

Example Interview Transcripts

Updated Thursday 28th July 2005

Read the transcripts of the example interviews

Introductory Clips

KAREN: Karen Doyle, 36 [years old].
LYNNIE: Linnie Williams, 35 [years old].
STEPHEN: My name's Stephen Kirk, I'm 19 [years old].
PETER: Peter Loftus, 13 [years old].
JODIE: This is Jodie Campbell. I'm in Speke, and I'm interviewing the Doyle family.

Getting Started

JODIE: 1, 2, 1, 2 1, 2.....OK. This is Jodie Cambell, taking part in one of the Voices interviews Um, I'm in Speke and I'm interviewing the Doyle family but also different members of the Doyle family; is that right Karen?
Yeah. Thank you for welcoming us into your home today.
KAREN: You're welcome.
JODIE: Now let's go round the group shall we and you can all introduce ourselves for me now don't be shy OK! Don't even think that the microphone is here. We're all going to have a bit of a laugh alright – especially you! Yeah! No nothing! Now you need to speak for me! OK right we'll go round the group. What's your name.
STEPHEN: My name is Stephen Kirk.
JODIE: Ok Stephen, how old are you?
STPEHEN: I'm 19.
JODIE : Excellent. And Karen, can you come in a little bit for us. OK what's your name?
KAREN: Karen Doyle.
JODIE: And how old are you Karen?
KAREN: 36
LYNNIE: Linnie Williams, 35.
JODIE: And you are both sisters.
LYNNIE : Yep.
PETE: Peter Loftus. 13.

How You Feel

JODIE: OK then, so shall we start off with a couple of the words then that we've got written down on our spider diagrams. We'll start off with a couple of the easy ones really and then we can how we get on shall we, we'll see how we get into the flow of everything.
Right if we start off with you. What would you put down for unwell?
STEPHEN: Sick
JODIE: Yeah. Was that the first word that springs into mind? What about everybody else?
PETER: Sick
KAREN: Sick
LYNNIE: Sick
JODIE: Ok then, that's great. That crosses off the first one. A bit of a giggle. What about unattractive. What did you put down for unattractive?
KAREN: Ugly
LYNNIE: Unfortunate looking
JODIE: Laughs. OK, no fair enough. Why? Why would you say that? Do you not like the word ugly?
LYNNIE: No, cos I just feel sorry for ugly people sort of thing, they're unfortunate looking!
JODIE: What about yourself?
PETER: Ugly.
JODIE: Yeah?
PETER: Ugly.
STEPHEN: Dog.
JODIE: Really?
STEPHEN: Dog.
JODIE: Now, now for me, that has, whether or not it's right, would it be a male perspective?
STEPHEN: No, both
JODIE: You'd say it for both?
STEPHEN: Yeah I'd say it for both. But I wouldn't say a male is attractive or unattractive, if you know what I mean. Cos other people, girls, think that males are attractive or unattractive and I'd just say dog, he's a dog, she's a dog, he's a dog. So dog.
JODIE: Fair enough

PETER: He's a sly.

JODIE: Sly? What do you mean by sly?

PETER: Nasty.

KAREN: He means cruel.

LYNNIE: Minch.

STEPHEN: Arlarse.

JODIE: Pardon?

STEPHEN: Arlarse.

JODIE: You're saying some funny words. 'Arlass'. Now what's 'arlass'? I've never heard of that before.

STEPHEN: Snide. Cruel, yeah. Arlarse.

LYNNIE: Shady, shady. On top, sly. So "bang on" our Chamonix says.

STEPHEN: Bang on, yes.

LYNNIE: You're "bang on" which means you're out of order

PETER: You're a "nugger".

JODIE: You're a...?

PETER: A nugger.

JODIE: And would you say that with your friends?

PETER: Yeah. Say if they snogged off on you, 'You're sly, you little snog off!'.

JODIE: What about like obviously if someone was um, let's have a look, if someone was lacking money, what would you say that they were?

PETER: A stig, a tramp.

JODIE: A stig or a tramp. What about yourself?

STEPHEN: Skint, broke, a dolite.

JODIE: A what?

STEPHEN: A dolite.

JODIE: Where's that from?

STEPHEN: That's someone who is on the dole. Like gets dole and doesn't work. Just like a dolite.

JODIE: What about yourself Lynnie?

LYNNIE: Skint. Skint.

JODIE: You know if you're pleased? What would you say if you were pleased about something?

STEPHEN: Made up. Happy. Over the moon.

LYNNIE: Chuffed.

KAREN: I'd say, "made up".. Happy.

JODIE: What about if you're annoyed?

KAREN: Fuming.

JODIE: What would you say if you were annoyed?

PETER: (Laughs)

JODIE: Go on, say it.

LYNNIE: Go on Pete, say it.

PETER: Pissed off.

JODIE: What about yourself?

STEPHEN: Pissed off.

JODIE: When was the last time both of you were annoyed about something?

[Child interrupts]

STEPHEN: Er, just the other day when the bank had me off for money, so I was fuming then. I was on fire. I was really pee'd off then.

JODIE: When was the last time you were annoyed?

PETER: When I got grounded.

WOMAN: He was too.

JODIE: For a genuine reason though.

PETER: What?

JODIE: For a genuine reason though.

PETER: Yeah

JODIE: Yeah. We'll move on from that shall we? Yeah go on then! What about, what would you say if you were cold or hot?

PETER: Freezing and boiling.

KAREN: Freezing and boiling.

STEPHEN: Boiling.

JODIE: Yeah? What about if someone is left- handed? What would you say for someone who's left-handed?

STEPHEN: Left-handed.

KAREN: Left-handed.

LYNNIE: Left-handed.

JODIE: What are you?

PETER: Left-handed.

JODIE: Exactly. All right then, let’s move on. What do you think about um, have we done attractive? Have we said attractive? What did we say for attractive?

KAREN: Fit.

STEPHEN: Sexy, fit, gorgeous. Can’t think of any more.

LYNNIE: Fine.

STEPHEN: Fine,

LYNNIE: Pretty.

PETER: Pretty

JODIE: What if you saw someone across the street that you really liked the look of?. What would you say to your mates?

STEPHEN: She’s fit her. Or... I’m not going to say the other thing.

LYNNIE: Babe.

STEPHEN: Yeah, she’s lovely. Um...

JODIE: Would you really say, “She’s lovely”?.

MAN: No I wouldn’t. I’d say, ah, she’s fit her. I wouldn’t half Uhhmm! A bit of xxxxx Can’t think of nothing else. She’s fit, she’d get it.

JODIE: Fair enough! What about a friend? What would you...? How would you describe a friend? What would you call a friend?

STEPHEN: Me mate. Me mate.

JODIE: Linnie, if you were phoning a mate, what would you say?

LYNNIE: Me mate, definitely.

KAREN: I’d say me mate.

PETER: Me mate?

JODIE: And a group of friends?

PETER: Me mates. Me crew.

LYNNIE: Compadres.

JODIE: Fair enough, that’s what you’d say.

KAREN: Me crew.

STEPHEN: Boys, me boys, yeah.

KAREN: Or me homies – now we’re back to homies. Posse.

JODIE: What would you say for the word ‘insane’?. Is there a different word that you would use for insane? Does that mean something a bit different than going mad?

PETER: Just going mad. Up the wall. Crazy.

JODIE: What about you? Does insane mean something different? Have you got a different word for it?

STEPHEN: Going off her head. Going off your head. Yeah, just going mad. Nuts. Crazy. That’s all I can think of.

JODIE: Karen, what about yourself?

KAREN: Throwing a mental.

JODIE: Fair enough.

LYNNIE: Going mad.

JODIE: And just one last question. Let’s just check that we’ve definitely gone through these words. So, we’ve done rich. Have we said moody? What would you feel if you said moody?

STEPHEN: Moody. That’s all I’d say. Moody.

LYNNIE: Stressed. Stressed. PMT. Yeah. Narky.

KAREN: Stressed out. Narky. Cheesed off. Not in the mood.

JODIE: Fair enough. OK what would you say then for a word for something that you’ve forgotten, so it’s either someone you see walking down the street towards you and you’ve completely forgotten their name or there is something that you want, you know, like for Pete to pick up and you’ve completely forgotten the word for it. “Pick that xxxxx” or “who xxxxx is coming down the road?”

KAREN: Thingummyjig

LYNNIE: Thingummybob

LYNNIE: What’s its name

STEPHEN: What’s its name.

JODIE: Do you normally use that? Do you normally forget things?

STEPHEN: Yeah. If you see someone walking down and “There’s whatshisname over there. Oh whatshisname?” That’s it.

What They Wear

JODIE: Let’s go on to “what you wear” now shall we cos that is quite a good one. OK let’s start off with “a child’s soft shoe worn for PE” what would you, what would you say for that?

LYNNIE: Pump. Pump.

KAREN: Pump.

STEPHEN: Pump

PETER: Trainee.

JODIE: A what? Sorry?

PETER: A trainee.

JODIE: What are those?

PETER: What you wear on your feet.

JODIE: And do you wear them all the time?

PETER: Yeah.

JODIE: Describe them for me.

PETER: Loads of people wear trainees. They've got laces and, just trainees.

KAREN: Fascinating.

JODIE: Pardon?

KAREN: Fascinating.

JODIE: Is it? Do many of your friends wear them?

PETER: Yeah. Loads of me mates wear trainees.

KAREN: Karen, do you think there's, obviously you say pump but you know...

KAREN: We wore pumps when we were young.

JODIE: Say that again sorry?

KAREN: We wore pumps when we were at school, pumps, and now the kids wear trainees. It's just...

LYNNIE: And in primary schools they still have to wear pumps for school.

KAREN: Or plimsolls.

PETER: [Inaudible]... trainees.

LYNNIE: They don't. It depends on the mother. But in secondary school it's trainees isn't it? You can wear trainees.

PETER: I wore trainees when I was in...

JODIE: Say that again.

PETER: I wore trainees in primary school,

KAREN: Did he?

JODIE: What about yourself? Did you wear pumps when you were at school?

STEPHEN: I wore pumps, yeah. When I was in juniors.

JODIE: What about, what about, like kind of when you walk down the street or that kind of thing, or when you leave the house or whatever, do you wear?

STEPHEN: I wear trainees, trabs.

JODIE: What do you wear?

STEPHEN: Trabs.

JODIE: And what are they?

STEPHEN: Trainees, kecks. They're trousers like trackie bottoms.

JODIE: Have you got any other words that you can think of, especially about the stuff that you wear?

STEPHEN: Clobber. Clobber. All that I am wearing now is me clobber. That's what you call your wardrobe, you've got all your clobber in your wardrobe.

JODIE: What about the name for "a young person in cheap trendy clothes and jewellery". If you saw somebody walking down the street in cheap trendy clothes and jewellery, what would you say?

KAREN: She's minted.

LYNNIE: A Scal.

JODIE: A what?

LYNNIE: Scal,

JODIE: What's that?

LYNNIE: Scally, just you know, people that are follower of fashion. Steve's the epitome of Scallyness.

JODIE: Why? What's scally?

STEPHEN: Just wearing trackies and going an' all (aside) ... yeah, following your mates, following the group, yeah.

WOMAN: Fashion, it's fashion in it?

JODIE: It's what?

LYNNIE: Fashion. Even though it says, where you've put, (refers to Spidergram) "cheap... young person", it doesn't automatically be cheap trendy clothes, it's sort of the fashion isn't it, and you would say, you look like a Scally, because that's what generally people of their age look like.

JODIE: So as in you're saying as in, "Their age", you're saying 14, 19, you know, what you're saying, teenagers?

LYNNIE: I know old Scallies. I know 40 year old Scallies and it just depends sort of on how they dress but it is isn't it. Our Karen's a mother of three and she looks a bit of a Scal today!

JODIE: So what defines a Scally? Is it a case of wearing trackies or is it, I don't know, certain clothes? I mean obviously you've got a football shirt on there. Is that... What's that about? If you saw somebody else walking down the street with a football shirt, would you instantly say something to them?

STEPHEN: No not really.

KAREN: It's how they wear them.

LYNNIE: It's how they wear them cos they can see like them business fellers in they would have a Liverpool shirt on, maybe jeans which can be either, but they'd have bad trainees on so they wouldn't be a Scally, would they, because they ...

KAREN: They would have to be stylish. To be a Scally you've got to be stylish and you've got to be in on it.

LYNNIE: You've got to have the latest trainees on so you can see someone in a football top with a pair of Dunlop green flash you would not be a Scally.

PETER: I'd say "Get away now"!

JODIE: Why, all right, explain that because obviously I don't understand that. Explain that, why is that not a Scally?

LYNNIE: That is not a Scally because the trainees are outdated. They're like, you know, not even last season. Or my husband tried to buy me a pair of pink and white trainees from Lidl's

KAREN: The Red Cross Shop.

LYNNIE: Lidl's , called Mercury or something pink, for a fiver. Now, there is no way on this earth would I would wear trainees but my husband doesn't care, cos he doesn't go in for it but he was saying "Why if they're good trainees?" and I was saying, "No way, am I wearing pink and white trainees that are a fiver but he wouldn't have it. So I think it goes on sort of, you know, sort of by the shoes. So that's me.

PETER: Say if someone come into school with a grapper (?) pod on or something like that.

JODIE: A what?

PETER: Grapper (?) crap shoes, you'd just – upside down Nike tick 'n all that - you'd just laugh at them, and say, "Where did you get your sneakers from lad?" and just ...

Family Relationships

LYNNIE: Chavvies is children. I wouldn't use it. But common people would! LAUGHTER I can't stand the word!

JODIE: What did you, like, kind of, what word did you have for your mum and your dad back then?

LYNNIE: Just mum and dad.

KAREN: Mum and Dad,

JODIE: What about you? What do you call your mum and dad?

PETER: To me mates, me ma and me da.

JODIE: What about yourself?

STEPHEN: Me ma and me ah'feller

JODIE: Why that?

STEPHEN: I don't know, cos he's an old man, he's me ah'feller. It's just backslang isn't it? Instead of old, old man, it's ah'feller.

[INAUDIBLE VOICES]

PETER: Your brother. Your kid. Your kid.

JODIE: What about, let's go on to some of the other words. You were saying about, obviously you've got mother, what about grandmother and grandfather? What would you call your grandmother and your grandfather?

PETER: Me nan and me granddad.

STEPHEN: Me nan and me granddad

KAREN: Me nan and me granddad.

LYNNIE: Me nan and me gran.

JODIE: So it's not really much of a change but when it kind of comes to the mum and dad then there's a little bit of leeway.

LYNNIE: We used to call me granddad, gran didn't we?

KAREN: Or gramps.

LYNNIE: Gramps.? And that was it like but we just called him gran because it was shorter. It was easier.

Generational Differences

JODIE: So you are obviously working with people, with youths, yourself so you are going to have, you know, kind of build a rapport with them yourself, aren't you? You're going to have to build up a relationship with them. Erm, that, I guess that's difficult as well, isn't it, in its own way?

STEPHEN: It is. Trying to get to speak to them first, but with me coming from like the same background as them, I can just go up to them and I can just talk, say "What's happening, what've you been up to?" as though I am one of their boys, as though I'm one of their mates, so I am like on the same wavelength as them. So it's easier for me.

PETER: So if you went to work in a pub in Widnes and someone come in and you'd say, "What would you like mate?" they say, "What are you going on about, I don't even know what you are saying". But say cos you're in Speke and you know how to talk in Speke, then it's easier..

JODIE: Lynnie, you work with youths. Is it, I mean obviously for yourself – you know, not like our chap here, you know, who is 19, he can get on well with youths and stuff - do you find it difficult or do you find it easy to build a rapport with kids?

LYNNIE: I think, it's just about being on their level isn't it? It's like, even though I don't go, "Now then kids what's happening?" because that's not how I talk generally, it's respecting how they talk, but actually I think it's just about being yourself because some of the things they yell, you think, "What are they yelling on about?" and you have to say, "What does that mean?", because even though I think, even with having a 13 year old. daughter, I'm aware of what's going on, they still come out with things, and I go like... you know if they are hungry they go, "I'm going for a fat munch.". Like, a fat munch! What's a fat munch? They come out with like bizarre ones, the kids that I work with, and I'm thinking, "What is that about?". He said before, "It's a beast", which means it's good. Or they'd say, "It's laughing" like, "It's laughing," like it's OK and that just means it's good, and that they are happy with it. Instead of saying we're happy or we're buzzing, they'll go "It's laughing". So it's just getting used to all them things that they say.

PETER: Cheddered.

LYNNIE: You're cheddared. Cheddar cheesed. Made up.

PETER: Yeah.

LYNNIE: So you see I've never heard that one but you'll soon be able to pick up what they mean just by...

PETER: You're buzzing.

LYNNIE: You're buzzing. It's just being... I don't think... you bring yourself to their level but you don't have to change who you are cos I don't go, "Now then kid, what's happening?" and I don't think the kids would like me to either

JODIE: Karen, obviously yourself with two youngsters - erm, three youngsters sorry - and your husband. With being a housewife, that is... you 're a housewife, is that correct?

KAREN: I look after the elderly.

JODIE: You look after the elderly, well then you've got a completely broad range there, that you've got to speak to them, and use certain words that, you know, kind of, everybody understands then, don't you?

KAREN: I just be meself and show them respect cos they show it to me. The people I look after are from Liverpool anyway, so they understand the way I speak and I understand the way they speak.

JODIE: Do you think there is a difference in generational, like kind of words that people say? For example your parents or the people that you look after, the elderly to the way that your son and your daughter speak or the way that your daughter speaks or the way that, you know (?)

speaks?

KAREN: But I understand the difference, so I respect the way they speak and they respect the way I speak.

JODIE: Give me some examples though of, like, kind of...

LYNNIE: The old people say “Me smalls”, for their underwear, don’t they? “I’m going to go and rinse me smalls”, and it’s like... and they say “I’ve got to go and get the groceries”, instead of the shopping. So we would say shopping and they would say, “I’m going to do me... get me groceries.” What other ones do the old people say? What do you think, right, what do they call it, different things? They say TV instead of telly. I don’t know whether the first TV came up and that stuck. And they’ll say, erm, what do they say for the radio? The gram or...

KAREN: The gramophone.

LYNNIE: The gramophone? Even though it is a radio, or...

PETER: I think it is quite a difference between, like, me mum and me auntie Lynn timer, and I think me and him are quite alike cos they’ve lived longer than us and they quite talk quite different.

LYNNIE: But me and your mum aren’t different are we?

PETER: No but me mum and me Auntie Lynn timer talk like the same, and me and him talk like the same as well. It’s cos youse come out with different words than us.

JODIE: In what way? What, think... what do you know, kind of words that they come out with that are completely different to yourself? Or the way that, you know, your dad or your mum speak that’s completely different to you, or even your grandparents? Cos, you know... how old are you?

PETER: 13.

JODIE: 13. And you’re 19 and obviously there is a completely different age difference between Lynn timer and Karen.

STEPHEN: There is, there is a difference between the age gaps and that in the way we speak because like Lynn timer said before, there’s times where people our age are coming out with words and Lynn timer hasn’t got a clue what they, what they are. ‘What’s that mean?’ It’s like people, like older people, the older generation, they haven’t got a clue what we are talking about half the time and we haven’t got a clue about the words that they come out with. There is a difference.

[Child speaks.]

KAREN: They’d say the parlour. The parlour or the lounge.

LYNNIE: Instead of the front room. Where we would say, “It’s in the front room or the back room”. They would say “the parlour”. It’s a parlour house or... And they call a hall a lobby.

KAREN: They say “Cheerio”.

LYNNIE: They say “Cheerio” instead of “Tarra”. They say the lobby, don’t they?

JODIE: What else do they say?

KAREN: The lounge.

LYNNIE: Old people? I’m trying to think. Me grandad’s been dead a couple of years.

KAREN: Cafeteria

LYNNIE: I’m trying to think what me grandad would say for words.

JODIE: What about clothes? Do they use any certain words for the way that they dress maybe, for like maybe the trousers that they wear or maybe...

KAREN: Well, they wouldn’t say pants, they’d say trousers. They wouldn’t say skirt, they’d say petticoat for underskirt.

PETER: They wouldn’t say bills(?) cos they’d say boxers.

KAREN: They’d say underwear or smalls.

PETER: I’d say, “What the hell were smalls?”

[Child speaks]

KAREN: They’d say overcoat, they’d say jacket, they wouldn’t say coat. They’d use the way they were brought up with it.

Playing Games

JODIE: OK what about if we went on to play a game or hit hard. I mean what games do you play these days?. Do you play games? Do you play out on the street? Do you sit down, and...?

PETER: We play football.

JODIE: You what, sorry?

PETER: Play football and other stuff like. Sometimes you just play deadarms or something like that.

JODIE: And what’s that?

PETER: You punch them on the arm, and the first one to give up, or something like that.

JODIE: Oh all right. That sounds quite painful! Lynn timer do you remember that?

LYNNIE: I can remember me brother giving me a dead arm but I can’t remember ever playing it for fun!

KAREN: I never played that, definitely not, I don’t like pain!

JODIE: What did you use to play when you were at school?

KAREN: Skipping. Two balls.

LYNNIE: Two balls. That was quite popular wasn’t it? Our Karen cleaned up when she was little. She was Cinderella. What did we play? Usually making up shows.

KAREN: Hide and seek. Hide and seek or kick the can.

JODIE: What was that?

LYNNIE: Where you kick the can, and... I can’t remember how to play kick the can. It would definitely be antisocial behaviour now. Anything that we played when we were kids would be antisocial behaviour now.

JODIE: You laughed then. Why?

STEPHEN: (laughter)

JODIE: What kind of games did you play? I mean obviously the games that the kids play these days, do you think there is any influence about, you know, what they do than what they used to do in the past?

STEPHEN: I don't have a clue. I play togethnow(?), that's footie. Games I played when I was a kid? Manholes. I think the games were different back in the day from what they are now because everything just moved on, hasn't it? Er, dunno...

LYNNIE: Kids play less now don't they?

JODIE: Say that again.

LYNNIE: Kids play less but also kids play outside less. And they can't amuse themselves as much as they could without costing money, I would say, because basically they've got video games.

KAREN: Play stations.

LYNNIE: They've got loads of stuff to keep them in the house so when they're out they're bored so they get up to no good, whereas we were thrown out to play cos you didn't have video games but you amused yourself without money cos you played...you were happy with two balls which cost 30 pence each and you could play for hours with a piece of rope as a skipping rope. Now kids will play for like 5 minutes, say they're bored cos their retention and their... now it's like, well I reckon if we got kids skipping it would last, you know, 20 minutes and then they'd be bored. Where we would just play skipping all day.

PETER: Something... what was I gonna say? Yeah, when you get grounded, right, and when you, when you don't get grounded, you don't feel like going out, but when you get grounded you wanna go out bad.

KAREN: Like you are at the moment.

LYNNIE: Yeah, Pete is grounded, aren't you Pete? For drinking vodka on the dunnies. Way to go, Pete! (Laughs.)

JODIE: What about grounded? I mean like obviously that, you know, when you were grounded was that kind of something that's obviously...I mean I remember being grounded when I was a kid. Do you remember being grounded when you were kids?

KAREN: I got grounded for a month, a full month.

LYNNIE: I did as well. Both of us did for a full month and we weren't allowed to go out. A full month!

KAREN: And we got a beating as well as the grounding. You're very lucky

LYNNIE: We did. For a full month and we were not allow to move out.

KAREN: We had no tellies in the bedroom. No playstations. No gameboys. Nothing.

LYNNIE: We had broken into the school, mind! We were little horrors by the way, weren't we? We were naughty. We're not now, but we were.

Review of the Doyle Interview

BARBARA: One thing that I've noticed you do exceptionally well in your interviews is you will often build on what people are telling you.

JODIE: Yeah

BARBARA: So you'll almost just throw the words in, in the course of having a conversation and there are a number of cases where people are actually telling their story...

JODIE: Yeah.

BARBARA: They've almost forgotten the chart.

JODIE: Which is brilliant. If they can do that or if you can swing it your way it is always a better thing to do. It's preparation. Obviously with me five or six interviews, that spider diagram is becoming a part of me, I know what is going to be talked about. So if you can go through that spider diagram, or go through some words that you think are interesting and make sure you are familiar with those words before you go into the situation so that if someone starts talking about their kids and obviously the conversation is going to flow into family so you can throw grandfather and father into there and you can throw about friends you know, and then it is a case of talking about people then. So it's always about trying to match the words with familiar conversation.

BARBARA: Yes, not being afraid to go with the flow.

JODIE : Yes

BARBARA: I thought that was something you did so well because perhaps you had an idea of the order that you were going to do things in.

JODIE: Yeah

BARBARA: But when it didn't quite work out that way, you went with it.

JODIE: Yes.

BARBARA: And if you wanted to come back to something you came back to it

JODIE: Yeah

BARBARA: And you weren't afraid to say so. You say, "Well I think there was one we forgot there."

JODIE: Yeah

BARBARA: Or, “I wonder if we’ve covered everything?”

JODIE: Ye. It’s making sure you’re not afraid of obviously talking, saying things that you forgot. It really is a case of being yourself. You’re in their environment. Obviously it’s a bit different for you but you want to keep them at ease. Now if they are going to go off at a tangent, if they are going to be telling a story, for me it was a case of working through the sheet, from right to left, so it was working round the sheet clockwise, but if they were going to talk about, I don’t know, the fact that it was raining yesterday after they had gone to toilet and something about, you know, and then they went to bed for a sleep, well that’s three words that they have already used and the spider diagram’s completely lost. It really is a case for the interviewer, is to make sure you cross through the words as you are going through them. Making sure you’ve said what you’ve said, and if you want to have a pause to think exactly about where you are, don’t be frightened to have the microphone, let them talk, let them talk over what they are talking about. Let them keep discussing stuff and but just quickly look down on your page and quickly tick off the words that they are using so that you know where it’s going. It’s a case of you controlling the interview basically. You know where words are being used and where the interview is being taken.

BARBARA: Yeah, I think it’s quite a balancing act between being in control and actually appearing very relaxed.

JODIE: It’s a fine line. It really is but it’s not something to be scared about or nervous about. It’s a case of throw yourself in there and see what happens to be honest with you. Make sure you cover the words. It doesn’t matter if there are pauses, let them speak for a long time because sometimes if you interrupt someone they might have been about to say something that they have just remembered and they don’t want to talk over you. They might be scared to talk over you because you’re there and you’re trying to control the interview so sometimes, don’t say anything at all and that’s normally the best way to do it is to just let them speak freely.

BARBARA: There were a number of times when you just let things run on even though perhaps they weren’t quite on the topic that you thought you’d gone in to talk about but you got some really nice recording.

JODIE: Yeah

BARBARA: Maybe it wasn’t about the words on the list, maybe it was about other parts of people’s lives but you’ve got something really nice there so I thought the way you handled that was fantastic. You could bring people back on track but not until you felt that they had had their say..

JODIE: Their say...

BARBARA:...about what made them excited otherwise you’re losing a glorious opportunity.

JODIE: Exactly. I mean when it comes to words, it’s a case of, how does it affect them? How do they feel that the words affect other people? How its been a generational thing? How local do they feel? Do they think words mean anything? Where did they get this slang from that they use? It’s not just sticking to the spider diagram of words it’s exploring where those words have come from as well. And then sometimes they bring out the best stories.

BARBARA: Yes because at several points you actually get people to talk about language. What they understand by it, what they feel about the words they use, the accents they have.

JODIE: Yeah.

BARBARA: And how they change their language how they are aware of changing their language, or not which is always worth spending a bit of time talking through with people I would imagine?

JODIE: It is and not only that it is interesting as well. Interesting for me to find out and if you don’t listen to what they are saying you may miss something.

Just the smallest word from Linnie talking about backslang. Well I have no idea what ‘backslang’ means. Well if I don’t have an idea what it means, I’m sure there are half a dozen other people who don’t know what it means. So therefore I’m going to go down that path, I’m going to go down that route of exploring. If it is interesting to you then it is going to be interesting to other people.

BARBARA: There were one or two other points where you actually followed a line, where you pick people up on something they said, you said, “Well what did you mean by that?” Or, “Did I hear that right?” The ones that I remember were when one of the boys talks about attractive or unattractive women and he actually uses expressions that you can hardly believe would be his natural choice.

JODIE: Mmmm I know.

BARBARA: So you challenge him in that and say, “Isn’t that a little bit of a male perspective!”

JODIE: Yes.

BARBARA: Would you really say “Lovely!”

JODIE: Lovely! I know that was quite funny actually and you’ve got to have a laugh with these people. You’ve got to sa, we’ll he’s an 18 year old lad. He’s a big lad. He’s an attractive lad. If he’s going to walk down the street, he’s not going to say, some girl walking towards him, is a “lovely” girl, so you know, it’s just picking up and having a laugh and saying, “You wouldn’t really say?” “What would you say?” And then obviously he opens up and says “I’d say, that bird” and all the rest of it and then it gets amusing and also you’ve got a nice little tale as well. He’s expressing to you the way he would speak to his mates, so it’s nice.

BARBARA: The other nice thing that you were not afraid to do was to say, “OK we don’t have the grandparent’s generation here but let’s just ask people, what would your gran have said, or what does your mother say?”

JODIE: Yes.

BARBARA: So you actually drew out of people things that they knew but didn’t necessarily use themselves.

JODIE: Yes, or weren’t present like you said with the grandparents.

BARBARA: You often covered one or two topics that could have been quite sensitive like playing truant or being grounded. Certain expressions that are quite strong and I noticed that you never passed any kind of judgement about what people said, in fact you almost went to the opposite end of trying to empathise with that situation, “Well I was grounded too and I don’t know if you have ever done this, I don’t know if you have ever stolen things, I don’t know if you have ever played truant”, but, so you were deliberately not passing any judgement.

JODIE: No. Like I said before it is a fine line between what you feel you can say but you have to remember the group of people that you are with. If it is a family, if it is a mixed diversity group, if it is, I don’t know, travellers or in an old people’s home. You need to remember to have respect for the people that you are with. You need to remember that obviously they may have their own way of dealing with things, their own religious aspects, they may have their own beliefs, they may have a younger generation there that you cannot swear in front of the children. You’ve got to remember so many things so when it comes to asking some of the sensitive questions like pregnancy, like drunkenness, like truancy, it is a case of not trying to imply anything because you don’t want to put the back up of people because you are in their home or you are in their environment and so obviously you don’t want the interview end because you have gone and said something.

BARBARA: Or indeed embarrass people in front of other members of the family.

JODIE: Or embarrass – exactly, exactly. When I actually arrived and the lad actually came downstairs his mum was the one to say, “He’s been a bit of a naughty one this one, he’s been grounded,” or whatever, so I wanted to obviously test the water and see myself before the interview started whether or not this was a touchy subject. So I said, “If you don’t mind me asking, what he’s been grounded for?” Well everybody started laughing. It was because, you know, he was caught drinking, drinking vodka at the back of some hills or something or the back end of a field, so I knew straight away that it was a bit of a joke so when it came to the fact of being grounded, I gave him a bit of a nudge and said, “I hear you’ve been grounded. Do you want to tell me a bit about it?” Well left the question open. If he doesn’t want to speak, that’s fine, and have it as a bit of a joke, “Never mind don’t worry about it”, or move on to something different. Always having it, as a bit of fun. But if it comes to any of the other words, not a case of tread carefully but just be aware of where you are and who you are speaking to.

BARBARA: Yeah I think you summed it up when you said respect and putting people at their ease and we can hear you doing that at lots of points, sharing a joke.

JODIE: Yes exactly.

BARBARA: And sharing an experience.

JODIE: Because you have to remember where you are. You have to remember that, you are being taken in by people that don’t know you and obviously, when you put those first calls out to find out who would be interested, well the majority of people they’re not doing it for any other reason but that you have asked them. They’re not getting anything out of it, it’s you who’s getting the interview out of them so you do have to be mindful of their time and obviously not to waste it and to make sure that they also enjoy the experience.

BARBARA: Can I ask you something different. There are a number of times during the course of the interview when something totally unexpected happens like somebody walks in through the door, the baby starts to cry and anybody who listens to the full recording will hear all these things happening although obviously in the little extracts its now always so apparent. How do you deal with the unexpected?

JODIE: Well you have to deal with it to be honest with a smile. It really is a case of goodness gracious you can see the gentleman walking to the door, you can see he is about to press the doorbell, he’s walking in, that’s great, you’re talking about something very interesting and then there is all this noise. It literally is a case of, “Don’t worry about that, yes of course, come in, sit down and settle yourself in. Umm, what were you saying again? Let me remind you. It was something about, I don’t know it was something about playing football in the street. Can we go back to that a second?” And get them to open up a little bit. Backtrack. Don’t be afraid to kind of go back over the ground that you have already covered so that you’re content, your recording, once you’ve edited it or once you wanted to take that little piece out seems seamless.

BARBARA: Taking it in your stride.

JODIE: Exactly. I mean if the baby starts crying or if she’s bumped her head or there’s always the case that you turn up and there aren’t enough people but you’ve always got to have a plan I guess. Whenever I’ve gone to interview a number of people or groups I’ve always made sure there are more numbers there than need to be so that when the people are there, like a family situation, well, it doesn’t matter that Dad’s not talking because he didn’t want to in the first place but he was there just in case.

BARBARA: I mean obviously when you are recording people it’s very nice if you can give them a copy of what you’ve recorded because that’s quite an incentive for them to take part and they have a memento of the event.

JODIE: Yeah and sometimes they like listening to themselves and listening to other people taking part as well so it is always a bonus if you can say, “I can throw in a copy as well”.

BARBARA: And in years to come these things become even more precious.

JODIE: Yes exactly.