

(RE) PENSANDO A ENTREVISTA: UM OLHAR A PARTIR DE TRANSCRIÇÕES

((Re)thinking the interview: a look from trasncriptions)

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RESUMO

Este trabalho discorre sobre a relevância do estudo e preparação prévia do pesquisador para a condução de entrevistas acadêmicas. A reflexão é oriunda do trabalho realizado ao longo de doze meses com transcrições de pesquisas da área de Administração e áreas afins. São destacados cinco pontos recorrentes e julgados fundamentais, mas não somente, no processo de entrevistas. Busca-se contribuir para o reforço necessário sobre a preparação para a escolha e realização da entrevista acadêmica, dado que erros na sua condução poderão ser centrais no comprometimento da análise e dos resultados alcançados em pesquisa.

Palavras-chave: Entrevista. Transcrição. Reflexões.

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to discuss the relevance of the researcher's previous study and preparation to conduct academic interviews. The reflection proposed here originated from the transcription work performed in Management and related areas during the period of a year. This paper's contribution lies in the weight given to the effort needed to prepare, choose and perform the interview as a technique of qualitative data collection, insofar as mistakes in such conduction might compromise both the analysis and the results reached in the research.

Keywords: Interview. Transcription. Reflection.

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INTRODUCTION

This work seeks to reinforce and alert about how important the previous to conduct interviews preparation is, abiding to the objective of investigation and taking advantage of further readings and systematizations. Aiming to contribute for the reflection about this technique of data

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collection, it is not proposed here a systematization about the kinds of interviews or the best forms of conduction, something already stressed in different previous studies (PATTON, 1990; GLESNE, 1999; FRASER; GONDIM, 2004; BONI; QUARESMA, 2005; ROULSTON, 2010; ROWLEY, 2012; FISCHER; CASTILHOS; FONSECA, 2014). Moreover, relying on an intense transcription experience, the focus was rather to call attention to five central points that emerged as highly compromising not only for the conduction of the interview itself, but also for the results regarding the data collected.

Academic interview is defined here in accordance with Rowley (2012, p. 260), to whom interviews are “verbal face-to-face exchanges in which a person, the interviewer, tries to obtain information and a comprehension from someone else, the interviewee”. This other to be heard and understood might be a person, a group or a representative of an organization.

Furthermore, it is not sought here to stress or discuss either the ontological or the epistemological assumptions from any researcher. Because of the confidentiality inherent to the transcription work, particularities of each study are not discussed as well. In this sense, this discussion orbits around general aspects that appeared and drew the attention to the interviews themselves as well as to their diverse processes of conduction.

It is intended to accentuate the role of the interview as a fundamental method for collecting qualitative data. This method for collecting data serves, in its turn, to different methodological perspectives, which might be positivistic, phenomenological or critical. The interview enables to collect data for different sorts of analyses (e.g. content analysis, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis and categorizations) and for different research tools (ethnographical studies, case studies, surveys and action-research). The use of interviews presents different objectives, depending on the epistemology adopted.

For instance, in his defense of positivism and functionalism in Organizational Studies, Donaldson (2003) refers to the use of interview protocols to capture thoughts and feelings as well as other non-observable processes. On the one hand, positivists understand that through interviews is possible to reach objectivity from the intersubjective accords settled between two or more agents. On the other hand, in a critical perspective, interviews also allow grasping both the contradictions in the discourses and the discursive gaps that express the interviewee’s vision as a representative of a class segment, i.e., interviews permit to understand the ideology behind the speech. Hence, inasmuch as the interview is a technique serving to different epistemologies, the researcher is the one in charge of giving clarity to the assumptions that provide basis for his or her research.

The interview conduction might seem to be a simple and direct task; nonetheless, its appropriate accomplishment can be a feat difficult to perform. The so-called simplicity of the interview is only illusory (KVALE; BRINKMANN, 2015).

In this regard, it is aimed, by sharing aspects judged to be central, to put the observations in order and contribute with the reflection of those, who being in field might draw their attention to the data collection essential for their studies. The frequent employment of interviews in a non-rigorous way has contributed for the false belief about the little reliability of this technique. This judgment is also fortified by the little preparation researchers might take before conducting the process and in the later analysis; little scrutinized and theoretically sustained (DUARTE, 2004).

In this sense, almost one hundred transcriptions were performed following different formats during the period of one year (from April 2017 to April 2018), ranging from individual interviews with more or less structured scripts to life histories and focal groups. As the work of transcription was carried out and, as greater attention was being given to the process, it was possible to notice many nuances. The interaction with the information allowed learning about how to conduct interviews, the profile of interviewees, different reactions to questions, distinct interviewers' postures and other issues that appeared as the interviews developed.

Thus, the contact with these specificities enabled the possibility to transform these reflections into an article aiming to give a further contribution not only to the area of Management, the one in which the transcriptions focused, but also to others where these observations seem to be appropriate.

In the direction of contributing with the already existing discussion about the issue, some relevant studies are remounted to provide further basis to the five principal elements considered here, which also entitle the following sections of this article, namely: interview flow; attachment to the script; choosing the interviewee; the researcher's opinion and, finally, the transcription. These sections are accompanied by the final remarks regarding this proposition.

Regarding the interview as one of the most consecrated forms of qualitative data collection, it is also important to underline that this technique can be understood as a dialogue, but one requiring certain care, element not necessarily applied to conventional informal conversations (FISCHER; CASTILHOS; FONSECA, 2014). These observations intended to incite reflections independently of any epistemological tradition or filiation. These central points are systematized in the end of the discussion in the Picture 1.

1. THE INTERVIEW FLOW

The interview flow strongly relies on the researcher's preparation for its proper conduction. "The quality of the information obtained during the interview is greatly dependent on the interviewer" (PATTON, 1990, p. 341).

Believing that the conduction of an academic interview is something trivial leads to making basic mistakes, which may compromise not only the moment of data collection, but also its future analysis. A careful conduction must be established in order to differentiate it from other popular forms of interview like the ones performed on the TV, radio, magazines or newspapers (PATTON, 1990). The making of an academic interview cannot be conceived as a banal task, once it implies in distinct contact situations, aiming at provoking a discourse contemplating the research objectives and, at the same time, be meaningful for the context of the investigation itself (DUARTE, 2004).

Before choosing for interviews, it is necessary the researcher outlines an idea about the basis and purposes of his study, i.e., the scope of his or her project, considering that such definition will help to devise an organization, which, in its turn, will help to foster an appropriate script (FISCHER; CASTILHOS; FONSECA, 2014).

The instrumentalization of data collection should also be taken into account previously (MILES; HUBERMAN; SDANA, 2014). What will be recorded? Will notes be taken while the interviewee is speaking? The transcription will be made by me or someone else?

During the transcription work, it was often noticed some anxiety from the researcher as he or she was expecting to ensure that the information judged important was being actually acquired. In some cases, for example, some previous knowledge the interviewer had about the respondent exerted a clear influence on the dynamics of the situation insofar as the respondent did not elaborate the answer, creating gaps with expressions such as "as you know" or "as you should know". It is important to remember such fact may happen and ask the respondent to present the information from his perspective even so. It must be transparent in these situations that individual being interviewed is central and it is his point of view as well as experience that are the focus of the moment. Furthermore, the relationship of closeness between interviewer and interviewee might enable the former to have greater accessibility and comprehension about the world from the perspective of the latter (FRASER; GONDIM, 2004).

The interviewer has, apart from the knowledge and position he or she has about what is being said, to demonstrate his or her willingness to learn with that interaction. It is the interviewee's expertise and contribution the central element underpinning the situation (FISCHER; CASTILHOS;

FONSECA, 2014). In this sense, another relevant point is that longer interviews do not imply in better data collection; shorter ones might be much more precise and contributive.

Even though there is an academic expectation to settle an optimum time for interviews, the result of this process is not temporal, but qualitative in its effective precision. In other words, many interviews get lost in the middle or turn out not contemplating what was asked. Although other more interesting things may appear during the process, it is vital to ask how much the emerging information actually contributes with the study. Moreover, the length of the situation sometimes makes the speech repetitive or little informative. As a result, it becomes perfectly possible to arrive at a thirty-page transcription in which just a small portion is indeed contributive.

The interview extension and the quantity of interviewees will vary according to what the researcher intends to answer. A general rule estimates that a reasonable average would be around 12 half-an-hour interviews, or less, but with a longer extension. Nevertheless, the main criterion must be if the content of those interviews can indeed generate meaningful findings. The decision about the number and length of interviews has also to consider the time to be spent in the analysis and the attention to be given to that future moment (ROWLEY, 2012).

The observations made reinforced the notion that a twenty-minute interview is not automatically inferior to one that lasted sixty minutes. In the expectation of being asked about such length, the researcher may employ greater effort and time to the process, which, in its turn, may lead to mistakes during the conduction. In many times, the information needed had already been obtained and the interview continued unnecessarily.

The decision, assurance and tact to interrupt the interviewee is always a delicate issue. Thus, thinking about leading the interviewee back to the subject is better than interrupting him or her. A well-calculated intervention emulating a moment of information sharing, but that guides the interviewee to resume his point, is more advisable in such cases.

During the transcription process, it was commonly observed that the researcher became monosyllabical or simply interrupted the interviewee abruptly; these practices normally took place when the interviewer was getting tired of the interviewee's speech or when wanted the interviewee to finish so he or she could start another question. Replies such as "right", "unhum", "sure" or even sudden questions were typical in those moments. Even though Patton (1990) stressed the ability to listen as key, this ability does not mean that when the interview is getting astray it should not be redirected. In truth, it actually means that such redirection needs to be carried out sensibly.

In order to ensure a good interview flow, the script needs to be adapted in a way that each question is linked to one another and to follow respondents' ideas. Even opportunity questions, which can be made from more important emerging information, have to be adequate to such flow. In

addition, even when a structured script is used with all interviewees, the order and content of those questions needs to be adapted to interviewees' profiles and expertise.

Hence, inasmuch as the interaction with the interviewee gets consolidated, and the researcher realizes he or she can alter the form of questions to reach positive exchange, actions can be easily undertaken to ensure more fluidity to the conversation (GLESNE, 1999).

Interviewing groups is, however, a much more challenging task, especially regarding a good interview flow. Depending on how agitated the respondents are, their talks can overlap each other or they can drift to other issues, sometimes opposite to researcher's interests. In this kind of conduction, it is advisable to resort to visual communication such as a sign about the topic debated in that moment, for instance. Cards containing the questions and their specificities can also be used to engage respondents with the topics being explored (ROWLEY, 2012).

Complementing a question with "why?" was also something usual. The use of this expression can lead the interviewee to believe what he was reporting was inappropriate, thus, the question should be made without the term or by making a sentence with the same objective such as "tell me more about it, please". Employing "why?" supposes a series of dimensions and not only a mere causal nexus (PATTON, 1990).

In addition, defining the interview location is another relevant aspect. Interviews are usually scheduled considering the respondents' availability; however, if possible, the researcher must search for quieter places where fewer interruptions are likely to happen. Public places with great circulation of people and a lot of noise are very problematic. If the interviewee happens to choose a place like these, it is recommended to visit the place previously and try to prepare it in a way that enables the interview to occur more properly (GLESNE, 1999; ROULSTON, 2010).

All these issues are conditioned by one central aspect: time; fundamental element in the entire interview process for both the researcher and interviewee. Therefore, the use of such moment needs to be very well calculated and systematized.

Therefore, learning to conduct an interview is only possible by reading texts about the technique, going to the process itself, reflecting about it and, then, returning again to the readings to adjust the process and move on (KYALE; BRINKMANN, 2008; ROWLEY, 2012). It is not possible to believe that making an interview does not demand a very appropriate preparation. It is imperative to read about the issue in order to be protected against possible mistakes and, then, take full advantage of the time and efforts dedicated to information collection.

2. THE ATTACHMENT TO THE SCRIPT

Defining the interview script is a very specific enterprise. Nonetheless, some confusion might take place between the question guiding the research (the issue to be understood) and the interview questions themselves (to be answered so to reach such comprehension). Although there is a relationship between these two kinds of questions, the latter needs to be more contextual and specific than the main research question (GLESNE, 1999).

The origin of the research question indeed influences the interview, but one point to be considered is that the inquiries the researcher makes in an interview are not obliged to be directly related to the research question itself. These inquiries should conduct the interviewee to elaborate about a specific topic taken as essential for further analysis (ROWLEY, 2012).

In this regard, a point calling much attention on some interviews is the extreme attachment some researchers develop to their scripts. This attachment does not occur to capture information related to the step defined in a plan, but in the form of reading the questions exactly as he or she thinks it should be done, regardless of necessary adaptations to the interviewee's language (ROWLEY, 2012).

Intending to make an accurate script, the researcher may turn out using excessively academic terms or, at least, little known to the chosen audience. In these cases, the interviewee might feel embarrassed (because he / she was unable to understand what was asked) and, thus, avoid elaborating on his / her answer by saying a quick and plain "no".

The script questions are not supposed to be rigidly connected to one another. They should be what the researcher outlined as the most appropriate before performing the interview. Moreover, the script is an instrument to be under constant revision, which can mean to adjust or even abandon some questions (GLESNE, 1999). Rowley (2012) recommends, for example, setting from six to twelve questions in a semi-structured script and, to each question, the researcher should establish three or four others to be mobilized to acquire, if necessary, the information sought.

During the transcriptions, it was also possible to notice an intense expectation by some researchers that interviewees respected the script and followed it systematically, doing so by answering each question precisely. Nevertheless, either when the researcher faced an interviewee that did not fit to the interaction expected or to the questions performed, he / she got lost and tried (often almost desperately) to reach any useful information, in spite of not being as effective as it was aspired. In this sense, the questions must be made in a way to avoid inducing or conditioning the answers; they should rather stimulate the respondent to develop about the topic. In addition, vague questions

can also make the interviewee feel confused or lead to an answer not contemplating what was expected (GLESNE, 1999).

Questions have also to be adapted according to respondents' positions, functions or occupations in an organization. Some representatives of one sector are likely to know more about an issue than others, it is necessary, then, to search for how issues emerge in that sector. In these cases, it is better to invert the approach a little, e.g., instead of inquiring, guide the interviewee to present how the specific topic is present in his reality and, from this point, adjust the script.

In other cases, even though a respondent was chosen for occupying a managerial position, the researcher can refer to the person using other terms to prevent making him or her to feel excessively related to the occupation. Nevertheless, this kind of conduction must be aligned with the research main interests (ALVESSON; SKOLDBERG, 2018).

All these steps demand great agility and dynamism. The researcher needs to be attentive to avoid losing the interview flow due to an exaggerated attachment to the script, especially when it does not fit the respondent. It is interesting to make questions with a succinct and direct central idea to prevent making the interviewee feel confused, numb or uncomfortable (PATTON, 1990).

Furthermore, in the relationship established between theory and interview, the researcher should look for a certain balance in the sense of neither stiffening the interview theoretically nor letting it too loose from the necessary readings. The distance from one another may result in a poor or little contributive analysis (ROULSTON, 2010).

During the interview construction, it is interesting the researcher to think about the reasons for the structuration chosen and why the questions were cast in a specific form. In this regard, the focus can be on the main research question and on key concepts to answer it. Moreover, the researcher may take into account what he / she understands about the concepts and why the question is important. This reflexive process will reverberate throughout the script in a continuous maturing process intertwining concepts and data collection (MASO, 2003).

There is also a necessary continuous review and adaptation of the script at the end of each interview. The researcher must evaluate how the interview went, assess his / her performance during the conduction and if the script was appropriate to the respondent as well as to the research question itself. It is fundamental to be alert to what needs to be improved. To do so, some notes taken during each situation can contribute to improving both the process' structuration and conduction (GLESNE, 1999).

Moreover, the emotions demonstrated during the interview need to be considered in order to improve the understanding of the dynamics settled between interviewer and interviewees. It is vital to pay attention to the fact that our emotions influence the development of any interaction. To take

into account hesitations, tones and silences can help to construct what the respondent thinks about an issue (ALVESSON; SKOLDBERG, 2018).

Wolgemuth *et al.* (2015) suggest that the researcher should aspire to perform a sensible and “risky” study, which can ensure much contact with the interviewee and, hence, greater benefits from what is exposed in the interview. In this perspective, the researcher needs to set strategies allowing the interviewee to develop the topic and, at the same time, broaden the relationship of trust in a friendly and honest way.

Flexibilizing the script also means keeping the topic investigated and the question guiding the research closely aligned. In the case of a focal group, for instance, it becomes necessary to employ a better-structured script in which individual experiences can be shared inasmuch as there is a lot of interaction between participants, feature that requires the exertion of more control on the process. The different strategies for conducting interviews are not mutually excluding; they can be easily combined to enable the researcher a better arrangement of his or her interaction with the respondent (PATTON, 1990).

3. CHOOSING THE INTERVIEWEE

It is precisely because we are incapable of observing everything, that we employ the interview as a way of complementing what cannot be captured. For instance, other people’s feelings, thoughts and intentions cannot be grasped without interacting with them somehow. Moreover, it is not possible for us to observe behaviors that already took place or to organize the world as other people perceive it. Thus, it is necessary to interpellate them once we are willing to see phenomena from their perspectives (PATTON, 1990).

Many respondents are selected based on convenience or availability, taking into account the research’s execution deadline. Hence, it is common that researchers seek indications of other potential respondents with the ones they are talking at a moment, without considering if that other person actually fits to the theme being investigated. The fact that someone holds some knowledge about the greater issue being studied, for example, does not grant he or she can give any real contribution to the specific research scope selected.

In the moment of choosing an interviewee, a general planning can be outlined to help, with steps such as identifying people that can be involved, the information being sought and who can offer it and, if it is the case, to separate people in groups (BOYCE; NEALE, 2006).

Talking to a respondent demands reflecting about why that individual was chosen and, later, thinking about who else could be heard (MILES; HUBERMAN; SDANA, 2014), not only concerning

the indication of other interviewees, but also the profile with which the research interests are aligned. The researcher must make this consideration basing himself / herself on all the aspects that support his interests and his research. Even though a respondent can indeed indicate others, he / she does not have the necessary depth about the researcher's interests.

In some cases in the transcription process, the interview was scheduled by indication and, only at the moment of its execution and during its development, the researcher realized that the answers being given were not coordinated with his specific interest. What happened next was a discomfort between the parts with the researcher giving the clear impression of being unsettled, trying to get reorganized in order to take advantage of that situation somehow.

Therefore, respondents' profiles can be determined after the definition of the research scope. Although there are authors who establish a precise quantity, the amount of interviews can be only effectively defined inasmuch as they are carried out, analyzed and their contribution assessed by the researcher. This procedure can continue until a "saturation point" is reached, which means the themes being investigated have been well developed and adding new interviewees does not aggregate substantial information to what was collected, just supplementary data (FISCHER; CASTILHOS; FONSECA, 2014).

That is why is important to look into who is going to be inquired, to study who is the person having in mind the research objective. If possible, it is also good to watch videos from other interviews, to get to know more about the field the interviewee works, the organization where he or she is as well as other information that may help to create closeness to the person who is going to make itself available for the process. It is imperative to know as much as possible about that individual (ROULSTON, 2010).

Interviews can also refer to past data, allowing the researcher to build a codification in order to associate data. Afterwards, he or she can consult other sources and interviews approaching the same topic (DENZIN; LINCOLN, 2003).

In addition, interviewees differ according to the profile of the contribution they can give, which can be more practical, technical, political, academic or activist, for example. This consideration must be made as the group that will be interviewed is defined. The alignment with the research problem has to guide the decision of how many people will be heard, instead of the wrong idea that an interview opportunity cannot be lost in any case.

4. THE RESEARCHER'S OPINION

The transcription process also revealed an interesting, but often unfruitful, interaction between respondents and interviewer when the latter stated some opinion that did not contribute to the point the respondent was building or even when, sometimes, the researcher stressed a position not converging to the perspective the interviewee was trying to convey. In these situations, there was a rupture in the interview flow and the interviewee became clearly inhibited to expose what he or she was elaborating.

The researcher must be aware of his influence over the respondent, which is expressed not only by his direct and personal influence, but also by the impact of the very idea the interviewee is likely to have about being inquired in a study. Whereas there are people who feel excited about participating, others might feel judged or embarrassed. Observing the interviewee's reaction is essential to settle the conduction and posture needed so the interview can be successful, which implies that it will evolve into a sort of dialogue between parts (LINCOLN; DE MATTOS, 2005).

Qualitative interviews can yield a moment of self-reflection, evaluation and validation of what is being conveyed. Moreover, they can work as the presentation of a point of view about something believed or be critical about a controversial topic. In this regard, interviews may also provide respondents a positive feeling from listening to themselves in a referential position about an issue (WOLGEMUTH *et al.*, 2015).

Moreover, in the relationship between interviewee and interviewer, the latter is ought to keep a level of neutrality in the interaction and avoid to reveal some surprise, disagreement or embarrassment to prevent compromising the answers' contents (PATTON, 1990).

After the researcher has selected a specific respondent, it is relevant to pay close attention to the actual contribution his or her perspective will bring. In this sense, the researcher must be attentive to the influence of his subjectivity in both the interview and analysis processes, being aware of and assuming it (DUARTE, 2004). The interview makes possible to search for what is not perceptible for the researcher, but it can be expressed by someone who knows a specificity about it (FRASER; GONDIM, 2004).

Furthermore, there were cases when the researcher eventually tried to "translate" what the interviewee said, questioning about some terms. The result was the respondent giving the clear impression of feeling bothered as if he or she had not expressed himself appropriately. Thus, when intending to clarify an issue, it is advisable to search for other means for the respondent to expose and develop that same issue. An alternative would be to conceive different possible answers to a short

topic (a question) and think about the possibilities to explore them if, in fact, one of those answers end up being given (ROULSTON, 2010).

The reliability of results is also intertwined by conduction because it is in the dynamics established between parts that will emerge the information to be analyzed and presented (FRASER; GONDIM, 2004). The scholar needs to be aware, in spite of any previous perceptions or ideas about the field being investigated, that he is likely to find different positions to which he will need to be impartial. Not in the sense of a naïve neutrality, but to be focused on comprehending the interviewee's standpoint.

Moreover, whenever a respondent gives technical or another kind of specific information with which the researcher disagrees, it is recommended not to oppose to what the interviewee is speaking. Rather, take notes and, in another moment, verify them through another source, which could be documents or other respondents' accounts (BOYCE; NEALE, 2006).

Finally, another problematic interference happens when some information is compared to other, given in previous interviews. When a study takes place in a field in which respondents are acquainted with each other, it is not possible to know for sure how these individuals interact exactly, thus, comparing information is likely to create antagonistic feelings in the moment the interviewee is exposing his or her point. Thus, it is unadvisable that the researcher presents information provided by other people who were willing to share their time and knowledge about an issue.

Therefore, as researchers, we carry the obligation of having to show our methods with skill and rigor; and paying attention to these elements that are very likely to improve the interview, considering its academic perspective (PATTON, 1990).

5. FINALLY, THE TRANSCRIPTION

This section brings forth the following question: should the transcription be made in the end of data collection? In truth, many interviews are transcribed months after being performed. A crucial point about the transcription process is its importance as part of the interview process once the transformation of an audio into a text is a second form of recording it, different of what might be inferred. Preliminary interpretations can occur before, during and after the interview itself (ALVESSON; SKOLDBERG, 2018).

Hence, it is recommended to carry out data collection and analysis at the same time. Accumulating interviews over a period may imply in accruing much data and, because of such, information will end up overlapping one another. Furthermore, this problematic choice often results

in data that are likely to be distant from the singularities inherent to the interview moment and, thus, jeopardizes the utilization of potential advantageous data.

Taking into account that some interviews might end in numerous pages of transcriptions, accumulating many of them is likely to result in an enormous file for later analysis. The transcription is constituted, as a fundamental step, of the transference from oral to written language, obviously considering that the former has details and meanings impossible to be entirely transferred into text. In this sense, the interpretation of the transcribed text can be much better employed when performed concomitantly to hearing the oral record of the interview (LINCOLN; DE MATTOS, 2005).

When hiring a transcription service, the researcher must be as certain as possible about its quality, confidentiality and fidelity to the text as well as to the emotions manifested during the interview. Moreover, reading the transcription can enable a better perception about how the interview was conducted. Such reading can also help to adjust the script, to revise postures, verbal mistakes and other elements that may have appeared and, thus, require some correction.

Hiring someone else to transcribe the audios or doing the transcription by yourself are options to be considered according to the conditions of each case. Nevertheless, when the researcher himself does the transcription he or she is able to recall that moment and include additional details that might have escaped from him at first. Nonetheless, each hour of audio can derive into many others to be transcribed and the researcher might not have time to do it; even so, it is imperative for him to review the text and adjust possible gaps. When the transcriptions are finished, it is time to start coding (or categorizing) the text (GLESNE, 1999; ROWLEY, 2012; FISCHER; CASTILHOS; FONSECA, 2014).

The transcription is not only a technical effort, but also a moment of reflection about different aspects of that conduction and about the information obtained there (ROULSTON, 2010). In this perspective, the transcription is also a part of the analytical process.

Qualitative studies need to be circular and non-linear, comprehended as something to be systematized, refined and adjusted constantly. The adequacy of interviews, their conduction and results are an invariant part of the process (FISCHER; CASTILHOS; FONSECA, 2014). A well-interpreted interview can yield much relevant information, especially when combined with other materials (ALVESSON; SKOLDBERG, 2018).

Synthetically, regarding the five elements cast here and the reflections engendered from the transcriptions performed, the Table 1 organizes some central points, specific to each of those elements. Nonetheless, these points cannot be understood hermetically separated inasmuch as they intertwine all the interview process.

Table 1 – Relevant elements to be considered during interviews

INTERVIEW FLOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Link the questions and adapt them, if it is the case. - Pay attention to the use of “Why?”. - Length does not grant quality to the interview.
ATTACHMENT TO THE SCRIPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask direct and concise questions. - Adapt the language. - The focus must be on the subject being investigated and on the research question.
CHOOSING THE INTERVIEWEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Despite previous indications, the definition about selecting an interviewee must be made by the researcher. - Get informed as much as possible about the interviewee before the interview takes place.
THE RESEARCHER’S OPINION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Previous knowledge about the respondent must not interfere in the rigor of conduction. - The researcher must try to be neutral while questioning and intervening.
FINALLY, THE TRANSCRIPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is inadvisable to accumulate audio records and transcribe them only after the end of all interviews. - The transcription is a concomitant part of the interview and of the analytical processes.

Source: Elaborated by the authors

To be willing to learn with someone else’s accounts is a vital aspect of being a scholar. Therefore, the researcher also needs to be committed to the role of a good interviewer. Nevertheless, this willingness in itself is not sufficient without disciplined and rigorous study, underpinned by the accurate employment of certain techniques (PATTON, 1990).

FINAL REMARKS

This article sought to offer reflections about how fundamental the proper preparation to conduct an interview is. Centered on the researcher, this proposition was built upon the experience with transcription work associated with certain identifications made during this process.

The assumption that anyone can devise an interview and, to do so, it is only necessary to cast questions, make them, record the answers and transcribe them for further analysis is incomplete, to say the least. The process is, in fact, much broader and more rigorous than the practical observation may demonstrate.

A flawless interview process is extremely challenging, maybe impossible to reach. Thus, the objective must be to avoid or mitigate possible flaws. The method needs to be regarded not only in

the previous preparation for the interview, but also in its effective practice, aspects that should be constantly refined and improved at each new application (BONI; QUARESMA, 2005).

Even though the texts belonged to other scholars, the possibility to perform the transcription work allowed drawing attention to essential details in the interview conduction process, as it was brought forward in this discussion. Moreover, the research methodology must not be seen as another section in the text, but as a central element that needs to cross it as a whole. In this process, readings must go beyond the theoretical references used to observe the phenomena. They also have to be performed with great attention to the methodological path to be followed.

Therefore, by stressing five crucial and recurring elements, it was intended to dissert about common essential aspects for the researcher to watch and be attentive. Moreover, this article conversed with other texts that also paid attention to the relevance and to the necessary robustness ought to be given to interviews. The central goal was to avoid compromising the apprehension of fundamental research information that is very likely to be delivered by respondents in general.

From the observations emerging from the transcription processes, it was possible to confirm the necessity to retake and reinforce that interviewing is not something ending itself within the research. There are many other crucial details in overlapping steps such as scheduling, sitting down, making the questions, recording and transcribing them. In each moment, the configuration and systematization of data collection is unique, meaning that each respondent is also unique in spite of the interest that apparently groups these people together.

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