

Interview Procedures – DACB Oral History Project

THE PRE-INTERVIEW

- Arrange a short meeting with the person. Give the person the information sheet and give him or her time to read through it (and/or read it with him or her).
- Verbally explain the purpose of the interview:
This is an oral history project. The goal is to collect memories of a Christian leader in order to develop an account of his or her life, ministry, and role in the origins and development of the African church.
- Agree on a date and a quiet location, with minimal noise and interruption, for the interview.

THE DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

- Don't forget to bring paper and pens/pencils to take notes; recording device, extra charger/battery if possible.
- Ask the person if they have any questions. Assure the person that they can contact you or your teacher with any concerns. Assure the person that they are free to participate or not and that they can change their mind at any time. Ask the person if they are ready to begin.
- Test the sound before the interview (if possible, avoid areas where traffic or wind distorts the sound).

DURING THE INTERVIEW

1. Begin recording.
2. Say: Today is _____ (date). I am _____ (your name). I'm in _____ (location) with _____ (full name of interviewee) who was born in _____ (birth year). We're going to talk about the life of _____ (name of biography subject).

(For example: Today is January 15, 2021. I am Lucie Lutete, and I'm in the CMCo church building in Delvaux, Kinshasa with Mrs. Marie Mutondo, who was born in 1958. We're here to talk about the life of Daniel Manteka.)

3. Ask for verbal assent:
Do I have your permission to record this interview? Thank you. At the end, we will discuss how the information gathered during the interview will be used. You will be able to specify what I am allowed to do with this audio file. Even if you would prefer that I delete it, I will respect your choice.

4. Continue by asking the questions in your questionnaire (aim for a discussion of about 45 to 60 minutes).
 - Begin with demographic questions (names of subject's family members, life history (places lived, education, church work), affiliations).
 - Move on to open questions to solicit longer stories.
 - Take some notes (discreetly) to help with analysis later – e.g., 10:30 conversion story; 15:45 conflict with older son; 1:00:25 consent.

5. Before stopping the recording, ask for detailed consent:

Say: We're going to stop here. Thank you so much for taking the time to share your thoughts and your memories. Now, you can tell me what you'd like me to do with this recording. It belongs to you. No one can do anything with it without your permission.

 - May I use this recording as a source for a story about the life of _____ (subject's name)?
 - May I quote your words, using your real name, when I write this story about _____ (name of subject)?
 - May I archive this recording and its transcript in an archive, where it will be accessible to researchers (possibly on the internet)? (That means that researchers will be able to consult it and quote from it in their own research.)

6. Stop recording.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- (immediately) Note down the full name of the interviewee, the location, the date, and the name of the person conducting the interview. Also note the interviewee's contact information (with their permission) so that you can give them a copy of the sound file and/or the biography. Take a photo of the person if they are OK with this.
- (the same day) Take some time to write down your impressions of the interview: highlights, key elements for your biography, phrases to quote – it's infinitely easier to remember these things on the day of the interview than to have to listen to it all over again to find them.
- (the same day) Save the file on your computer with the name of the interviewee and the biographical subject (e.g., TRAORE_Diane_Interview_2021-04-02_Biographie_SANOGO_Elsa.mp3). Save any related documents (the photo, your transcript, your notes...) in the same place with a similar name for easy sorting (e.g. TRAORE_Diane_Transcription_Interview_2021-04-02_Biography_SANOGO_Elsa.txt, TRAORE_Diane_Photo_2021-04-02_Biography_SANOGO_Elsa.jpg).
- (after completing the transcription) Transfer a copy of all these files to an appropriate archive, to the library of your university/Bible Institute, and to the interviewee.