquiry

Experts are professionals who have high expertise in a certain area. They can easily articulate their detailed knowledge and skills in that area.

Interviews that are carried out with experts are called interviews with experts.

# What are the goals?

- to detail the knowledge of related research questions
- to formulate and answer research questions stated
- to inquire data qualitatively



# How can I prepare myself for the interview? <sup>1/3</sup>

- Main motiv: interest in facts/expertise of others
- Approach: constructive, relations between facts are clarified
- Motivation of the interviewees: interest in facts, knowledge transfer, presentation/sharing of knowledge and skills
- K.O. criteria related to interviewees: interviewee is not an expert or has no experience in the specific area
- K.O. criteria related to interviewer: no knowledge in the area, incompetent

# How can I prepare myself for the interview? <sup>2/3</sup>

- Inform yourself about the subject-to-study, especially its formal terms and the main findings in that area so far
- Clarify issues about the research questions and the own knowledge inquiry interests
- Generate a concrete interview guideline

# How can I prepare myself for the interview? <sup>3/3</sup>

- First the research question, then the hypothesis
  - Do I know enough about the research question/s?
  - Formulate the subject-to-study clearly, without considering the own interests
  - What is the main research question?
  - What are the hypotheses? (own expectation, possible outcomes after interviews)

# How can I find the right interviewee?

- Who should be considered as a potential expert for an interview? Who knows enough about the subject-to-study?
- Contact this person, explain the goal and content of your study
- No interview possible, if the person declines the invitation
- Revised interview possible, if the person is an expert in a subarea of the subject-to-study
- Consider the person as a gate-keeper, if s/he is not an expert, but knows people to recommend others
- Consider the work setting of the interviewee: the status, function, type of the institution

# What is the structure of a interview guideline?

- Questions as introduction to the interview
- Question blocks related to the subjects structured for the interview
- Order of the question blocks, depending on the content
- Consider the dynamics of the interview - important questions at the beginning, delicate questions at the end
- Final remarks and future work at the end + Thanks



# What type of questions do you need?

- Open/closed questions: avoid closed questions (yes/no questions)
- Direct questions that address central topics
- Questions that specify issues to concretise general statements
- Example questions to ask for examples
- Insuring questions whether the answer was understood correctly
- Indirect questions if the topic is delicate

# What to consider while creating questions? <sup>1/2</sup>

- No confusing or ambivalent questions
- No multiple questions or no alternatives to questions
- Use a simple language
- Adapt your language to the language of the interviewee
- No judgemental or aggressive questions
- Don't include your expectations into the questions

# What to consider while creating questions? <sup>2/2</sup>

- No direct suggestive questions
- No questions triggering shame or guilt
- No emphatic comments, except the affirmations needed to maintain the interview
- No hints how to interpret the statements/situations/issues mentioned
- No questions that *\*must\** be clarified
- Careful with the taboo issues, if needed, only at the end of the interviews

# Dis/advantages of interview guidelines?

- Advantages
  - Help for orientation and structuring the interviews
  - Ease the analysis and comparison of the data gathered in interviews
  - Reduces the irrelevant or less informative data material
- Disadvantage
  - Danger to shift to a question/answer dialogue if the interviewee does not answer the questions exploratively

# What else is very important?

- Consider the context: What is the reaction of the interviewee to me?
- Stick to the facts: Ask directly and clearly, no psychologic questions
- Think about possible answers
- If the answer is foreseen → rephrase the question

# What are typical mistakes?

- Questioning too intrusive - tendency to rather dominating communication style
- Questioning too shy
- Too many suggestive questions (e.g., “this was probably very exhaustive for you”)
- Too many judging and commenting statements
- Problems with listening passively and letting the interviewee talk/explain
- Sticking too hard to the interview guideline, because of the unsecurity
- Asking the same questions several times

# What do I need during the interview?

- Interview guideline
- Enough paper to make notes
- Written information about the background and the goal of the interview, name of the person, telephone number as contact in case of questions
- Pen, pencil, raser, ...
- Audio recorder, microphone, power supplier
- Additional batteries
- Eventually photos, other visualisations



# What is the pre-test?

- A test before really carrying out the interview
  - to identify redundant questions
  - to cluster the questions if not happened yet
  - to clarify conceptual misunderstandings
  - to find out the duration of the interview
  - to avoid technical problems
  - to find out whether there are potential conflicts



# How to plan the data inquiry?

- Carry out an interview only with one expert at the same time
- Share/get information before you meet them, e.g., contact them by providing a subset of questions from the interview guideline, ask them for their consent before meeting them
- Schedule a meeting with them and set the duration of the interview (usually 1 hour)

# Can you publish everything?

- Does the interviewee want to remain anonymously?
- Is there an explicit autorisation of quotes, to ensure that there are no legal problems if published?

# How to carry out the data inquiry?

- Keep protocols: Audio recordings, video and/or hand-written protocols, including time, place, participants → prepare the technology needed and test it beforehand
- Let the interviewee talk/explain
- Note important occurrences: disruptions, new questions
- End: change the roles and ask the interviewee whether s/he has questions to you
- In case of problems/disruptions → keep calm and use the guideline to focus

# How to analyse the data inquired? <sup>1/4</sup>

- Are there questions with obvious answers?
- Answers to hypotheses
- Answers to the main research question/s
- Answers helping to form new theories based on new emerging views that were not expected
- Quotes → could be used in papers if they are transcribed and used for explanations or representations of situations or opinions
- Transcripts of audio recordings

# How to analyse the data inquired? <sup>2/4</sup>

- Transcripts = constructs that represent the interview
- Non-verbal actions should be noted without any interpretation
- There are standard transcription systems in the qualitative research
- Transcribe „Ähm“, „Hm“ only then when these are important phenomena to represent

38 I: So you're saying there's a difference maybe between a crown court and a  
39 magistrates' court?  
40 R: Yeah. I mean the magistrates' court's sort of very just like skirty issues really,  
41 it just looks at getting things through quickly because it has such a build up of  
42 cases to get through.

43 I: Do you think they're effective in the way they work?  
44 R: I think the magistrates' is the least effective. I think it's hard to expect sort of  
45 it to operate when it has somebody with not much legal training making  
46 decisions on law. I mean you wouldn't get that in the crown court say because  
47 they value the legal training of the judge in those places...so you have like a  
48 lesser court so it's just like an appointed position that anyone can have.  
49 There's obviously going to be less justice there.

# How to analyse the data inquired? <sup>3/4</sup>

Analysis based on Mühlberg (1981)

- Important are the content of the interviews
- Identify and mark the answers related to the questions in the interview guideline
- Assign and cluster the answers to the categories derived from the interview guideline
- Read the interview transcripts, identify the logic within an interview
- Write down the logic for each interview to make this visible for the analysis
- Study the answers to each question, by also using the transcripts available
- Create a presentation of the analysis results

# How to analyse the data inquired? <sup>4/4</sup>

Analysis based on Meuser und Nagler (1991)

- Check the relevance of the general (abstract) outcome iteratively by going back to the previous stages in the analysis process
- Paraphrase = short description of the content of the interviews, identify/mark the related content in the interviews
- Assign paraphrases to text parts of the interview, by referring to the terminology that interviewees used
- Compare the interviews with each other, simplify the headings and clusters
- Conceptualise the findings, abstract the content
- Generalise theoretically by using theories and scientific frameworks

- Although there are some useful rules and ideas how to carry out and analyse interviews with experts, but the most important aspect for a successful interview inquiry is the experience you gain while doing.



# HA2 – Interviews with experts

- Each student carries out min. 1 interview with an expert and documents/analyses its results.
  - Content:
    - Who was interviewed when to which subject?
    - Interview guideline, quotes, transcripts of the whole interview or of parts of the interview, analysis
- 10 pages