



Research workshop series

Session 3: Interviews, observations, and rubrics

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What is REL Midwest?



Workshop series

2018

October 2 Data, Research, and Evidence Overview

November 28 Surveys and Focus Groups

2019

January 29 Interviews, Observations, and Rubrics

**March 4 Understanding and Interpreting Qualitative and
Quantitative Evidence**

April 1 Research Resources and Data Visualization



Today's goals

1. Discuss **appropriate application and design of interviews** to collect data.
2. Review the development of **interview protocols** and **coding structures**.
3. Explore best practices **conducting observations and using rubrics** in Illinois State Board of Education research projects.

Agenda

1. Interviews as a Research Method
2. Developing an Interview Protocol
3. Developing a Coding Structure
4. Observations and Rubrics
5. Closing

Interviews as a research method

Interviews gather data using first-hand accounts of respondent's experiences.

A conversation with a purpose.



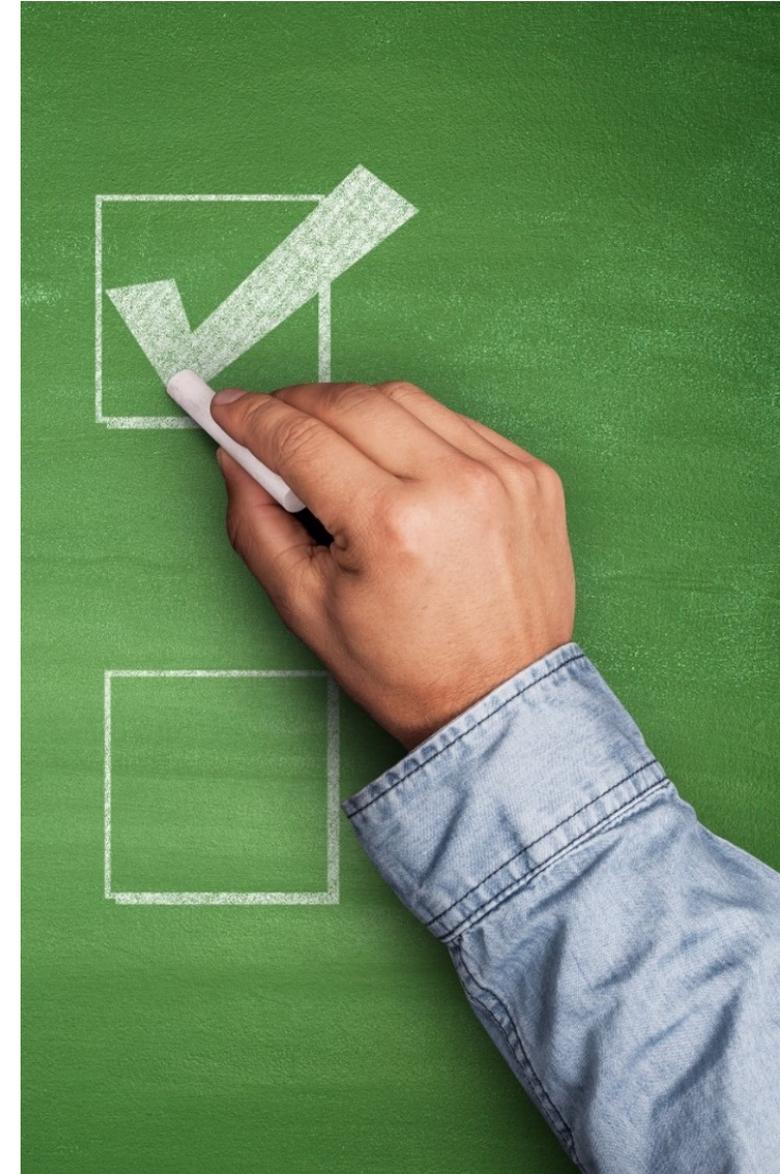
Interviews use open-ended questioning to understand individual experiences.

Data collection methods:

Surveys = Reported behavior or perceptions.

Focus groups = Probative questioning and participant interaction.

Interviews = Eliciting individual participant experience.



Appropriate applications of interviews

- Little information known about study phenomenon.
- Detailed insights needed from individual participants.
- Exploration of sensitive issues not suitable for focus groups.

(Creswell & Creswell, 2018)

Using interviews as a research method

- Interview questions linked to ISBE projects needs.
- Considerations for selecting respondents.
 - Inclusion criteria.
 - Determining number of interviews needed.
- How to recruit respondents.
- Combining interviews with other research methods.

Types of interviews

- Structured.
- Unstructured.
- Semistructured.



(Berg, 2001)

Identify the appropriate interview type

Example questions:

- When do you typically hold the first staff meeting of the year? What is the first thing on the agenda?
- Have you ever given a student the wrong grade? (Subject response: Yes, once last year). Tell me about that.
- I notice that your classroom is decorated with flags of public universities rather than private universities. What made you choose these schools?

Developing an interview protocol

Developing an interview protocol

1. Determine research objectives—policy and practice.
2. Create an outline of relevant themes.
3. Develop predetermined questions.
4. Develop question order, content, and style.
5. Include two types of interview questions.

Remember ...

Avoid these types of questions.

What is wrong with these items?

Why did you give a student the wrong grade?

How many times have you called in sick, or do you typically arrive early?

How would you describe the work environment that you perceive as the ideal culture for the students, staff, and stakeholders?

Effectively phrase questions.

Better approaches:

Have you ever mistakenly given a student the wrong grade? Could you tell me about that instance?

**How often have you been tardy to work in the last year?
How often have you called in sick?**

**How would you describe the current school environment?
How about from the students' perspectives?**

Pretest.

How to pretest your interview protocol:

Link questions to goal of study.

Obtain feedback from stakeholders and experts.

Reevaluate and revise as necessary.

Use these interview best practices.



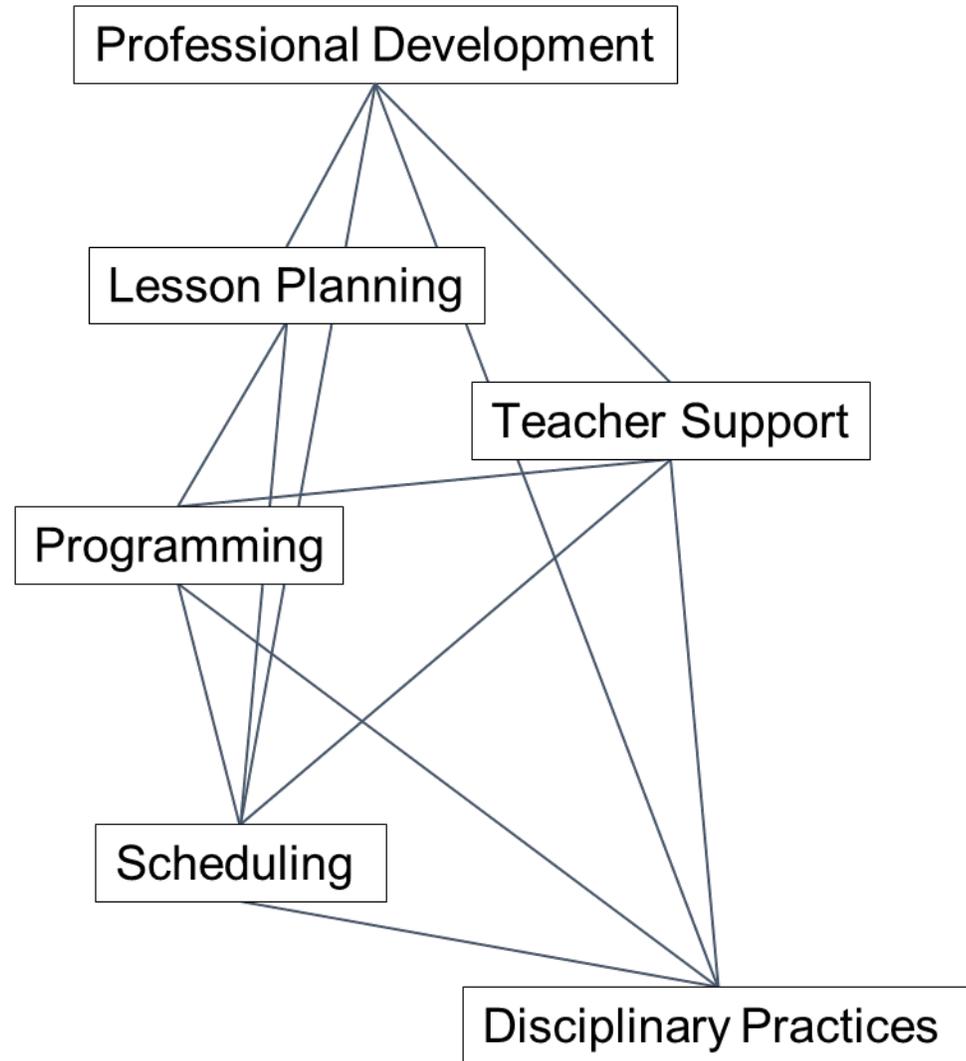
- **Take time to build rapport.**
- **Consider:**
 - **Positionality to the interviewee.**
 - **Location of the interview.**
 - **Body language.**
- **Record audio.**
- **Take minimal notes.**
- **Write informal memo immediately following interview.**

Activity 1.

**Developing an interview
protocol**

Break

Developing a coding structure



Why code?

Coding is a way to organize and understand the data. It is a method of discovering potential relationships among data points and unveil unexpected themes. Coding structures connect interview responses to the research questions.

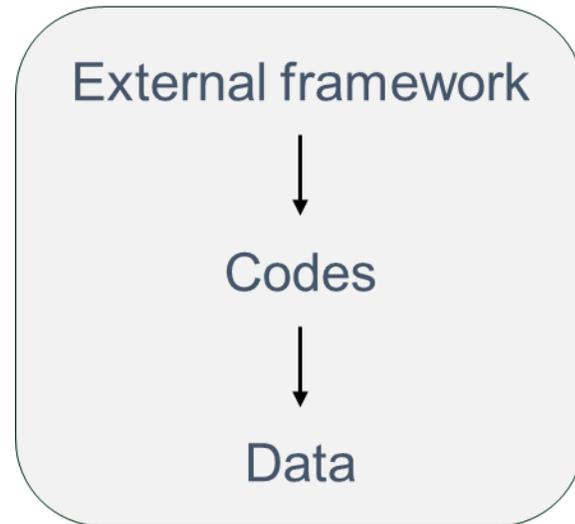
What is a code?

A word or short phrase that represents salient issues that arise in the interview transcripts, and addresses the research questions.

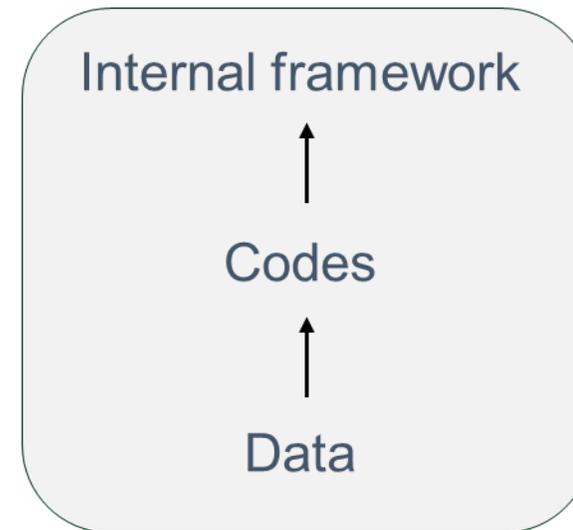
(Attride-Sterling, 2001; Saldaña, 2015)

Types of coding processes

Deductive coding



Inductive coding



Developing a coding structure

Steps to take

- Transcribe interviews.
- Generate categories based on data, previous studies, or theories.
- Create a document with code descriptions and examples.

Example: Coding notes

Lack of support. Desire for professional development training.

Unorganized tracking.
Need/improve online platform.

“It’s just hard to incorporate all of these new programs that the district requests into lesson planning. We already have enough on our plates as it is. I guess it would be helpful if they actually showed us how to include these in our scheduling.”

“I think we need a more organized way to track things. With the way technology is advancing, it’s beyond me why we still use these archaic methods.”

Activity 2.

Developing a draft coding structure

Observations and rubrics

Purpose of observations

What comes to mind?



Observations as a research method

Data is collected in a natural environment to elicit naturally occurring behavior.

(Bogdan & Biklen, 1997)

Best practices while observing

- **Preparation to observe.**
 - **How will you record?**
 - **Rubric versus free notes?**
- **Your presence in the observation environment.**
- **Awareness of interactions and how they interplay.**

Using rubrics

What is a rubric?

- A rubric is **a data collection tool**.
- It measures performance, artifacts, programs, or systems.
- It provides ratings on multiple dimensions/criteria.
- Its ratings are anchored in descriptors and examples.

What are some common uses of rubrics?

- Evaluate **student work** to assign grades or determine proficiency level.
- Measure **teacher classroom behaviors** as a component to teachers' formal evaluation.
- Assess appropriateness of **curriculum materials** for a course or program.
- Measure fidelity of **program implementation**.
- Evaluate components of a **written proposal** to determine funding or approval.

What are the benefits of using rubrics?

- Can provide reliable and valid data.
- Clearly communicate expectations.
- Useful for self-assessments and refining practice.
- Can promote collaboration.

What are some best practices?

- Ensure interrater reliability by:
 - Including language clear to raters.
 - Testing out rubric among multiple raters.

Excerpt of a rubric used to evaluate instructional materials

Rubric: Grades K–2 content

Directions for reviewers using this rubric

Record your findings based on the extent to which the criteria were met using the 1–5 rating scale.

1	2	3	4	5
The criterion was not met.	The criterion was partially met.	The criterion was adequately met.	The criterion was substantially met.	The criterion was completely met.

1. Foundational reading skills

1.1. Materials include guidance to provide small group, differentiated instruction to students struggling with reading development [RTI practice guide].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

Print concepts

1.2. Materials facilitate understanding that sentences can be broken into words and compound words can be broken into separate words [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

Phonological awareness

1.3. Instruction follows a progression to develop phonological awareness (for example, syllables, rhyming, alliteration, onset, and rime) [FR practice guide, Rec. 2, #1].

1 2 3 4 5

Support your rating:

Things to keep in mind...

For effective research:

- Interviews should be formulated using terminology that respondents are familiar with.
- Remember to pretest your interview protocol.
- Search for protocols and rubrics from similar research studies. No need to reinvent the wheel.

Revisiting today's work, what were you able to accomplish?





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Additional resources

References

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