HCI and Design

Today's Class

Assignment 1 is posted on the website and on Slack

   Do it in pairs (exceptions require permission)

Today: Qualitative Interviewing

What is Qualitative Interviewing?

Verbally asking participants a set of evaluation questions and hearing the participant's point of view in their own words.

Interviews can be structured, unstructured, or semi-structured

They can be done in person, over the phone/web

They can be done individually or as a group

Interviews are useful…

When you want to hear the person's own voice, his/her own perspective

When you want to delve into depth about a topic, an experience, a program

When people like personal interaction

When personal interaction is likely to yield the best data

When reading and writing skills are limited

When you want to encourage people to reflect and learn from the topic

How culturally appropriate are interviews?

Things to consider:

Preferred by populations with an oral culture

Language level proficiency; verbal skill proficiency

Politeness – nodding, smiling, agreeing (unacceptable to say "no" in some cultures/settings)

Need to have someone present, person-to-person interaction

Relationship/position/status of interviewer

May be seen as interrogation. Direct questioning may be seen as impolite, threatening, or confrontational

Structured Interviews ⟷ Unstructured Interviews

A **structured interview** uses a set of questions that are asked in a standard way across all respondents (like a survey).

An **unstructured interview** has a topic to be explored but what is covered is up to the respondent.

> An opening question might introduce the topic:
> *I'd like to get your perspective about Cornell Tech. What would you like to tell me about it?*

Structured Interviews ⟷ Unstructured Interviews

A **semi-structured interview** has specific topic areas and a general set of questions but the interview flows like a conversation and topics are covered as they come up.

A key component of conducting semi-structured interviews is **probing.**

Probing is the process of asking follow-up questions to **dig deeper** in order to obtain useful, meaningful information

Probing - example

Interview question:

"What do you like best about this degree program?"
  Response: "I like everything."

Probe 1: "What one thing really stands out?"
  Response: "My professor in the HCI and Design class."

Probe 2: "What about the program activities?"
  Response : "I liked it when we had famous people come and talk to us."

Probe 3: "Really? Tell me more…?"
    Response : "It was interesting to hear their perspectives. I heard some things I hadn't considered before."

Probe 4: "What is one thing that you learned from them?"

Examples of probing questions

Interesting….. tell me more….

Can you expand on that?

Can you give me a bit more detail?

….Go on…..

What happened next?

Do you have any other examples?

etc. etc.

Individual or group interview?

Interviews may be conducted with a group or an individual.

Individual Interview

◦ The number of interviews and selection of interviewees will depend on your purpose and the time and resources you have available.

◦ **Key informant interview** is one type of individual interview.

◦ Key informants are individuals who are specifically chosen because they have particular knowledge or insights of interest.

Group interview…

The most common type of group interview is the **focus group**
- Focus groups involve a particular process with a focused set of questions.

Other group formats also can be used, for example:
- Informal discussion group: ask a series of questions in an informal way; a summary of the discussion is recorded.
- Community forum: an open community meeting provides a forum for getting perspectives on needs, behaviors and outcomes.

Plan your interview process

What do you want to learn
◦ What is your goal for conducting the interviews?

Who do you intend to interview?
◦ What are their characteristics?
◦ How many?
◦ How will they be selected?

Will you conduct individual or group interviews?
◦ Which will be more comfortable for participants?
◦ If you are considering a group interview, how might the presence of peers affect what they are willing to say?

Plan the interview, continued…

Where will the interview be held?
- How long will each interview take?

Who will do the interviewing?
- You? Colleagues/Teammates? Others?
- Will you need to train the interviewers?

Will there be an incentive for participants?
- Money / Giftcard
- Food is often helpful ☺

Develop the interview questions

What do you want to know?
- Review the purpose of your evaluation and why you are conducting these interviews

Decide on the questions you will ask
- Brainstorm questions
- Prioritize and identify the key questions
- Identify possible probing questions
- Anticipate how long each question will take to answer and keep within your timeframe

Develop interview questions (continued…)

Sequence the questions
- Opening questions, transition questions, ending questions

Write your questions down in an **interview guide** that lists the topics or questions to be covered
- The type and specificity of your questions depends on whether you are conducting a structured, semi-structured or unstructured interview

Pilot test the questions

With a colleague, friend, or family member

and/or

With a few people like those you intend to interview

Practice – Practice - Practice

Good interviewing requires practice and skill

Practice interviewing before you begin
◦ Ask a colleague or classmate to 'stand in' as the respondent, or solicit someone from the interviewee population

Know your questions well so the interview flows smoothly

Contact the respondent

By telephone, in-person, email

Personalize the request

Explain in advance:
◦ Purpose of the interview – how data will be used
◦ How long it will take
◦ How it will be conducted – when, where, etc.
◦ Solicit participation and arrange date/time for the interview

Send the interview questions in advance if appropriate

Capturing what people say during the interview

Use paper and write down what the person says as they talk

Jot down notes during the interview and fill in immediately after the interview

Type responses into a computer

Audio record the interview for transcription

Work in a team: one person interviews and another records the responses and takes notes

How to conduct interviews (1)

1. Greet the interviewee in a culturally appropriate way.

2. Consider where you are sitting, and where the interviewee sits. Make sure they are comfortable.

3. Friendly gestures, jokes, and conversation may help break the ice.

4. Explain the purpose of the interview. Ask them "May we begin?"

How to conduct interviews (2)

5. Start with a topic that is not sensitive

6. Use open-ended questions

7. Avoid asking leading questions

8. Follow the flow of the discussion

9. Ask "probing" questions

10. Listen!! Do not only look at your interview guide

How to conduct interviews (3)

11. Pick up phrases that the interviewee uses and use them for your questions.

12. Avoid passing opinions or judgements. Treat your interviewee as an equal.

13. Respond to issues raised by your interviewee.

14. Thank the interviewee at the end and give them time to ask you questions.

Immediately after the interview

Check and fill in your notes at the end of each interview – don't wait to do this because you will forget details

Write a brief summary for each interview – highlight themes, quotes, key points

Analyzing interview data

Review notes, listen to tapes or review transcripts

Organize interviews by question and summarize across all interviews

Identify themes, patterns and divergences

Highlight key points and notable quotes

Depending upon the amount of interview data you have, you may do the data processing by hand or by computer (excel, qualitative software programs)

More on qualitative data analysis soon….

Strengths of interviews

Depth of information

Respondent can influence the topic so unexpected issues/topics emerge

Researcher can probe to get a better understanding of perspectives and experiences

Topic guide ensures that a core list of questions is asked in each interview

Because order of questions not fixed, flow and sharing of views is more natural.

Weaknesses of interviews

Trained interviewers needed to probe without being directive or judgmental

Time consuming and challenging to analyze findings – helps if it is done by the people who did the interviews

Researcher has to avoid their own bias in analysis

Analysis is time-consuming

Difficult to generalize findings

Let's practice!

Topic: Digital security and privacy practices and preferences.

1. Design your interview protocol
- Design a 10-minute interview.
- Pick high-level topics. Think about potential for probing.

2. Conduct your interviews
- Find someone in the class to interview that you don't know well.
- Start by establishing rapport. Probe as you go.
- Take as many notes as possible.

3. Reflection
- What surprising things did you learn? What questions worked well or did not work well? Do you trust the data you got? Why or why not?