The Interview, a Tool to Create and Develop Civic, Moral and Ethical Skills for Pupils and Students

Carmen Alexandrache[1]

Abstract: In this paper we intend to present the importance of the interview for developing ethical and moral-civic behaviors and consciousness. These aspects are often neglected in school activities, because the interview is used for developing the communicate competences or for make a social researches. Our paper analyzes the value of interview from the civic, moral, ethic educational perspective. In this sense, we are used more observations and case studies. The theoretical aspects and examples of good practice hope the teacher to develop ethical awareness

Keywords: education; communicate; objectivity; instrument of social researches; competences

1. Introduction

One of the most frequently used methods in quantitative and qualitative social research (and ethnographically as well) is represented by the interview, portrayed as a direct or mediated ***dialog***, *more or less conducted*, ***between an interviewer and an interviewee***. The interview remains the most known way of obtaining multiple data in social environments for further reshaping and statistical analysis (Chelcea, 2004).

Given the increasing interest for this option of saving data and opinions, the structure and the classification of the interview became more diversified, so that today it manages to be present in all domains of human activity, encompassing both socio-humanistic studies but equally the educational and publicity sector. This situation leads to a more visible classification of formal, educational, aspects regarding right or wrong, good or bad, adequate or inadequate in conceiving and applying the interview as well as the resulted data.

[1] Training, University "Dunarea de Jos" of Galati, Physical Education and Sport Department of Teacher. Romania, Address: 47 Domneasca Street, Galati 800008, Romania, Tel./Fax: (+40)236 46.13.53. Corresponding author: carmen.enache@ugal.ro.

2. Hypothesis, Objectives and Observations

Our research start from the point that the interview, as a tool to develop a research, can be used successfully in the scholar environment, as well as academia, regardless of the pattern of the courses.

In this way, we consider that the interest and the attitude of those educating towards the act of learning improve substantially. Also, beside the well-known competences for research and communication (Stăiculescu & Lăcătuş, 2012) that we can create and develop to students, it equally constitutes an excellent way of cultivating behavioural and moral, civic and ethical conscience of those involved in the investigation process and scientific usage of data. In regard to this last aspect, we aim to insist that there is a danger of incorporating it in the actual *idea of research objectiveness* (Babbie, 2010), without it being a *distinctive object* that would emphasize directly the formation and practice of a moral, civical and ethical behaviour coming from those that use the interview in their scientifically research. Of course, on this aspect particularly depends the quality of the research that is being done by realizing the interview.

In order to encourage the usage of the interviewing process in *any activity of individual or group research of pupil / students*, in our research, beside the general elements that define it, without customization, we presented an observation annex regarding the manifestation of moral, civic and ethical behaviour of it. We consider that the observations we proposed could further become useful recommendations for those that are getting involved in conceiving and preparing the interview, in applying it and analyzing the resulted data.

Emphasizing the moral, civic and ethical component of the interview is a must, because in the most numerous case the interest of the interviewers stops on collecting data, which helps them work with statistics, with which they can demonstrate or combat some aspects of reality, that are being researched at that point. Yet, the quality of the research realized by adding the interview depends proportionally on preparing the context, the moment and the environment when the interview is organized and applied, on preparing the questions and the way of leading the conversation, on the sensibilities and the emphasizing level of the interviewee, on the availability and the emotionality of interviewee, on the degree of involvement and focusing on the discussion on those persons involved in the interview, on the objectivity of the interpretation, etc. In other words, these elements that prepare and lead the gathering and analyzing process of information represent the unseen face of

the interview, equally important as the interviewing process itself, but which underline the attitude and conscience of the one that uses the interview. Therefore, the interview becomes an *exercise to form and develop behaviour and moral, civic and ethical conscience* that is necessary in any activity of research, generally speaking.

In scholar environment and academia, the interview in classified as it follows:

- in regard to *oral techniques of examination*, being determined by a set of questions regarding the verifying, observing and underlying the knowledge and skills that the pupil / student has until that specific moment;

- in relation to complementary methods of evaluation, by taking *the shape of the projec*t itself. In this given case, it is being considered that in order to prepare the interview, the student must individually research so that he/she can be capable of leading the discussion from the perspective of specialized knowledge, by knowing the socio-political and cultural context in which this know-how is being applied;

- in regard to the *strategies of investigation* of a specific reality, event, process, opinion or when *handling* the obtained data.

In our research, the issue of using the interview is handled from the last two perspectives, that more commonly used in scholar practice and academic networks. In this sense, the interview is frequently associated with other pedagogical methods and scientific research, by becoming the main way of applying it. Therefore, pupils / student can equally use the interview in the context of:

- ***investigation***, the interview being a standardized aspect, being identified with questionnaire;

- ***conversation***, in which the leading process of the interview can go smoother;

- ***self-knowledge***, when the respondents can electronically complete a questionnaire with questions that are specifically focusing on their case.

By using the interview, pupils/students can develop cognitive acquisitions and attitudes, by being encouraged to get *involved directly and responsibly* in specific activities of research referring to certain aspects as:

- emphasizing lifestyle aspects from past or present historical frameworks or political regimes, when the interviewees were witnesses directly or indirectly;

- emphasizing the ideological, economic, social, cultural, political diplomatic and military dimension of contemporary events;

- checking public opinion by referring to certain decision that were taken locally or nationally, regionally, European or internationally speaking;

- establishing the satisfaction level / public opinion support in relation to certain realities or present and future situations;

- identifying the level of civic involvement of the community in regard to some problems of local or general interest;

- portraying the attitude and civic behaviour of the community, in relation to a certain situation or event;

- expressing the level of information among the community / social-professional groups by referring to certain present situation or part of the near future;

- identifying solutions related to solving certain problems that affect a social group, the community, society or the world;

- establishing the level of responsibility and sensitivity of public opinion or scholars' opinion defining some facts, processes, past decision, present ones or part of the near future;

- expressing beliefs and feelings in relation to certain types of behaviour, gestures, expressions, media attitudes or of public life, political or administrative spheres.

By determining *the actual purpose*, the content and the way this is structured, pupils / students can be involved in multiple activities of interviewing and interpreting gathered data, from which we emphasize the following:

- *structured interview/semi-structured interview*, in which questions follow up with precision or with less precision a certain purpose, situation in which ideas cannot be totally developed or are deviating from the established structure;

- *unstructured interview*, in the case when question are being created in connection with the ideas of the respondent, fact that implies a larger freedom of expression of those involved in its development;

- *interview more or less standardized*, in which questions respect, to a certain degree, a specific pattern. In this category we include the *electronic interview*.

- *thematic interview*, specific interview, that can be named in this way only if it can fit in a certain domain of research, with a research purpose clearly stated.

If we take in consideration the criteria that we use in *organizing the content*, the typology of the interview can have the following shapes:

- *interview – survey*, which can be applied through electronic tools to collect data (phone, electronic mail and others, especially those involving the online environment).in this given case, the interview as a studying tool, is applied online, by gathering and summing up data automatically and secured;

- *reflexive interview*, that is consciently created by emphasizing impressions and ideas that were formed as a result of a past event (Alexandrache, 2014);

- *interpretative interview*, which is being situated on the trajectory of underlining the sense of life, of a scientifically evolution of bigger proportions, etc.

- *biographic interview*, by definition, its content makes the interviewee to narrate certain aspects of his life, in accordance with the purpose of the research that is being done.

The interview can have multiple shaped in accordance to the types of questions that were being used as well as the modality of recoding the answers. Mostly, the kind of questions that the scholar / academic interview contains are as follows:

- closed questions (with determined answer, sometimes with specific answers from given possibilities) semi-opened and opened questions (with larger answers, developed by the interviewee);

- factual questions (that contain references to elements of behaviour, physical characteristics and concrete life situations, etc.);

- cognitive kind of questions (that reflect the knowledge of respondent(s));

- questions that underline opinion, impressions, opinions of the interviewee:

- control questions – when it is about checking the violability of the answers.

By way of the reflection activity, the pupil is helped to establish a connection between the social conscience (ideas, representations, feelings, attitudes) and the social existence (relationships, the conditions in which people live and act). In this sense, it is hoped that the pupil will succeed to eliminate the prejudices and the convictions which fuel the deviant social behaviors. In other words, it is hoped that by means of ethical reflections, the pupil will show a prospective and positive conscience. It will generate and consolidate a certain model of individual behavior which will have a (general) supra-individual significance and validity.

Generally speaking, pupils/students are prepared from earlier stages in regard to the rigorist of creating, applying and interpreting an interview (Comsa, 2012). They learn how to wisely use the interview in their research activity, they learn what is the right procedure to be applied and further on, once it finished, which are the frequent mistakes and how those could be avoided, they learn the respect towards the answers' integrity and data security, the correlation of obtained data within the context and the purpose of the research itself. These aspects are related to research ethics from a general point of view. From this point of view, ethical competences denote the ability to comprehend an ethical argument, to identify the ethical implications in certain circumstances, to find practical solutions to diverse problems linked to what is right / wrong, fair / unfair, good / bad (Tompea, 2011, pp. 21-49).

Obviously, these ethical components are dependent to learning and applying some norms, values and moral judgments that reflect the social experience and community's expectations. All these are consciently manifested, contributing to the emergence of individual's moral autonomy. Throughout this kind of ethical aspects, an extremely important role is given to the knowledge of the stages of a research that is being done by interviewing methods. In this way, pupils / students learn how to comply with the following structure:

a) *Initial preparation*:

- conceptualizing the research project's topic, purpose and objectives;

- identifying the interviewed / the public that will be interviewed;

- estimating activity's expenses;

- planning the interview's time frame (especially in the case when the interview is realized piece by piece, in multiple sessions);

- establishing the means that can facilitate the process of interviewing;

- identifying the way and the tools to be used when evaluating those elements that were planes (a self-control method and a feedback process highlighted during the interviewing process).

b) *Documenting the interview*:

- announcing the interviewee vis-a-vis the self-intellectual and professional preparation, as well as towards the socio-professional and communitarian involvement, with his/her interests, professional and personal objectives, etc.;

- stating the proposed time frame, space, professional medium that the interview will be about.

c) *Conceptualizing the interview*:

- elaborating the content of the interview / quiz / observation file.

d) *The process of interviewing*:

- respecting the conditions that ease the interviewing activity;

- interviewing and archiving data (as discussion and quizzes).

e) *Analyzing and interpreting the information*:

- verifying the recordings and the quizzes;

- introducing data in the main system and verifying the content:

- primary use of data and preliminary analysis of the results;

- elaborating the results and presenting them.

We presented the general aspects of an interview, the structure and its typology, the application steps, as the ethical behaviour formation of pupils/ students is linked to honesty of the preparation and the research's process by interviewing, flawlessly conceptualizing the interview, the conditions in which this is being done and the objectivity applied in collecting and interpreting the data. Therefore, in order to underline better this research activity's contribution in creating and developing ethical, moral and civic competences we will present additional details , especially those of educational nuances, which highlight the interview. In this sense, we propose the following table:

Table 1. The components of interview and the ethical, moral and civic competences

No crt.	Interview component	Moral, civic and ethical aspects of the interviewee
1.	**Interviewer interviewee relation**	• actively listening the interviewing process; • live dialog; • interpersonal comparison; • clearly stating the expectations of the interviewee's participation at the research; • remarks towards the cultural influences in the interviewee's declarations; • expressing emotions (even at a expressive-evocative level) ; • initial presentation of the interview's design; • stimulating the interviewee's participation and keeping his/her interest alive throughout the research; • refraining from situations in which the interviewees would feel manipulated, leaded towards external interests, contrary to their convictions; • applying methods to relate to persons and institutions; • cultivating the self-expression spirit; • manifesting moral integrity, correctness and objectivity throughout the research activity and endeavors; • demonstrating strong support of some values such as respect, compassion, engagement, tolerance, trust, solidarity, optimism freedom.
2.	**Interview's content**	• the content of the interview will be stored with no cultural changes by the researcher; • formulating the questions that would favor communication and stimulate cooperation; • the questions will be organized in a logical construction, intuitive one, that would allow an answer that the interviewer wanted to receive, yet one that does not necessarily represent his/her own opinion; • the intervention's accent falls on the information not on the person that is being interviewed; • previous ones; • questions could be repeated, reformulated; • identifying elements that could affect the honesty and accuracy of information.

3.	The interviewing process	• contextualizing the interview;
		• maintaining a stimulating involved, emotional framework, that would inspire trust and objectivity.
4.	Processing data obtained as a result of the interview	• comparing obtained data;
		• examining the authenticity of information;
		• organizing resulted information in accordance with certain criteria.
5.	Using the interview's results:	• archiving data (audio and/or video recordings, albums, etc.);
		• promoting the importance of developing constructive communication and intercommunity collaboration;
		• the action of maintaining interpersonal relations on a long term basis.

As a consequences, realizing a quality research by interviewing involves a set of values and moral, civically, interior norms that a pupil / student must have, constantly manifest with responsibility (these values being perceived as "preconditions", Cucos, p. 68).

3. Conclusion

While using the interview, as a research method, one handles multiple items, both in the communication competences sphere but also in regard to professional ones. As a consequence, the interview addresses both the socio-professional level and the one regarding the personal development, issue that involves the conscience's manifestation and the moral and civically behaviour, strongly linked to ethical principles. By realizing this kind of research, the interviewer is self-preparing for actively living within a democratic society, assuming for himself the responsibility for his/her own destiny but also for the community's faith.

While preparing the interview, its application and in analyzing the obtained data, the pupil / student faces *a model of civic and moral behaviour.* In this way, the student/pupil learns how to effectively and constructively participate at his/her social life, how to daily use respect towards the law, human and nature, towards national and European identity, towards democracy and citizenship, personal and professional development. Cultivating moral, civically and ethical values means relating to real life, individually and collectively, to past or present history, to community's experience, by dealing with the will to relate to world's values generally speaking.

Therefore, we believe that our research constitutes a good argument in understanding the interview from an additional point of view, the one of active, social competences, not just by focusing on the established purpose of the interview. We hope that this presentation will represent an example of best practices for every teachers interested in developing reflexivity from the perspective of the ethical competences.

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