

# Session B3 - English posters

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## Negotiating multiple roles: A methodological framework for the co-creation of data in elite interviews in Higher Education Research

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### Program text

An adapted version of the elite interview is offered as a methodological framework for research interviews conducted in HE, underlining the negotiation of multiple roles in the co-creation process.

### Abstract

#### Introduction to the theme of the project

Research interviews conducted in the field of Higher Education (HE) is created under unique conditions that calls for participants in the interview to actively negotiate multiple roles. These conditions have implications for the interview data created and therefore the research as a whole. More systematic attention needs to be given to this topic in order to continuously strive for improved quality of HE research.

Drawing on own as well as others' experiences with interviewing supervisors, an adapted version of the elite interview is suggested as a productive methodological framework for research interviews conducted in HE by PhD students/younger researchers, underlining the implications of the negotiation of multiple roles in the co-creation process.

#### Applied methods and/or theory

The methodological framework for HE research interviews is based on 1. Own experiences with conducting semi structured qualitative interviews with 41 Master's thesis supervisors (Andersen & Jensen, 2007; Jensen, 2016), 2. Others' experiences with interviewing supervisors (Gunasekara, 2007), 3. Dialogue with existing literature on the elite interview (Leech, 2002; Aberbach & Rockman, 2002).

#### Results and/or experiences

Conducting elite interviews with highly educated people poses a set of challenges in its own right and put certain demands on the interviewer. But elite interviews in HE is complicated further by the fact that the interviewing PhD student/younger researcher is placed within in the very same hierarchy as the interviewee. During the interview, the participants are positioned in the same way as during a supervision meeting, and the roles of an interviewee/interviewer have several similarities with the roles of a student/supervisor. As a consequence, the intended relation can be affected by the roles of a student/supervisor, with possible implications for the entire interview. Furthermore, when the interview is a part of a PhD project, the goal is also to grant the interviewer access to the (elite) group that the

supervisors is part of and, in this context, acts as a gatekeeper for (Gunasekara, 2007). Research interviews in HE can therefore be classified as elite interviews in more than one aspect, as the interview situation calls for a complex negotiation of roles and power.

### **Practical implications and/or impact**

Using the proposed framework as a lens, it becomes possible to identify some of the unique conditions that characterize research interviews in HE. Five specific conditions and their implications are presented, with the goal of increasing reflexivity and transparency of the conditions of the co-creation of interview data.

### **Author**

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### **Literature**

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