

## Book Reviews

Alvesson, M. (2011). *Interpreting Interviews*. London: Sage

Salmons, J. (2010). *Online Interviews in Real Time*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

### Qualitative and Quantitative Aspects of Interviewing – Different Communication and Interpreting Approaches

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Psychological Thought, 2012, Vol. 5(1), 78–80, doi:10.5964/psyct.v5i1.4

Received: 2012-01-04. Accepted: 2012-01-25. Published: 2012-05-31.

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These books deal with some different kinds of methodologies: qualitative (case study, grounded theory, phenomenology, and multiple qualitative methodologies), quantitative (experimental and quasi-experimental), and mixed methods. The trends in and the future of interview research, qualitative and mixed research methods are discussed.

Different kinds of interviews are presented – real human encounters and online interviews (text messaging, videoconferencing, multichannel meetings, 3-D immersive environments, social networking sites, etc.). The structure of different types of interviews (structured, semi-structured, unstructured, in-depth interviews, life story and oral history interviews, postmodern interviews, active interviews, co-constructed narratives, creative interviews, etc.) is described. The pros and cons of conducting an interview online rather than in person are discussed.

Some distinctions between different kinds of communication are made in order to be suggested the appropriate technologies for carrying out the research. The interrelationships between epistemologies, theories, methodologies and methods in research design are mapped. Some ethical issues in research practice are specified. Special attention is paid to the informed consent and participants' agreements. The preparation of the interview questions is related to private or public setting of the interview.

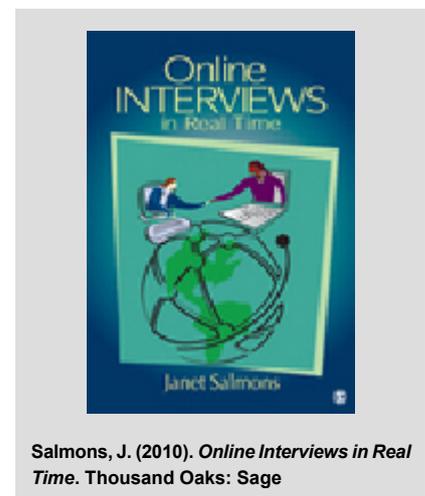
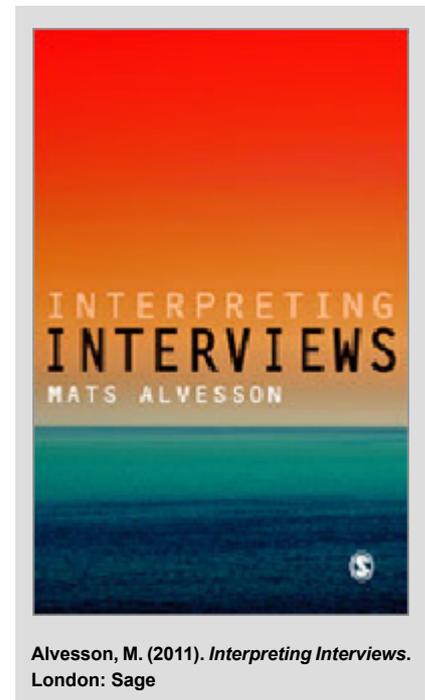
The consecutive stages of conducting interviews and research design are presented – identifying question, technology selection, ethical review, plan sampling, recruit of participants, preparing for interview, conducting interview, follow-up and verification, data analysis, and reporting findings. A strong research design includes a description of the problem of the study, the rationale for the study, why the study is important; a description of the sample; information about the method of data collection from the sample; a description of data analysis

techniques to be used, of the approaches for deriving meaning; discussion of the scope and the limitations of the study; discussion of the ethical issues. Both books deal with the components of strong research design with the book by Alvesson (2011) focusing more on the qualitative aspects, and the book by Salmons (2010) focusing more on the quantitative and mixed aspects.

The sample size and category for conducting an interview are discussed. The different types of sampling and procedures of selection of research participants for interviews are described (probability sampling, purposeful sampling, etc.). The sampling typology is presented in details where each approach is described along with its advantages. Some suggestions for ensuring of credible research participants are made. The nomination approach relies on verification of identity by another person who knows the potential participant – participant is nominated by trustworthy third party. The existing sample frames approach relies on verification by membership in a group, organization, or reliable administrative list. Snowball sampling approach is convenient for validating the answers and treating a problem from multiple aspects.

A lot of different views are offered on how to conduct and interpret interviews using more metaphors and the perspectives of neo-positivism, romanticism and localism. A broad theoretically approach of the interview is suggested that takes into account the interviewee's motives, the relationship between "knowing" and "telling", the interview situation, some ethical and practical aspects. Eight new metaphors of interviews are offered – local accomplishment, establishing and perpetuating a storyline, identity work, cultural script application, moral storytelling, political action, construction work, and a play of the powers of discourse. Each of them focuses more or less on linguistic, psychological, and social aspects or realism. The metaphor approach to conducting and interpreting interviews is illustrated by some examples from interviewing practice. The metaphor approach is followed by a reflexive approach to the interview practice distinguishing D-reflexivity (deconstructive and defensive) challenging dominating understanding and R-reflexivity (reconstructive, representative, and rethinking) developing and adding new meanings to interview interpretation. The focus is more on qualitative aspects of interviews, putting the accent on more thoughtful interventions when doing research work, interpreting more carefully the meaning of interview material, development of new, innovative and realistic research questions, voicing respondents ethically. A set of metaphors could be put together in order to the interview situation to be seen as a complex, socially, linguistically and subjectively rich situation; the interview to be used for a variety of research purposes and multi-angled interpretation.

These books are very useful for all kinds of interview practitioners/researchers offering them a rich theoretical framework and practical guidelines for conducting and interpreting interviews. Several steps for carrying out an



interview are presented along with some examples of such interviews (some of them are conducted by the authors of these books and some interviews are carried out by several other researchers). These books are useful for students, because they include discussions and assignments whose goal is to assist better understanding and preparation for the process of interviewing.

### **About the Author**

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