4
Research Interviews: Modes and Types

Introduction

Chapter 4 considers different interview modes and types. It is a wide-ranging chapter, as it aims to introduce important choices that face the qualitative interviewer. The chapter begins with a discussion of 'mode' (Halliday 1978: 138). For example, we think about whether an interview is face-to-face or conducted on the telephone or through Skype. This deliberation furthers some of the discussion around the importance of context that was developed in Chapter 3, as whether you are interviewing face-to-face or using some form of CMC (computer mediated communication) can be seen as an important dimension of interview context.

Chapter 4 also examines the nature of 'conversation' and the extent to which an interview can be regarded as a conversation. From there, we focus on various ways of understanding and classifying research interviews, detailing the range of characteristics and orientations. There is a discussion of what is meant by structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviewing and the last part of the chapter comments on the use of a range of tools in interviews. This includes video (e.g. for stimulated recall) and the use of photographs and texts.

Interview mode

This chapter primarily focuses on the face-to-face research interview involving one interviewer and one interviewee. The treatment of group interviews and focus groups will be covered in detail in Chapter 7, as well as a fuller range of the synchronous, asynchronous, text based, video, and audio platforms possible. However, the first part of this

S. Mann, *The Research Interview*

chapter considers other kinds of interview 'modes' (Halliday 1978); it briefly thinks about what difference it makes whether the interview is conducted face-to-face, on the telephone, through Google Hangouts, Skype, or through a chat room interface.

Hammond and Wellington (2012: 91–93) cover the main arguments why we should not assume that qualitative interviews necessarily need to be 'face-to-face encounters'. They believe that it is an open question 'as to how much difference face-to-face interviewing makes in practice' and see online interviewing as a growing opportunity for researchers to 'access interviewees across distance and time barriers' where interviewees might have 'better opportunities for reflective responses'. Interviews (including focus group interviews) are increasingly conducted online (Mann and Stewart 2000). This is often a matter of convenience for both parties and does make it possible to interview informants that would otherwise be difficult to interview:

> We would be able to interview geographically dispersed populations with a recorded interaction that at least mimics face-to-face interactions. Although there are some drawbacks, the benefits strongly outweigh them. (Sullivan 2012: 60)

In my own research I have increasingly used telephone and Skype interviews (both because of practicality and restricted research budgets). Obviously Skype 'mimics' face-to-face interactions, at least to some extent, whereas telephone and e-mail can't have this element. For a recent British Council project our research team used Skype. This is currently free and it is possible to capture the computer screen (e.g. using Snagit or Camtasia), so that you can record, transcribe and review the interview later. As well as the Skype video, it will also capture any texts or photographs shared on your screen during the interview. The use of Skype enabled the team to interview 30 informants relatively quickly, although you are always at the mercy of two Internet connections (theirs and yours). Consequently, a few of the interviews had a short hiatus while we reconnected. Extract 4.1 is typical of such a glitch where part of the turn cannot be heard (in this case because the connection seemed to drop out for a few seconds).

Extract 4.1

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1  P:  Well I can give you my example. I was on the
2      water village, it's a called Kampong Ayer
3      I don't know if you've heard of it?
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 4 I: No, I haven't.
 5 P: It's the largest water village, I think, in the
 6    world, there's many, many thousands of people
 7    living there, it's not a rich area,
 8    And the classroom management situations ( xxxx
 9    ( xxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxx xxx
10    xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx x )
11 I:  Sorry, I missed that last thing, you were talking
12    about water village and it not being rich and
13    then I think you were going on to talk about some
14    aspect of the methodological challenges?
15 P:  Yes, it was more classroom management really
16    than anything else.
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I suspect the detail of the original turn (lines 8–10) has been partly lost in the re-telling (lines 15–16).

As well as problems with bandwidth and connection, there are sometimes more 'natural' interruptions. In Extract 4.2, the interviewee is using Skype (audio only) but is in a car on a windy day. There are both problems with the connection and a background wind noise.

Extract 4.2

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 1 I: And have you had any feedback on whether that's
 2    working better?
 3 S: I don't know to be honest, I'm not sure.
 4 I: OK. So what exactly are you doing now?
 5 S: I'm now an education advisor for the Department
 6    for International Development.
 7    (( a few second of interference ))
 8    Sorry, I'm going past a windy bit
 9    again. So I work, I'm a ((xxxxxxx xxxxxxx and and
10    I sit xxxxxxx xxxxxxxx for xxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxx))
11    in the Education Policy Team in this department
12    and think about how the UK should spend lots of
13    money on education in other countries, which is
14    very interesting.
```

Before conducting your first Skype interview, it is worth having a trial conversation to get used to the interface and recording possibilities. The following is a comment from Valeria Lo Iacono who is sharing this experience of using Skype for his interviews:

> When you first start doing video interviews with Skype, the first thing that can strike you is seeing yourself on video. You become 'the other' i.e. the viewed and also the viewer. Seeing yourself onscreen can be daunting or exciting (depending on your outlook) and offers advantages and disadvantages. First, it means that you can see what the other person sees and this can help you to maintain your professionalism. When you begin to slouch in the chair or look as though you are disinterested, you can re-compose yourself. On a negative side, one's focus should be on the interview, dialogue and questions, although in the holistic embodied experience of an interview, one might argue that being aware of the presentation of self is an important part of the interview. Noticing oneself in the video is perhaps no different from the moments when we try to avoid appearing to stare at the interviewee and need moments to look elsewhere in a face-to-face interview. It is worth considering the interviewee and how the ability to also view themselves can impact on their experience and on the interview. Will the awareness of their self, have any impact on the data collection for example.
>
> In one of the pilot studies I noticed myself slouching and I immediately changed my sitting position. Seeing yourself and the interviewed live on screen also has the benefit that you can ensure that you are both correctly in picture and visible to each other for when you come to analyse and transcribe the interviews. Another issue was note-taking. On the video, I could see that I appeared to be looking down at something which for the other person is not viewable. I was in fact looking down at a notebook, as I took notes, my hand out of camera shot. I decided to verbally explain that I was taking notes to pre-empt any concerns of focus on my part, to the volunteer. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Valeria_Lo_Iacono

This kind of reflexivity is important, especially with regard to not maintaining eye contact. Recently, I had a researcher come to see me and he was very upset. After several weeks of trying to set up a Skype meeting with a well-known and very well-published American academic (in the field of online communities of practice), he had finally managed to pin down this 'guru' of the Internet, only for the guru to be clearly pre-occupied with some other task. Apparently this pre-occupation with another task was so engaging that the academic apparently did not establish any eye contact at all during the talk. The young researcher was left deflated and disappointed.

So far in this section I have concentrated on Skype because this is what I am currently using (if I cannot set up a face-to-face interview). However there are other possibilities that can be considered. Of course, in the past 20 years there has been a global spread of the Internet and this gives us many more possibilities with CMC. In 2007, there were 1.24 billion Internet users (Burkeman 2008) and this has had a significant impact, providing opportunities for individuals to construct the reality of their everyday lives online (and off-line) and for these two to interact. The Internet has reconfigured the way in which individuals communicate and connect with each other (Jowett et al. 2011). Not only has the Internet had a far-reaching impact on the nature of social interaction in workplaces and our social lives, it offers new possibilities for research too. As we have already said, research interviews might be conducted through e-mail, online chat, and through telephone/video tools like Skype. Table 4.1 provides a few basic distinctions to consider in reflecting on your choices.

Table 4.1 Interview mode – basic distinctions

Distinction	**Comments**	**Further reading**
Synchronous or asynchronous	If you are working synchronously (in real time) you will be able to probe, check, and clarify more easily. If you are working asynchronously informants may have more time to construct their responses.	Gatson and Zweerink (2004)
Written or spoken	The advantage of written interviews is that there is no need for transcription as it is possible to copy and paste chatroom exchanges or e-mail interviews. However, it is hard for written exchanges of any form to have the richness and engagement that conventional spoken interviews usually establish.	See Meho (2006) and James (2007) for in-depth treatments of e-mail interviewing
Telephone or face-to-face	It can be hard to establish rapport on the telephone and responses are less in-depth (Thomas and Purdon 1994). There is a lack of non-verbal possibilities on the telephone (e.g. Miller 1995). Irvine et al. (2011) found interactional differences (e.g. telephone interviews are shorter; interviewees speak proportionately for less time on the phone; there are proportionately more instances of interviewee requests for the interviewer to clarify questions in telephone interviews).	Holt (2010) Irvine et al. (2011)

Degrees of structure

Most novice researchers start the methodology section of their dissertation or thesis with an overview of structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviewing. Usually, referring to sources such as Fontana and Frey (2000), they remind us that there are various types of qualitative interview. They then provide a summary that goes something like this:

> (a) Structured interview. This type of interview relies on a detailed script that is prepared and usually piloted before the interview. It can resemble a spoken questionnaire. Part of the reason for this piloting and revision process is that the script is usable by more than one researcher.
>
> (b) Semi-structured interview. This type of interview often relies on a guide (rather than a script) and, although there is room for deviation from the guide, it is important to cover most of guide, for comparative purposes.
>
> (c) Unstructured interview. This type of interview relies on a few open-ended questions where interviewees are encouraged to talk at length about what seems significant or prominent for them. In such open-ended interactions, there might be one or two themes that the interviewer wants to focus on but generally follows the lead of the interviewee (Weiss 1994).

About 90% of students then say that, after careful reflection, they have decided to opt for semi-structured interviews. I suppose this is not necessarily surprising. Semi-structured interviews provide a reassuring structure and at the same time there is no pressure to stick to a predetermined script. Also, there is more chance to develop an 'equilibrium between the interviewer and the interviewee' (Hitchcock and Hughes 1989: 83). In addition, the semi-structured format provides room for negotiation, discussion and expansion of the interviewee's responses. However, while it may not be surprising, there are two main objections to such an unreflexive rush to opt for semi-structured formats. The first is that it may be worth trying more unstructured or open formats before making this decision (at least in a piloting phase). The second is that there is too rarely an account of the challenges and learning points in preparing for, undertaking, and writing up such semi-structured interviews.

Of course, types of interviews are not always divided according to structure. As well as degrees of structure (where we have structured at one end of a continuum and unstructured at the other), we can talk about degrees of formality. When interviews are planned/scheduled and consent forms are signed beforehand, it is of the more formal variety. When it happens on a more ad hoc basis, perhaps as part of ongoing fieldwork, it can be more informal (see Gobo 2008). These more ad hoc interviews might not even be framed as interviews. More informal interviews tend to be controlled to a greater extent by the interviewee (see Agar and Hobbs 1982). It is also possible to divide interviews according to degrees of directiveness, and degrees of conversation. In simple terms though interviews can be grouped as follows:

Structured	Unstructured
Formal	Informal
Directive	Non-directive
Less conversational	Conversational

Structured and more formal interviews will be much more directed by the interviewer and will follow question and answer patterns rather than resemble conversation. A completely structured interview is often regarded as a spoken questionnaire. In fact, neither of the two extremes (structured/unstructured) exist because, at the other end, a completely unstructured interview (i.e. unstructured not only in terms of planning but also execution) would just be a chat. Every interview finds its place somewhere *between* these two extremes and is therefore in some sense semi-structured.

Degrees of conversation

One of the important questions to ask, in an effort to pin down the generic parameters of the qualitative interview, is can an interview be a conversation?

Unfortunately there is not an easy answer to this question. A commonsense answer would suggest that an interview cannot really ever be a conversation, as the turn-taking and topic-changing patterns look very different in almost all interviews.

Task

Look at the three extracts below. They all come from the same interview.

1. What stage of the interview do you think that they come from? (One is near the beginning, one is in the middle, and one is at the end).
2. Would you call any of these extracts conversational? In what ways are they like conversation or different from conversation?

Extract 4.3a

K: I think that's one of the most important things in having a successful co-teaching relationship, is having both teachers feel valued they feel that the other person values them and that the work they are doing is important. So I think having parity helps to create those feelings.
I: Is that something that you've experienced as a teacher yourself, that kind of parity relationship?
K: Yeah, it is. One thing that I did actually last year, because I do a lot of research on co-teaching, and like I said my own co-teaching experiences are rather limited and happened 10 or 15 years ago, so I wanted to do it again. So last semester I asked one of my co-teachers, who was teaching a class on critical pedagogies, so I asked him …

Extract 4.3b

K: I must have sent invites to the wrong person(.) I thought I invited you.
I: Well(.) the funny thing is (.) that when I've just tried to phone you (.) normally it doesn't let you just go straight through (.) normally you have to invite (.) so I can't remember having a contact request. So anyway (.) we're online we're cool.
K: It worked.

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I: What are you doing in the States at the moment?
   I came home for the vacation, with the kids,
   we're spending some time with Grandpa and Grandma
   here.
I: So where's home for Grandpa and Grandma?
K: Minnesota.
I: OK, great. So did you grow up in the States?
K: I did, yes, grew up in the same area,
   in Minnesota.
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Extract 4.3c

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K: So I think that is very problematic, yes, relying
   on those six countries, privileging Caucasians
   as native speakers.
I: I was talking to a Korean researcher here at
   Warwick and I think she had a friend in America
   who was Korean Heritage (.) so obviously she
   looked Korean (.) I think she had been all
   through secondary school in America anyway she
   got rejected by the EPIK scheme because they
   said,'Well, you didn't have primary education in
   the US' (.) which seems bizarre to me (.) Is your
   perception that it's breaking down a little bit
   in terms of- (.)it sounds to me like you said
   there are various people who get jobs but if
   you're black or of colour then you're pushed
   out to the countryside.
K: Yeah, I think that is happening. I think there is
   a lot of discrimination…
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These extracts are from one interview with a teacher trainer and researcher who has been a team-teacher in the past and who is currently researching aspects of team-teaching/co-teaching in Korea. The talk certainly looks different at different points in the interview and the extracts above vary in the degree to which you could say that they look like conversation.

Extract 4.3a is from the middle of the interview and looks the least like conversation. All the attention is directed on the views of the interviewee ('K'). Extract 4.3b is from the beginning of the interview. Typically the beginnings and endings of interviews are sites for more conversation-like exchange. Extract 4.3b certainly looks more like

conversation than the Q and A routines in Extract 4.3a. For example, the turns are shorter, and it is more symmetrical. However, the Q and A routine do start to get established on line 10.

Extract 4.3c is from later in the interview. Once the main questions have been asked, the interviewer is more likely to disclose information and have a wider interactional repertoire than asking simple questions. There is an interviewer question here (starting on line 11) but it is pre-sequenced by the disclosure of a short anecdote, including some 'voicing' (line 10–11) and an opinion on the problematic aspects of recruitment and employment practices in Korea.

Clearly, as the extracts above demonstrate, the talk at different parts of the interview might be more or less conversation like. However, the turn-taking rights and instrumental and goal-orientated nature of the speech event means that it cannot be simply like conversation.

Probably 'conversation-like' is a reasonable interactional goal for most interviewers and, if you are a reasonably good conversationalist in your everyday life, you will probably be fairly natural as a qualitative interviewer. In other words, if you can sustain a conversation that is 'unthreatening, self-controlled, supportive, polite, and cordial' then interviewing should not be a problem for you (Lofland 1976: 90).

Some definitions of a qualitative interview embrace the notion of conversation. For example, Webb and Webb described an interview as 'a conversation with a purpose' (1932 in Burgess 1989: 164) and Kvale calls it 'a professional conversation' (1996: 5). Richards (2003: 50) says an interview is 'a very special kind of conversation' and to be contrasted with 'ordinary conversation'. Richards also make the point that in normal conversation our aim is to participate and to try and find the right thing to say (bringing our own points into the talk). He contrasts that with interviews where we are not trying to put our own point across (we are encouraging the interviewee and 'trying to draw out the richest possible account').

Many definitions avoid the mention of conversation at all (e.g. Clayman and Heritage (2002: 2) who prefer 'interactional encounter'). All that we can say, with regard to definitions, is that conversation is an integral part of some definitions but not all of them. However, achieving more precision about conversational elements in interview interaction would be helpful in developing sensitivity.

It might be helpful at this point to look at classroom interaction as a form of generic comparison. In doing so, we briefly consider to what extent conversation has been seen as either desirable or possible in that environment. Perhaps not surprisingly, similar questions have

been asked with regard to classroom interaction about the status and nature of conversation. Certainly conversation is often at the forefront of descriptions of language learning. However, whether or not conversation, in its everyday sense, can ever be part of a foreign language lesson is a moot point (see Seedhouse 1999; 2004). Seedhouse argues that the kind of talk that occurs in a language classroom is a form of institutional discourse and not 'naturally-occurring' and, as such, does not conform to Warren's (1993: 8) definition of conversation:

> A speech event outside of an institutionalized setting involving at least two participants who share responsibility for the progress and outcome of an impromptu and unmarked verbal encounter consisting of more than a ritualized exchange.

Seedhouse's position is that asking language learners to have a conversation does not make it a conversation. Consciously encouraging conversation in a language classroom always comes with an instructional purpose and so resulting talk is still inherently institutional, even though it may look very different from normal asymmetrical 'talk and chalk', with its predominant IRF pattern (Initiation/Response/Follow-up). Richards has questioned Warren's overly restrictive definition of conversation, and therefore Seedhouse's definition of a lesson:

> It is, of course, possible to define a lesson solely in terms of the teacher's 'pedagogical purpose' but this would exclude the many unanticipated, incidental and spontaneous interpolations – including those directly flouting the teacher's purpose – that provide educationally valuable diversions and sometimes important learning opportunities. While nobody would wish to deny that teaching is and should be a goal-directed activity, this does not mean that interactional legitimacy is determined solely by pedagogic purpose. (Richards 2006: 57)

It is tempting to follow the same argument for a research interview in that participants do not necessarily have the same priorities in partaking in the interaction. A qualitative interview too is certainly goal-directed but not everything that happens in an interview is determined by research purpose either. Equally usefully, Richards (2006: 57), in making the case that conversation happens in classrooms, refers to Zimmerman's (1998) three aspects of identity:

- Discourse identity, e.g. as speaker, listener, questioner, 'challenger', 'repair initiator' etc. 'integral to the moment-by-moment organization of the interaction' (Zimmerman 1998: 90);
- Situated identity, participants 'engaging in activities and respecting agendas that display an orientation to, and an alignment of, particular identity sets' (Zimmerman 1998: 90) namely teacher and learner in the classroom context
- Transportable identity, or 'identities that are usually visible, that is, assignable or claimable on the basis of physical or culturally based insignia which furnish the intersubjective basis for categorization' (Zimmerman 1998: 91), that is to say making relevant in talk your identity, perhaps, as art lover, mother, or tennis player.

Richards (2006) argues that conversation (with its equal participation rights and openness of topic) is possible in the language classroom when transportable identities are engaged by participants in that context, and that actually interaction of this kind may offer a useful antidote for lock-step I-R-F sequences. As we progress through this book, we will find that actual interview transcripts reveal plenty of instances of conversational-like interaction. So, bringing the focus back to interviews, perhaps a fairer question is 'can an interview include conversation?' We can then say with some confidence that interviews can aim for and adopt a conversation-like interactional style and, even if they do not, most semi-structured interviews will include conversational elements or exchanges.

Going back to Warren's definition of conversation for a moment, it would be hard to claim that interviews are 'naturally occurring'. Indeed there have been several important arguments that interview talk is not naturally occurring and is contrived (see Speer 2002). In Chapter 2 also we outlined Potter's 'dead scientist test' which problematises the 'natural' status of the interview and also contrasts interview data with data which is naturally occurring. Potter's argument is that we would be much better off finding data in the field (where people are pursuing goals, living their lives, or managing work-based tasks) at least as a starting point, as this kind of naturally occurring data does not 'flood the research setting' (2002: 550) with the researcher's own categories (embedded in questions, probes, vignettes etc.). In short, Potter's challenge is that the 'justificatory boot might be better placed on the other foot' with the question being 'not why should we study natural materials, but why should we not?'

Our challenge, in collecting interview data, is to try to be more precise about the interaction. Are there any elements which resemble conversation or are more-conversation-like? How do the participants orient to some of the less than natural and contrived elements of research interviews? How are participation rights managed? How are different aspects of identity brought into play? These kinds of questions are important as we examine our methodological choices and the interactional nature and orientations of different varieties of interview.

Interview variety

The next section of the chapter introduces and summarises the most common forms of research interview. Although there is not enough space here to go into a detailed account of the strengths and limitations of each type of interview, Table 4.2 is at least an introduction to the range of possible choices. Interviews have evolved in all sorts of ways to meet different needs and it's valuable to have a sense of just how much variety there is in terms of approach, type, etc. It is offered here as a starting point for further reading and reflection:

There are also possible additions to this list but many of these possible additions are actually conceptualised around either a topic or a technique. For example 'language experience interviews' (Polat 2013: 70) provide insights into language experiences and the situated, dynamic nature of learner differences (see also Dewaele 2009; Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009) but 'language experience' is treated as topic rather than an interview type. Similarly photo-elicitation interviews (PEIs) are best treated as a technique which can be adapted to a range of different interview types.

Critical voices

In adopting any of the choices in Table 4.2, it is important to be aware of critical voices. Needless to say, there are plenty of these to be taken into consideration. For example in reference to life history interviews, Hobsbawm (1997) has pointed out that these types of interview rely heavily on memory, which can be flawed and prone to exaggeration. Another major problem are assumptions that narrative accounts produced in life history interviews can give access to social reality:

> Historians who claim that accounts of lived experience give access to social reality, falsely separate discourse and experience: experience cannot exist outside discourse, agency cannot exist independently of language. (Summerfield 2004: 67)

Table 4.2 Interview variety

Common types of interview	Key features
Cognitive interviewing	Cognitive interviewing has the goal of eliciting data on how interviewees respond to and interpret specific stimuli or situations and has been used to pre-test questionnaire design (Beatty and Willis 2007). However they are also used in education to gauge cognitive processes, including reaction to particular materials, and in ICT to evaluate participant use of particular technologies (e.g. Snow and Katz 2009). Paraphrasing, verbal probing, and think-aloud techniques are the main techniques in cognitive interviewing.
Convergent interviewing	Convergent interviewing has features of both structured and unstructured interviewing. It aims to collect, analyse, and interpret participants' experiences, attitudes, viewpoints, knowledge, and beliefs that converge over a set of interviews. It is most often used in under-researched areas or where there is some doubt about an issue. Early interviews try to get long and detailed responses to one main question with subsequent questions clarifying features of these. Subsequent interviews try to probe features of the converging themes (see Dick 2007).
Conversational interviewing	Conversational interviewing is an approach to interviewing that puts the priority on social aspects of talk and tries to avoid a formal question and answer approach. It consciously adopts an informal and conversational way of conducting interviews and, as much as possible, strives to maintain a relaxed and extended discussion. It puts emphasis on informality, reciprocity, interviewer disclosure, and more equal roles in terms of turn taking. This kind of interviewing responds to some of the criticisms of standardisation (in that interviewers can be prevented from resolving misunderstandings). Conversation is suited to revealing that the same question may be interpreted differently by different respondents (Suchman and Jordan 1997).
E-mail interviewing	Despite some disadvantages, the e-mail interview allows the interviewee more time to control both when they want to respond as well as the quantity of the response. In particular, the asynchronous e-mail interview can provide more thinking time for the respondent (not having to reply on the spot). E-mail interviewing can be a viable alternative to face-to-face, telephone and CMC interviewing (e.g. Skype) and Meho (2006) provides an overview of this emerging interview methodology. E-mail interviews can offer opportunities to reach greater numbers of potential research participants (especially where they at a geographical distance). It is inexpensive and the resulting data does not need to be transcribed.

(*continued*)

Table 4.2 (Continued)

Ethnographic interviewing	Ethnographic interviews often take place alongside fieldwork and there is usually a commitment to observe and interview in the natural setting (Heyl 2005). As the emphasis is on observing and experiencing a way of life, the interview process is likely to involve reference to documents, practices, and artefacts within that setting. Davies (2008: 105) sees ethnographic interviews as 'often virtually unstructured, that is, very close to a ''naturally occurring'' conversation'. However, many ethnographers have in mind topics they wish to explore and questions they would like to ask. Linguistic ethnography is also focused on gaining an emic perspective and participants are invited to give opinions and recount experiences in interviews which provide 'alternative perspectives' to field notes and recordings of naturally occurring interactions (see Copland and Creese 2015: 29–37).
Feminist interviewing	Rather than the interviewer directing a question and answer process, the interviewer is encouraged to recount her experiences in her own words. The interviewer supports and allows space for this account. Oakley's (1981) classic article argues for breaking down the hierarchical power relationship between the interviewer and the researched. Key features of feminist interviews include the establishment of intimacy, rapport, and openness. This openness is at least partly achieved through the interviewer's self-disclosure (Devault and Gross 2007). Feminist interviews have a strong tradition of reflexivity; focusing on the interviewer's thoughts and behaviour (e.g. Harding 1991).
Free association narrative interviewing	Free association narrative interviews are guided by psychoanalytic principles. Free association interviews elicit narratives through open questions; the main aim is to get the interviewer to recall and detail specific events. Part of the focus is often on the emotional dimensions of these events. Hollway and Jefferson argue that this style of interviewing is especially valuable in picking up detail in the intersubjective context of the interview. This is partly because this form of interviewing values the interviewees' own formulations and expressions and 'unconscious connections will be revealed through the links that people make if they are free to structure their own narratives' (2008: 314).
In-depth interviewing	In-depth interviews aim to elicit a full picture of the participant's perspective on the research focus. The role of the interviewer is to engage with participants by asking questions in a neutral manner. It is important to listen closely to the interviewees' responses, in order to formulate appropriate, probes, clarifications, and follow-up questions (see Johnson and Rowlands 2012). It is often claimed that interviews find the experience of the in-depth interview cathartic and even therapeutic, as it is unusual to have the opportunity in ordinary life to experience such a sustained focus and understanding (see Legard et al. 2003).

Informal interviewing	These are interviews which are not planned and often go hand-in-hand with participant observation or fieldwork. They are often undertaken 'on the fly' and often feel like a conversation. Without the feel of a more formal interview, informants may be more open and forthcoming (Kemp and Ellen 1984). Informal interviews also play an important role in building trust and rapport and can be used before more structured interviews. The interviewer talks with people in the field informally, without use of a structured interview guide of any kind. The interviewer does not usually record interviews but tries to recall details of his or her exchanges with informants.
In-person interviewing	The term 'in-person interviews' or 'face-to-face interviews' are contrasted with telephone, e-mail or Skype interviews. The key criteria is that the interviewer and interviewees share the same physical location. The term 'in-person' is usually used in contrast with telephone surveys but they are often used in combination with larger surveys (see Shuy 2002). They are often used in advertising or market research to get feedback on products. For example a respondent might be shown copy of a flyer or advert and be asked questions about their reaction to it.
Interactive interviewing	Interactive interviews aim at getting in-depth and detailed understanding of people's experiences, including those of the researcher (e.g. Ellis 1998). These interviews create space for the articulation of emotions, insights, beliefs and attitudes. They are unstructured and usually involve 'reciprocity', where the interviewer also shares their experiences (see Corbin and Morse 2003). The conversation itself, as speech event, is also a focus of analysis, where the co-construction of meaning can be investigated. The researcher often has experience of the topic at hand and turn-taking is fluid and lacks a hierarchical nature (see Warren 2012).
Life-story interviewing	These interviews are focused on documenting the respondent's life and understanding how personal narratives reveal how a life is constructed (Atkinson 2012). They have been widely used in social history, anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Life-story interviews established a prominent position in the sociological research associated with the Chicago school in the early 1920s. They have also had an important role in feminist research (Devault 1990). Life-history interviews are very similar, although some practitioners argue strongly for a key difference. Goodson for example argues that 'the distinction between the life story and the life history is therefore absolutely basic. The life story is the 'story we tell about our life' … The life history is the life story located within its historical context (1992: 6). In either case, interviews are usually time-consuming and can stretch over several all-day interviews. They elicit descriptions of everyday life, motives, and practices, and their relationship with the social historical contexts in which they occur. Life-history narratives are seen as socially constructed (e.g. Goodson and Choi 2008).

(*continued*)

Table 4.2 (Continued)

Narrative interviewing	The narrative interview has been widely used to encourage informants to tell a story about some significant event in their life (see Schütze 1992). The interview is designed to both encourage and stimulate the informant and the interviewer's role is to facilitate the reconstruction of social events from the perspective of informants in as much detail as possible (see Riessman 2004). The narrative interview puts emphasis on creating a setting which encourages the generation of detailed 'stories' of experience. These stories should be significant events in the informants' life. Narrative interviewing also often puts emphasis on researchers' own stories and experiences and so reflexivity is important. Researchers are advised to consider their experiences before, during, and after each interview.
Oral history interviewing	Oral history interviews elicit biographical accounts of people's lives. In many ways they are similar to a life-history interview but may only cover one period of the interviewer's life. Oral histories typically aim to record and preserve memories of an older generation. See Perks and Thompson (2006) for further detail.
Semi-structured interviewing	This form of data collection involves the researcher having a series of predetermined but usually open-ended questions, usually written up as an interview guide. The topic or topics that the interviewer wants to explore should be reflected on before the interview, in order to form the interview guide. This provides some format but does not constrain the interview interaction (see Wengraf 2001). The greater freedom (cf structured interviews) allows for probing and clarification. The researcher also has more control of the sequence of questions than in unstructured interviews.
Structured interviewing	Structured interviews involve asking all participants standardised interview questions. Here, it is usually important to ask the same questions in the same order. Interviewers should not show reaction or provide responses to interviewee contributions (although in practice, of course, they often do; see Drew et al. 2006). Often associated with large-scale quantitative research projects with several interviewers, there is an emphasis on keeping to the protocol and reducing 'researcher bias'. Usually used where researchers need to make comparisons between responses from different interviewees (see Arthur and Nazroo 2003).

Telephone interviewing	Telephone interviews are often described as a less attractive alternative to in-person interviewing. They were initially associated with large-scale quantitative surveys but there is evidence that qualitative interviewers are now using them more (Carr and Worth 2001). It is also possible to have relatively unstructured interviews over the phone but the general agreement is that interviewees tend to be more reticent and less detailed and that it can be difficult to build trust and rapport. The main problems are felt to be the lack of visual cues and body language. On the other hand, telephone interviews usually offer more anonymity to interviewees (see Musselwhite et al. 2007).
Unstructured interviewing	Unstructured interviews are not determined by a pre-existing protocol, although there may be a checklist of topics. As there is no set order of questions, they tend to be open-ended and conversational in style and are designed to get a detailed picture of the topic of interest. Instead of aiming for reliability and comparison across different cases, unstructured interviews prioritise validity arising from the detail and depth of the interviewees' responses. These interviews can be effective in eliciting beliefs, practices, and rationale for decision making and can uncover insider perspectives that might not have been revealed using other data-collection methods (Corbin and Morse 2003).
Virtual interviewing	A virtual interview refers to any form of interview that uses an ICT medium. Another associated term is CMC (computer mediated communication). Virtual interviews take place through Internet-based communication tools such as Google Hangouts, e-mail, and chat (i.e. instant messaging – see Hinchcliffe and Gavin 2009). Synchronous technologies such as these can gather qualitative data. As many people routinely conduct their communication anyway through such media, virtual interviewing is often both convenient (for both parties) and helpful in getting perspective on ideas, beliefs and experiences (especially regarding ICT use). Also it enables the researcher to interview large or geographically dispersed samples (see Crichton and Kinash 2003).

The anthropologist Weiner (1999) is particularly critical of life-histories, seeing them as a poor substitute for the richness of social life. Life history interviewing forces interviewees into 'artificial subject positions which are then taken as the positions they occupy in real life' (1999: 77). Whatever form of interview you choose, it is important to follow up and reflect on critical voices as well as more evangelical ones.

One of the perspectives that is always worth reflecting on is whether the cultural constructs inherent in your interview style are problematic. For example anthropologists such as Weiner (1999) have expressed the concern that, in terms of engagement with interviewees, forcing a Western form of narrative upon people who may not view their lives in these terms is potentially misleading. Indeed, different cultural contexts place varying values on the interest and value of biographical information itself.

Longitudinal studies and multiple interviews

The next two sections concentrate on time and place. Most peoples' image of a qualitative interview is a one-off, one-to-one, in-person speech event. However it can be very useful to interview an informant more than once. Such multiple interviews are often part of longitudinal studies. Shirani and Weller's publication 'Conducting qualitative longitudinal research: Fieldwork experiences' is a useful starting point if you are using interviews within a longitudinal study. This reports on a four year ESRC project (*Timescapes*). It includes several longitudinal projects that employ a range of methods to explore subjective understandings of life course processes (http://www.timescapes.leeds.ac.uk/). The research is particularly focused on 'the intersection between different dimensions of time and the ways in which temporality shapes and is shaped by the changing relationships and identities of different individuals and collectives' (2010: 4). The longitudinal research investigates 'how individuals perceive past, present and future, and the relationship between their biographies and wider historical processes' (ibid.). One of the useful features of this project is that it makes its material available for use and analysis by other researchers. They also exemplify a range of methodological issues, including ethical challenges in this kind of qualitative longitudinal life (QLL) research.

Ruspini (2002) provides an introductory overview of key issues in researching longitudinally. Grinyer and Thomas (2012) also provide a guide to interviewing on multiple occasions, usually within longitudinal studies. They cite Earthy and Cronin (2008: 431) in listing the following advantages of interviewing a research participant on more than one occasion:

- It may assist the development of trust and rapport between the researcher and interviewee.
- It may be less exhausting for both parties, particularly in comparison with a single attempt to capture a person's life story.
- For interviewees who are unwell or who find aspects of the conversation distressing, the possibility of ending the interview knowing that the conversation can continue on another day may be particularly valuable.
- The gap between interviews provides an opportunity for both the interviewee and researcher to reflect.
- Aspects discussed in one interview can be clarified and explored in greater depth in a subsequent conversation.

Repeat interviews are possible even if the research time-frame is relatively short and Vincent (2013) provides an insightful account of the value of such repeat interviews.

Walking interviews

Investigating the connection between place and people has meant increased use of mobile methods, such as 'walking interviews' (see Wiles et al. 2009). Although ethnographic traditions of interviewing have always prized shadowing and walking with an informant in their social setting, there has also been a recent sustained focus on 'mobile interviewing' (see Sheller and Urry 2006). Ingold and Lee (2008) provide a readable introduction to different 'ways of walking' and include contributions from sociologists, ethnographers, geographers, and specialists in education and architecture. '*Timescapes'* mentioned above (see Shirani and Weller 2010) prioritises 'walking alongside' project participants, capturing their lives as they unfold. The overall purpose is building a picture of life in 21st-century Britain by gathering, archiving, and analysing interviews from over 400 people living in a variety of circumstances across the UK. Generally this 'walk alongside' methodology seems to help with trust and rapport as this reported comment from one participant suggests:

> 'L' says that she thinks we are privileged and she admires our approach and commitment to walking alongside people for a while and listening to them through thick and thin. We are not being extractive and simply pulling out their knowledge and leaving. This is a heartening comment on the value of longitudinal research and sustained relationships. Margaret speaks at length about how much

> she and Geoff do trust me and how much they enjoy speaking and having me listen to them. (Shirani and Weller 2010: 18)

In health provision studies too (e.g. Carpiano 2009) there has been increasing use of 'go-alongs' to explore the dynamics of health in social context. This method typically combines interviewing with participant observation (observing behaviours and routines and asking questions on the way). The go-along is essentially a hybrid of interviewing and participant observation, with the researcher accompanying informants as they go about their daily routines and asking them questions along the way (Kusenbach 2003). Walking interviews can be combined with GPS tracking to provide more accuracy and this technique has been used in studies of mobility in aging populations (e.g. Mitchell and Burton 2006) and in studies of urban planning (e.g. Propen 2006). Jones et al. (2008) provide interesting data related to perceptions of public places (mostly in Birmingham, UK) where matching a GPS record to a location can also give insights into what prompts interviewees to make particular comments in particular places. Pink (2007) provides a methodological commentary on videoing while walking.

Interview tools

This next section provides an overview of a number of different tools that can be used in qualitative interviews. Again, this is meant to be introductory in nature and the suggested reading will provide more detail from these various points of departure.

Photographs – Photo-elicitation interviews (PEIs) have been used in ethnographic, social studies, and health-care research (Collier 1987; Hazel 1996; Oliffe and Bottorff 2007). Hurworth (2004) is a good starting point for considering the value of photos in eliciting interviewer viewpoints. Photographs are especially important in work with children (e.g. Einarsdóttir 2007) where they can be profitably used as an 'ice-breaker': helping to open up space for discussion; mitigating the differences in power and status between adult interviewers and young interviewees. Clark-Ibáñez (2004) discusses the PEI detailing possible benefits and potential challenges. This article is useful because it shows how researchers introduce photographs into the interview context in various ways. The main distinction to make is between photos that originate with the researcher and those that are brought along by the interviewee (see also Frith and Harcourt 2007). Sometimes social scientists work collaboratively with photographers. David Stark works

collaboratively with Nancy Warner (a professional photographer), using photographs in combination with interviews to elicit viewpoints in his book *This Place, These People: Life and Shadow on the Great Plains* (Stark 2013).

Diagrams and illustrations – Diagrams and illustrations can also be used to elicit data from the interviewee(s). These can also be useful with interviewing children to reduce any tension between the interviewer and children. This might involve existing drawings and illustrations or perhaps pictures that children have produced from a drawing task or prompt (e.g. Wall and Higgins 2006). Starting points for consideration of graphic elicitation are Crilly et al. (2006) and Bagnoli (2009).

Video – Video can be used in research interviews as a tool to help recall experience or as prompt. Particularly in stimulated recall interviews, video plays an important role in providing reference to the detail of a recorded event (Nguyen et al. 2013). This method is widely used in social science research to help recall the way participants experience a specific interactional event (e.g. Dempsey 2010; Haw and Hadfield 2011). In medical settings too video has been used successfully to elicit viewpoints on physician-patient interactions (e.g. Henry and Fetters 2012; Asan and Montague 2014). One of the important features of video is that it can help get beyond assumptions and reveal tacit knowledge and understandings. Iedema (2014: 1) sees the use of video as especially useful in allowing practitioners to question ingrained routines, and, referring to Dewey, argues that video can bring into focus 'the human tendency to confront the world through habit rather than reason or emotion'. This kind of habit needs 'unsettling, and video does this admirably well'.

Repertory grid – This is also referred to as a '*Rep-grid'* and has been used in a wide range of educational and workplace settings. Originally proposed by Kelly in the 1950s as a methodological component of his 'Personal Construct Theory', it can be used as tool for seeing how the interviewee construes and interprets his or her experience of a chosen focus (topic). The grid usually has four parts and once completed, looks like a matrix/table with rows, columns and 'boxes' for ratings. This includes the topic, elements (instances, examples or pieces of data related to the topic), constructs (terms interviewee uses to make sense of the elements), and a set of ratings of Elements on Constructs. Ceren's vignette on p. 110 provides an example of reflexive commentary on the use of a repertory grid.

Vignettes – This book makes extensive use of vignettes. Hazel (1996: 2) calls vignettes 'concrete examples of people and their behaviours on

which participants can offer comment or opinion' and I see such concrete examples of context, interaction and comment as important in understanding reflexivity in qualitative interviews. However, vignettes can also be used as prompts or tasks for qualitative interviewing, often featuring a short scenario or story (e.g. Spalding and Phillips 2007; Jenkins et al. 2010). However responses to such vignettes are not necessarily straightforward in analytic terms. O'Dell et al. (2012) show how a vignette of Mary (a fictitious young carer) produces overlapping responses and identity positions in an interview, as in Extract 4.4 (2012: 709).

Extract 4.4

1 I: How do you think Mary's dad might feel about
2 the situation?
3 M I think Mary's dad may feel a little guilty because
4 at one point he loves his daughter but at the
5 next point he may feel that he is taking her away
6 from being a normal child. Or he could be like my mother
7 and be totally consumed in the fact that he's disabled.
8 Cos I'm there for my mother, I love her, but at the
9 same time the second my mum became disabled something
10 just flipped in her head and she changed.

In this extract we can see that Mary's initial positioning is with one of characters (lines 3–6). However her identification with the father in the story gives way to an expression of her own experiences with her own mother (lines 6–10). The dialogue 'illustrates how shifts between identifications with the character and the self are also evidenced in multiple constructions of reality that can run simultaneously' (O'Dell et al. 2012: 709). The use of such vignettes is not without its analytic challenges (see also MacIntyre et al. 2011).

Use of texts or transcripts – Using texts and documents in interviews can help focus on specific details and elements (e.g. 'You told me this teacher's guide was useful. Can you tell me which parts were useful to you and why?'). In terms of transcripts, Mann (2002) uses follow-up interviews in a longitudinal study where transcripts from a previous open-ended interview played a key role in the follow-up semi-structured interview. This study interviewed six participants in June 1999 and undertook a second interview in March 2001. In the follow-up interview, transcribed extracts from naturally occurring data and transcripts from their original interview comments (from Interview 1) were used.

The follow-up allowed some critical distance to have developed from the original interview and encouraged an overall retrospective view of aspects of development. It also provided an opportunity to comment on particular critical incidents and checked if the original perspectives from the 1999 interviews still obtained. This process is explained in more detail in Mann (2002: 94–99).

Summary

This chapter has provided a brief introduction to the many types of interviews and tools that are used in qualitative research. If you are a novice researcher, it is worth undertaking a period of reading and reflection on what you are hoping to find out and the type of interview that is likely to most appropriately achieve your purpose before making your methodological choices. Apart from the many references in this chapter, the following journals regularly have contributions that focus on methodological issues of various types of qualitative interview:

- *British Educational Research Journal*
- *Forum Qualitative Social Research* (open access online journal)
- *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*
- *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*
- *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*
- *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*
- *Qualitative Health Research*
- *Qualitative Inquiry*
- *Qualitative Research*
- *Qualitative Research in Psychology*
- *Qualitative Research Journal*
- *The Qualitative Report*

Suggested further reading

Atkinson, R. (2012). The life story interview as a mutually equitable relationship. In Gubrium, J. F. et al. (Eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft.* (pp. 115–129). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Grinyer, A. and Thomas, C. (2012). The value of interviewing on multiple occasions or longitudinally. In Gubrium, J. F. et al. (Eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft.* (219–231). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Roulston, K. (2010). *The Reflective Researcher: Learning to Interview in the Social Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Chapter 4 covers various features of interview design).

UK DataService has a useful overview of most interview types (including an example transcripts) http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/teaching-resources/interview/qualitative.aspx.

Ceren Oztabay's Vignette

Context of extract

Extract 4.5 below comes from a repertory-grid interview I conducted in the autumn of 2013 for my PhD research study about student-teachers' perceptions of research and learning to do research (*research education*). These student-teachers were taking a BA in English Language Teaching studies in North Cyprus. In my rep-grid interviews, I elicited elements from my participants by utilising the following topic/focus: 'the research activities that I have done/am doing as part of my BA studies'. Extract 4.5 below comes from an interview with Lara, a 23-year-old, female, Turkish-speaking student-teacher studying BA in ELT. At the time of the following interaction, we were talking about an essay-writing experience which Lara had identified and presented as 'research-inclusive'. The essay topic was Turkey's historical Village Institutions of the 1920s which were well known and celebrated for their 'creative' and 'democratic' approach towards teaching and education. In terms of background then, the following interview extract captures Lara articulating her essay-writing experience about these Turkish Village Institutions. As can be seen, Lara was very enthusiastic about the subject and wanted to dwell on it a bit more once she 'introduced' me to her experience. Even though I appreciated her keenness, I was extremely worried about time. My focus was primarily on completing the grid, without straying too far away from our focus (research).

Extract 4.5 and its commentary will hopefully shed light on two important tensions related to utilising a structured interview tool that requires a particular form. The first is my resistance (as the interviewer) to allow for what appeared to me, at the time, as a needless and irrelevant deviation from our focus (*research*). The second is the unexpected yet welcome consequence (in terms of the goals of the rep-grid method). Changing my mind, in the moment, allowed the deviation to unfold. To further explain my 'resistance', I was very aware that my previous rep-grid interviews which, even with slight deviations from the focus, lasted well over 90 minutes. They were mentally exhausting for both my participants and myself because we simply had to finish the grid. Therefore, at this moment, I was regretting the fact that I had willingly allowed a drift away from the topic. However, as Extract 4.5 will indicate, the 'unwanted' deviation turned into an opportunity for me to formulate a 'new construct' together with Lara.

Extract 4.5

L: In my second year, hmm ((trying to remind herself of the 'research activities')), what did we do? (1.0) Aha yes! For example in the [X] module, tutor [X] asked from us – the village institutions, do you know about them?
C: Hmm, not quite.
L: Shall I tell you about them a bit? I mean, can I?
C: Sure, let's go over it briefly though, shall we?
L: Yeah.
L: So these schools were opened in the 20s and shut down in the 40s. They were founded as boarding schools for those children who did not have access to education in their villages. They were such lovely schools, you know! This is what we were assigned to research.
C: Mm-HMM.
L: The reason is that everyone was engaging in experiential learning (.) for example imagine that it was the music hour. The teacher would not just go and write on the board the musical notes. They would hand the pupils with whatever instrument they wished to play – a violin or saxophone or whatever – and they would, interacting with one another and getting help from the teacher – I mean this is something that does not exist now in Turkey! Maybe in 2050s or something. And there was a practice called 'the reading hour' and it was like, say, in Friday afternoons everyone would get together, sit together outdoors and read books or whatever. Like a day of hobbies, everyone did whatever they wanted to. It was called the reading hour for some reason. So this is what we researched and I liked it so much because I have heard about these schools before because my grandfather went to one but I did not know about the details. So I out of 5 actually (both laugh)
C: So you liked the style of teaching, the ideas-

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41 L:  Ideas yes, everyone being equal, teachers'
42     attitude, that intimacy and closeness – I loved
43     it. And it makes me so sad that they were shut in
44     the 40s for political reasons. To me it's the
45     worst mistake ever made in the history of our
46     education!
47 C:  Oh, okay. You used the word 'sad'. It sounds
48     as if you personally related to this topic
49 L:  (laughs) Yes! Exactly that!
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My two turns early in this extract (lines 7 and 9) reveal my lack of enthusiasm for this potential detour. The next turn in line 17 (having heard of the word 'research' from Lara) is a loud 'Mm-hmm'. I think this was aimed at intervening and directing the talk back towards the essay itself as a research activity. However, Lara continued until line 38. The first part of this extended turn is a passionate, detailed and uninterrupted explanation of how 'experiential learning' and then there are details of how the particular practice of the 'reading hour' was implemented in these Village Institutions.

In line 40, seizing the opportunity of Lara having started to share her experiences of the research aspect of reading and writing about the Village Institutions, I interrupted. This was undoubtedly because I was feeling an even stronger urge to resist any further deviation and get the interview back on track. My intention was to sum the topic up in a sentence and perhaps follow-up with a possible 'why' or 'what about' question. However, it was Lara who this time seized back the turn, eagerly building on my use of 'ideas'.

As it turned out, this was a crucial moment in my interview with Lara in terms of 'generating new constructs' and this is an essential aim of the rep-grid technique. Because of my impatience and sense of losing control at the time, I let myself think out loud and passed what then sounded to me as a 'judgement' or a forced 'conclusion' of Lara's foregoing self-expression (line 47). I picked out the word 'sad' and concluded hastily that she had related to the research topic at a personal level. In the corner of mind, I knew that I should have changed the subject in a less leading manner (i.e. frame a follow-up question such as 'You used the word "sad", can you explain that a little?'). However, the end of the extract (line 49) shows that to my surprise, Lara took my comment well, approved it, adopted it, and later, wanted to put 'my phrase' of *personal relation to experience* versus *no personal relation established* as a construct pair by which all other elements should be evaluated.

No other construct pair in Lara's final rep-grid was as strongly influenced by *my* words in terms of labelling as this one.

On reflection, I felt that I had done something 'wrong' as a repertory-grid interviewer because of my previous readings which framed *supplying* constructs (like I did) as undesirable. Soon after, however, I came to the realisation that it is perhaps inevitable that in this kind of construct work, a few of the labels arise out of the co-construction. It did not set out provide the constructs but, in this case it arose out of the interview interaction. I additionally alleviated my initial 'guilt' by thinking that Lara would have perhaps rejected – or at least modified – my conclusive phrase had she felt that it was not representative of her opinion; but instead, she owned it as hers. Additionally, I realised that despite the time pressures, in Lara's case at least, it proved useful to give up some control as the interviewer and allow the interaction to unfold more naturally. I thought that, in my future rep-grid interviews, letting go off my resistance to detour might again prove itself very handy in a moment when my participant was 'stuck for words' to formulate a new construct.

Indeed, having developed this awareness, I later more intentionally 'offered' a potential construct (but in a way that I felt was congruent with my current understanding of the interviewee). Most times my participants did take up my attempt to provide a construct. Instead, they used them in a dialogic way to generate a 'better' or more representative construct version. Moments like these helped develop a more nuanced sense of what was allowable in terms of the use and timing of my potential 'word/phrase offerings' during the interviews. As a researcher, I believe that improving such self-screening skills is essential as a means to bring me closer to my target of achieving discretion in the use such 'offers' in my future interviews.

At heart, repertory-grid interviews support a constructivist view of meaning-making between the two parties involved. I believe that this extract may somewhat be a good example of Lara and me, the interviewee and the interviewer, co-constructing an interesting piece of meaning bounded by a particular place, time, and interaction.