



Delving Deeply into Interviews with Timeline Tools

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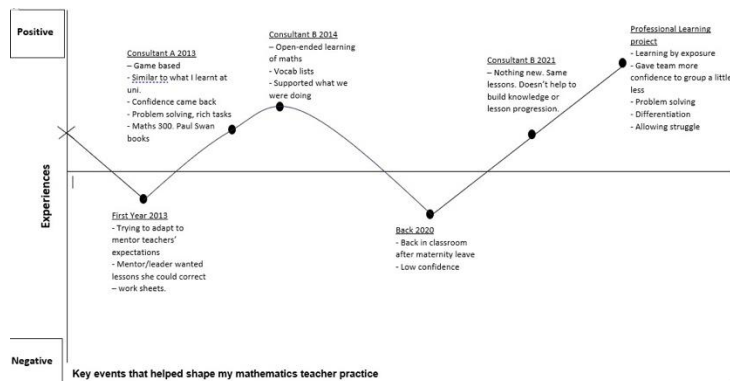
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Semi-structured interviews are useful for gaining insights into participants' lived experiences and perspectives on issues, but they are open to limitations (Galletta, 2013; Kervin et al., 2016). To address this issue, our study explored the combination of timeline graphic elicitation tools with semi-structured interviews as an approach to strengthen insights into teachers' experiences of mathematics teaching and professional learning.

A qualitative study was conducted. Ten Years 1 and 2 teachers from two schools engaged in a 45-minute semi-structured interview and completed two versions of a timeline graphic elicitation tool. One response was completed prior to the interview, and one during the interview. The first tool elicited reflections of previous experiences with mathematics education (e.g., Figure 1), while the second tool captured teachers' reflections on recent mathematics professional learning.

Figure 1.

Ceilia's timeline and written reflection of teaching experience over time (first timeline tool)



Findings suggest that using a graphic elicitation tool during semi-structured interviews is effective when facilitating conversations, alleviating perceived interviewee anxiety, and deepening reflections. This was observed during Ceilia's interview when sharing her timeline graph (above). Such an approach was valuable for exploring complex, lived experiences in educational settings.

References

- Galletta, A. (2013). *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond: From research design to analysis and publication*. NYU Press.
- Kervin, L., Vialle, W., Howard, S., Herrington, J., & Okely, T. (2016). *Research for educators* (2nd ed.). Cengage Learning Australia Pty Ltd.