

## QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING: FIELD-WORK REALITIES

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### **Abstract**

*The article presents field-work experiences and reflections of the group of researchers who conducted qualitative (in-depth) interviews in the research project “Trajecto-*

ries of family model and the social networks: intergenerational perspective” (code No. VP1-3.1-ŠMM-07-K-01-106). Qualitative research aims to identify the perspectives of research participants, their interpretations and meanings attached to life events, experiences or objects. Qualitative interviews applied in the research project provided rich qualitative data. Also, researchers collected data on the practical aspects of qualitative research that are not widely described in the studies dedicated to qualitative research methodology. Conducting qualitative interviews is a challenging research activity. In order to receive sound qualitative data, researchers have to be prepared, experienced and trained. Therefore, the main motive behind this article is to review and share qualitative interview field-work realities, revealing many aspects that might not come into consideration previous to conducting research, though they can have an impact on the quality of the data collected. The applied method in the article is systematization, description and analysis of the records (notes and reflections) from researchers’ field-work diaries. The article covers the following issues: the process of contacting research participants works; the main challenges of social and physical interview environment, and the main challenges for the researcher during the interview.

The authors conclude that qualitative field-work can often be unexpected and challenging. Common terms and generalised examples in research methodology literature do not always reflect the realities of field-work. Qualitative field-work requires flexibility and ability to efficiently react to on-going situations of a different nature. Summarising their experiences, researchers provide insight and recommendations that can be helpful for other researchers to better understand the field-work element of qualitative research process as well as build upon the advancement of qualitative research activities.

**Keywords:** *qualitative research methods; qualitative interviewing, field-work.*

## Introduction

Qualitative research process is constant interaction between pre-constructed methodology and the field, i.e. natural settings, diverse research participants, complex narratives as well as a variety of emerging organizational issues. On the one hand, qualitative research rests upon participants whose perspectives and behaviours are the focus of the research. On the other hand, the *researcher* becomes an active “tool” for collection of information in qualitative research. The researcher is the instrument of validity in qualitative research. The extent to which the researcher is experienced and trained often plays a critical role for the quality of research data.

However, Hennink et al. (2011) note that sometimes qualitative research is oversimplified and seen as an activity that can be done without training and experience. Correspondingly, this oversimplification is evident in relation to one of the most commonly used qualitative data collection methods, namely, interviewing (King and Horrocks, 2010). “Failure to recognise the special requirements of a qualitative research interview can result in the elicitation of data that have serious limitations for a study”

(ibid. p.1). Qualitative interviews provide in-depth, contextualised, open-ended responses from research participants about their views, opinions, feelings, knowledge, and experiences (Patton, 2002; Creswell, 2009). Interviews can reveal the past; they can uncover how certain events affected people's thoughts and feelings, as well as obtain information about social settings which are otherwise closed or unreachable for researchers (Weiss, 1994). To summarise it, qualitative interviews opt to provide rich and multi-sided data for sociological analysis. Yet this can only be achieved when seriously considering the preparation for the interviews. Otherwise, interviews may produce data which does not conform to the notion of qualitative data. For example, interviews can be shallow and superficial or informants can restrain from being open (King and Horrocks, 2010). Moreover, the necessity to intervene into immediate relationships with research participants and their contexts can bring situations which may not always be predictable behind general recommendations of the method. Therefore, the main motive behind this article is to review and share qualitative interview field-work realities revealing many aspects that might not come up into consideration *previous* to conducting research, though they can have an impact on the quality of the data collected.

The research project "Trajectories of family model and the social networks: intergenerational perspective" (code No. VP1-3.1-ŠMM-07-K-01-106) combined quantitative and qualitative research methods. During the first stage of the research a representative sociological survey was applied. During the second stage of the research, qualitative (in-depth) face-to-face interviews were used. A team of researchers (including the authors of the article) carried out the qualitative component of the research project. Four researchers conducted interviews in six regions of Lithuania: Vilnius, Panevėžys, Klaipėda, Marijampolė, Utena and Alytus. In total, 60 in-depth interviews were conducted (among them 30 female and 30 male informants distributed in four cohorts: born in year 1950–55; 1960–65; 1970–75, and 1980–85). Interviews were conducted using an interview guide composed of open-ended research questions. All informants were interviewed face-to-face individually. All interviews were recorded. Usually, one researcher participated in an interview. However, during research trips to remote regions (e.g. Klaipėda) two researchers participated and worked interchangeably. Interviews were conducted in a variety of environments depending on the requests of informants. The number of cases interviewed during the research allowed collecting not only rich interview content; it also brought valuable insight about potential challenges and peculiarities of qualitative field-work.

The **purpose** of the article is to reflect upon and share field-work practices when conducting qualitative interviews. The **object** of the article is the process of qualitative interviewing field-work. The article covers the following **issues**: (a) the process of contacting research participants works; (b) the main challenges of social and physical interview environment; and (c) the main challenges for the researcher during interview. The applied **method** in the article is systematization, description and analysis of the records (notes and reflections) from researchers' field-work diaries.

## 1. The path from contacting informants to conducting interviews

The initial phase of the selection of informants has been implemented before qualitative interviews. The research project employed triangulation of research methods combining a quantitative and qualitative approach. Initially, a quantitative survey was conducted. During the survey, respondents were asked about their consent in participating in the second stage of the research project, namely, to give in-depth interviews. Following pre-developed research methodology there was a list of potential informants constructed from the respondents of the survey. Initially, it seemed as a promisingly easier way to form the sample of interview informants, that is, the number of interviews actually conducted. The potential informants already took part in the survey and they provided preliminary consent to take part in interviews. However, the contacting process was still challenging. It confirmed that contacting potential informants, agreeing upon participation and *actually* conducting interviews is a rather fluctuating process. In some cases, even firm initial agreement about participation in an interview did not lead to realisation of the interview. Research experiences support the insights of Flick (2007) and Alveson (2011) who note that *finding access* to the field is highly relevant. Sampling is an important step in research design, however, “finding access determines how far the plan of research formulated in this design is going to work in the concrete research practice” (Flick, 2007, p. 34). According to Flick (*ibid.*), finding accessing takes a form of negotiation with and in the field. The below-described experiences reveal some instances of the course and result of the negotiation.

Potential informants were contacted either by phone or by email (depending on the kind of contact information available). In most cases phone calls worked better than emails. For example, in two regions, out of five informants contacted by email, none responded. Also, email would not have worked as an efficient contact tool in many cases because it was necessary to communicate with informants in prompt communication circumstances, e.g. to specify the way to their living places or to re-agree upon the time. Thus, for the matters of qualitative field-work communication, by phone is a preferable means of communication.

It is possible to analytically divide all contacted respondents into four groups: 1) strictly refused to participate in the second (qualitative) stage of the study; 2) hesitated and refused to participate; 3) hesitated and agreed to participate; and 4) agreed to participate without any hesitation. Based on research experience, it is possible to generalise that people in Lithuania are modestly willing to take part in research activities.

There were quite few cases of very *assertive refusals* to take part in an interview. Likewise, there were few cases of *unhesitating agreements*. In most cases potential informants would consider and discuss reasons, possibilities and necessity to participate in the research. Despite the fact that potential informants provided their pre-agreement to give interviews during the first stage of research, in many cases it was needed to remind them what kind of research we were talking about, what topics it covers, and etc. Experiences with *hesitant* informants are provided below focusing on the factors that led to either *agreement* or *refusal* to participate.

It was noticed during the contacting process that strongly hesitant informants are not very promising. In most cases hesitant informants later used to refuse to take part in the research. The probability of actual participation was highest with those potential informants who agreed to give an interview during the first contact with them. In many cases, when a potential informant was hesitating during the first phone conversation, he or she used to refuse participation during the subsequent call.

Also, it must always be noted that contacting and conducting interviews is a volatile process. There were cases when life circumstances simply corrected the plans of informants and new agreements with the same informant were made a few times. For example, a son of an informant had an accident at work exactly on the day of interview, so it was postponed several times. In some cases informants suggested interviewers to simply try catching them in their tense schedule: "Please, call me tomorrow in the morning, I will then know where and when I will be and then we will try to agree where and when we could meet..." Therefore, researchers have to be prepared to be flexible, fast reacting, and organised. Otherwise, it might be problematic to collect a planned number of interview cases.

One of the challenging parts in any social research is to reason potential informants why they should take part in the research. For that it is very handful to explore the reasons of refusal to participate in a research. What were the main reasons of refusal to participate in interviews? It is possible to point out at least four types of refusal. One type of refusals was based on *objective factors*. Potential informants were not refusing to participate *per se*; however, they provided clear objective reasons due to which they were not able to participate in interviews. For example, an informant was not present in Lithuania; was away for vacation, or had very tough/inconvenient work schedules. Shifting work hours was one of the common difficulties to agree upon interview time suitable both for potential informant and a researcher. In some cases, it was possible to adjust the participant's shifting work hours and research field-work schedules. However, in remote regions, field-work trips had defined time periods and there were cases when it was not possible to arrange meeting with informants having shifting work hours. There was also the impression that men were more often than women reasoning based on their tense schedule and work. It was more difficult to arrange time of meeting with them.

Next, the type of refusals can be referred to as *simply unwillingness to participate*. In some cases informants were straightforward: "No, I do not agree/do not want to participate". In other cases, informants were trying to find some reasoning, for example, "very busy." However, there were really busy persons who put effort to find time for interviews and really took their time from other activities. During conversations, different ways of reasoning why they should consider participating in the research were employed with hesitant informants. In some cases, the only reasoning that worked was straightforward explanation: "This is our work, and we want to do it right. Therefore, we need real cases and real people, and not invented ones." In these cases, arguments about science or knowledge or importance of research would not work this way. Also, we noticed that informants do not perceive their life stories as possibly be-

ing important or of some scientific value. Sometimes in the beginning or the end of an interview they would comment: "I am not sure if I have something important to say" or "This is it? I talked so much, but I am not sure if I somehow helped you". Therefore, even for the same research it might be necessary to think about several reasons for the participants depending on the course of the individual contacting conversation.

One more type of refusal was the *strategy of "disappearing" or "vanishing."* There were a number of informants who initially agreed to participate, but they did not respond to subsequent phone calls. This was quite disturbing for the interview course; especially in the remote regions. For example, during a trip to one region there were five pre-agreed informants for the first days of the trip. However, none of these informants responded to check-up phone calls on the day of the interview (even after a few tries during different times of day). Researchers were on their route pre-planned according to agreements with potential informants. Therefore, it was a rather urgent issue to be solved when a pre-agreed informant "disappeared". Researchers started contacting other informants and arranging interviews. Thus, experience shows that it is very important to assure as firm a confirmation as possible, for example, asking to agree upon exact time and place, receiving informant addresses and other concrete information. This can help to avoid "disappearing" of informants. Also, a check-up call a few hours before the time set for interview is recommended. It can help avoiding situations when informants forget about the interview or they have some changes in their plans.

Finally, *family members* (or more precisely wives/mothers) also played important role in potential informant decision making process. At least in four cases wives have functioned as negative "filters." In one case, a male informant preliminarily agreed to participate, but he said he must talk to his wife about it. During next call he said that his wife was not very enthusiastic about it. So it was agreed on a third call. Then the informant said that his wife is definitely against his participation, so he refuses to participate. In other cases, the potential informants were male, but their wives or mothers answered the phone call. In none of these cases researchers had the possibility to talk to any informant directly. With all of these women researchers had a repeated conversation because they promised to clear the situation with the informants. However, in all cases the final result was refusal on the part of the by wives/mothers.

To summarise, contacted potential informants vs. actually conducted interviews ratio in the research project was about 2:1. For example, it was planned to make 15 interviews in two regions; for that, over 30 potential informants were contacted. Initial contacts with potential informants are of critical importance when forming a due number of conducted interviews. Therefore, experience and preparation for negotiation with potential informants has to be carefully considered. It is reasonable to think about more than one possible argument and strategy of convincing informants to take part in research. The path from initial selection of informants to actually conducting interviews can be rather long, time consuming as well as requiring energy and effort of researcher.



## 1. Interview environment: balancing between requirements of methodology and requests of research participants

Standard recommendation in methodology literature is to conduct qualitative interviews in an environment that is comfortable and non-disturbing for research participants. Also, it is suggested that outsiders (other people than an informant and a researcher/researchers) should not intervene during the interviewing process (Hen-nink et al., 2011). Comfort, privacy and quiet are among the most important aspects of a physical interview environment (King and Horrocks, 2010). However, actual field-work circumstances do not always provide possibility to follow the suggestions. During the research, interviews were conducted in a variety of locations and environments. Researchers tried to conform to the needs of potential informants as much as possible. In some cases, it was necessary to ply between possibility to conduct an interview and standard requirements of research methodology.

It might be presumed that potential informants choose their homes as the most comfortable environment (King and Horrocks, 2010). However, interviews went on in a variety of places, both *private and public*. During a field trip to the West and North districts of Lithuania, there was a tendency that female informants preferred to give interviews at home; whereas male informants preferred public places. However, in other regions researchers did not notice this tendency.

Considering public places used for interviewing it is possible to give a range of examples: cafes, public library, hotel where researchers' stayed, work place of an informant, or back yard arbour of an informant's friend. There were also several cases when interview conversations took place in a researcher's car. In these cases, informants would agree to give interviews though not willing an intrusion of researchers into their environment or meeting in a public place. Thus, conversation sitting in a car was a satisfying solution for those informants as well as researchers.

Usually, researchers tried to explain informants that they need an environment without interruption of other people around. However, it was not possible to completely avoid "outsiders" during the interviews. There were cases when family members or co-workers used to interrupt. It is possible to point out two groups of "outsiders": children of female informants, and adult "outsiders" (family members or co-workers). In several interviews, small kids were around during conversations. Of course, they disturbed interview process. For example, in one case one of two researchers went to play with three small kids outside while other researcher was interviewing. In other cases, when researcher was alone, kids were playing around and trying to get some attention (grabbing recorder, spilling out breakfast and so on). In one case, three grown children were sitting in the room during the whole interview time. The reason for that was simply because they did not have any other place to be. Surprisingly, the informant was still very open in her talk even about sensitive issues.

There were cases when family members present at home would interrupt (e.g. a wife, mother, girlfriend, son or husband). In some cases, outsiders would disturb the in-

interview, in other cases — enrich significantly the interview information. Most common practice in cases of intervention was to stop the interview (pause the voice recorder) and continue it later. However, in one case the mother of the informant came and for some time just listened to the interview. Then she started interrupting the conversation. In another case, the wife interrupted by commenting on our questions and actually providing information which would otherwise have remained undiscovered. The informant started to develop the issue only after the comment of the wife. In most cases, a small disturbance did affect the openness of informants. However, in the case with mother who was interrupting there might be additional problems for analysis. On the other hand, asking an informant to ensure that his or her family member would not interfere might cause discontent from the informant's side and thus hinder open and sincere dialogue. Therefore, it is very important to try to minimise the interference effect in as much an un-disturbing way as possible (e.g., stopping the voice recorder).

## 2. Sensitivity and unexpectedness in qualitative research

Among other challenges during interviews, Bryman (2008) points out unexpected interviewee behaviour, environment problems and dealing with sensitive issues. However, it is not always obvious what actually lies behind these general statements. The intention of this section is to illustrate that field-work realities can range from extremely sensitive and disturbing situations to unexpectedly odd or even absurd circumstances.

One of the distinctive features of qualitative interviews is to extract information from research participants in depth and in detail, covering the context and live impressions of an informant. On the one hand, this kind of information is very rich and informative. On the other hand, in order to extract sound qualitative information the researcher must be trained to handle the interview in a way that the informant would feel open and willing to share his or her life story. Also, the researcher has to be prepared for unexpected, uneasy or even pressing situations. It is not possible to predict the course of the interview in advance as it is highly dependent on the relation of the informant to the research questions. Sometimes there might be unexpected reactions by informant to a rather simple or neutral question. Researcher has to be prepared for sensitive issues and circumstances.

Combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods in the research project allowed to parallel the information received about the same cases using a survey questionnaire and qualitative interview. As the interview informants were selected from the survey sample, previous to conducting a particular interview, it was possible to review corresponding survey questionnaire in order to follow the stories of informants more easily and be consistent with factual information (e.g., number of children, marital status, etc.). In survey questionnaires, most cases made an impression of “regular cases.” Survey questionnaires provided with information that could be generalised. However, revealed in a qualitative way cases appeared to have a rich



background behind generalised information. There were very complicated cases, very impressive or very oppressive life stories which were not fully reflected in the survey data. Qualitative interviews provided the background and rich context for the information collected during survey research.

Respectively, the data collection process in qualitative research is not standardized. A qualitative interview guide was used for the field-work. The aim was to collect as rich stories as possible. Therefore, informants were asked to tell openly and in details their experiences, feelings, or reactions in relation to open interview questions. Thus, even having a generalised picture of a prospective case from the survey questionnaire, it was not quite possible to predict the course of the interview. For example, during one of the field-work trips, eight informants out of fifteen were crying during the interview; at least two more informants were nearly crying at the end of interviews. A car accident resulting in the death of 20-year-old son; a wife, lost after long period of illness; sudden death of a beloved father; suicide of a father; recovering from cancer treatment; painful experience of a small son — these were the most sensitive circumstances. Informants came out with these stories after seemingly neutral questions (e.g., “Please, tell us more about your family members”). The sensitivity of conversation affects not only informants. It is a very critical factor for the work of researcher. The most difficult thing was to ask the subsequent questions. What kind of question it should be? Should researcher continue the interview or should not? How much time should the researcher give for the informant to calm down? What is the status of the researcher in a sensitive situation, as described above: is the researcher still just a researcher, or he/she becomes a source of consolation? These examples strongly support the suggestion that involvement in qualitative research activities requires training not only in usual methodology issues (e.g., constructing questionnaire, forming research questions) but also in communication or even psychology. Moreover, the researcher has to accumulate experience to be able to act in a variety of situations which cannot be predicted or learned in advance.

Apart from sensitive situations there also may occur odd situations that often remain un-reflected in methodology literature. Researchers find it important to provide instances of “non-conventional” issues of field-work. For example, a dark jeep-type car for a research trip unexpectedly appeared to be an extremely reactive factor: most of the informants who had a chance to see it, commented upon it in a sense that “researchers have very good cars for their field trips.” Moreover, in a research location that was close to the state border there was a case of “replaced” informant. The potential informant and members of his social network suspected researchers to be representatives of criminal police. Most probably, this observation was based on the similarity of researchers’ car to the cars of criminal police. Thus, a “testing informant” was sent instead of the real one to check what kind of researchers came and what kind of research they were doing. After about 15 minutes of conversation the “testing informant” revealed his intentions and suspicions. The interview was terminated. Researchers did not have a chance to meet the real informant.

Another example of field trip challenges was misunderstanding with the names of location. In the same region and district there were two locations with exactly the same name but 60 km away from one another. It became clear only when researchers went to the wrong location. Thus, there was a question to be solved: to immediately go another 60 km or to resign the informant? Goodwill of informant and determination of researchers resulted in an interview. However, the example reveals the need for flexibility and ability to handle perplexing situations.

The last example to be presented concerns the possible impacts of field-work activities on researcher's well-being after the research is finished. Anonymity, privacy or confidentiality in relation to research participants are conventional issues of social research ethics. However, field-work experiences show that privacy of researchers should also be taken into account. In the research project personal mobile phones of researchers were used for contacting informants. However, after interviewing was finished one researcher started receiving disturbing messages and phone calls from an informant's phone number. This example reveals that the privacy of researchers has to be ensured as much as possible, for instance, acquiring phone numbers only for research purposes as well as thinking in advance about other possible ways to minimise disturbing research effects.

## Conclusions

Qualitative interviewing is not a simple conversation. It is close contact to the life story of an informant, a certain type of intrusion into his or her natural context, and necessity to enquire the story from a variety of types of people (e.g. very incommunicative informants). In research reports and research methodology literature we can often find quite a neat picture about the qualitative field work. However, authors assume that vivid and real-life reflections from the field-work are very useful for better understanding the actual need for preparation and training when planning to conduct qualitative research. Qualitative field-work can often be unexpected and challenging.

The article revealed realities which are hidden behind common terms in the methodology literature. Some reflections illustrated the challenges that are in relation to basic elements of research practices like contacting the interview participants or sensitivity of conversation topics. However, the article also provided examples of challenges that are sometimes disregarded as not falling into the realm of scientific activity. Nevertheless, they may play a critical role for the success of scientific activity.

Qualitative field-work requires flexibility and the ability to efficiently react to on-going situations. Based on researchers' experiences some recommendations can be provided. However, it is important to note that these recommendations are of a suggestion or reflection type. They can help to better realise possible difficulties and challenges. However, solutions always depend on the context of particular qualitative research. Qualitative field-work is a viable process and in each case the researcher should think what will work best for a particular case.

## Recommendations

1. The general recommendation is that researchers who prepare for qualitative research field-work should necessarily be prepared to face challenges. These challenges may occur in different stages of research. Moreover, they may not always be of a “standard scientific” manner.
2. Before contacting informants, the researcher should prepare at least twice as big a list of potential participants as is needed for the final sample.
3. Researcher should try to make rather concrete arrangements during the first contact with a potential informant, e.g., agree about time and place of meeting. If researcher makes too abstract agreement, there is a high probability that informant will change his/her mind and “disappear.”
4. It is reasonable to think about convincing arguments why it is worth a participant to give an interview. “Scientific importance” might not always be a good argument. It is more relevant for researchers than for the potential informant. It is useful to prepare several possible reasoning items and use them intuitively reacting to the situation of conversation with a research participant.
5. Researcher should be prepared for sensitive/pressing situations. Though sensitivity is methodologically widely considered, one has to be prepared that sometimes very simple questions may become sensitive. Researcher shall build upon his own experiences in coping with these kinds of situations.
6. Researcher should be prepared to be flexible and fast-reacting during field trip. The actual course of the field trip may be very different from the initial plan.
7. When planning a field-work trip, it is reasonable to discuss possible challenges for the confidentiality and privacy of a researcher.

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## KOKYBINIS INTERVIU: LAUKO DARBŲ PATIRTYS

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### Santrauka

*Straipsnyje apibendrinamos tyrėjų grupės, atlikusios giluminius interviu pagal mokslo projektą „Šeimos modelių ir socialinių tinklų trajektorijos: tarpgeneracinė perspektyva“ (kodas Nr. P1-3.1-ŠMM-07-K-01-106), kokybinio tyrimo lauko darbų patirtys. Kad kokybiniai duomenys būtų patikimi, tyrėjai turi būti tinkamai pasirengę atlikti kokybinius interviu.*

*Tyrimo projekto metu atlikti kokybiniai interviu leido pasiekti dvejopų tikslų. Pirmia, buvo surinkti gausūs kokybinio tyrimo duomenys. Antra, tyrėjai per savo patirtį lauko tyrimo metu surinko duomenis apie tuos praktinius kokybinio tyrimo aspektus, kurie nėra plačiai aprašomi kokybinių tyrimų metodikai skirtose studijose. Straipsnio tikslas – atskleisti lauko darbų atlikimo kokybiniuose tyrimuose praktinius aspektus, parengiant rekomendacijas, galinčias padėti kitiems tyrėjams labiau įsijausti ir suprasti lauko darbų specifiką kokybinio tyrimo procese, apgalvoti potencialius tyrimo veiklos momentus ir tinkamiau jiems pasiruošti. Tyrimo objektas – kokybinio interviu lauko darbų procesas. Tyrimo uždaviniai: 1) atskleisti kontaktų užmezgimo su tyrimo dalyviais proceso ypatumus; 2) aprašyti fizinės ir socialinės aplinkos, kurioje vyksta interviu, specifinius aspektus; 3) atskleisti esminius iššūkius, kylančius tyrėjui interviu ėmimo proceso metu. Taikomas metodas – tyrėjų dienoraščiųuose užfiksuotų įrašų (pastabų ir refleksijų) sisteminimas, aprašymas bei analizė.*

*Straipsnyje aprašomi kontaktų su tyrimo dalyviais užmezgimo proceso ypatumai, ypatingą dėmesį skiriant potencialių tyrimo dalyvių nedalyvavimo arba atsisakymo dalyvauti tyrime veiksnių analizei; pateikiami pavyzdžiai, iliustruojantys problemišką santykį tarp „idealių“ metodologinių reikalavimų fizinei ir socialinei interviu atlikimo aplinkai ir „realių“, egzistencinių situacijų; nagrinėjamos menkai metodologiniuose darbuose aprašytos jautrios, dramatiškos situacijos, kylančios interviu metu ir keliančios papildomų etinių, taktinių iššūkių tyrėjui; taip pat pateikiami pavyzdžiai, rodantys, regis, nepriklausomų ir tiesiogiai nesusijusių su tyrimo atlikimu elementų reikšmę ir poveikį tyrimo dalyviams.*

*Straipsnio pabaigoje formuluojamos praktinės rekomendacijos planuojantiems atlikti kokybinių tyrimų: svarbu būti pasirengusiems priimti bet kokios kilmės iššūkius bet kuriame tyrimo etape; rekomenduotina paruošti apytiksliai dvigubai ilgesnį potencialių informantų sąrašą nei reikia; derinant interviu laiką ir vietą, siekti kuo konkretesnio*

*susitarimo; paruošti kelis „nemokslinius“ argumentus, kodėl informantams verta dalyvauti tyrime; neatmesti tikimybės, kad, regis, paprastas klausimas gali tapti jautriu, sukeliančiu informantams stiprias emocijas, ir būti pasiruošusiems suvaldyti tokį interviu momentą; būti lankstiems priimant sprendimus sparčiai besikeičiančioje situacijoje, kai aiškėja, kad tyrimas negali vykti suplanuota eiga, bei pasirūpinti pačių tyrėjų konfidencialumu bei privatumu.*

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** kokybiniai tyrimų metodai, kokybinis interviu, lauko darbai.

