

Notes on Italian Interviews

No.	Summary	Comments
1	<p>A man in his 70s wife was present in the interview. They have a son and a daughter. Talks about the work experience he had here and Italy. Lived apart from his family for 15 years but went to visit them. Came to Canada to give his son a future. They would be upset if children married non-Italians. Gave a house to his son when he got married. Children and grandchildren speak Italian very well. Elders are not put in retirement homes but they would like to go because they don't want to be a burden to their children. Not interested in going back to Italy. Wants to be know as Canadian Citizen but they have Italy in heart.</p>	<p>He talks in depth about economic situation since his arrival. Immediate family was analyze in depth. Most question were targeted at family situation and expectation. Wife added few details the husband wouldn't. Answered questions honestly and in detail. Didn't hold anything back.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - translate "Abruzzi" –is it a place name or region of Italy or reference to Italy? (p. 5) - Interviewer makes an interpretation (p. 6) about R.'s feelings about not having a male grandchild. I think we should keep her factual additions, but not the interpretation.
2	<p>Women, almost 70, visiting from Italy but lived in Canada before. Married and have 3 children. First person in her town to come to Canada. Never worked in her life. Surprised at the number of Italians living here well off. Doesn't want to move back to Canada. Unity and having a united family is important to her. Identity is Italian.</p>	<p>Interview not in length (5 pages). Talked about the comparison of how Canada was before in 1950 and now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - interviewer stresses that her husband made the decisions. This is repeated a few times (pp. 1, 2, 4). Some evidence in the content of the transcript. Suggest deleting some of these comments. Also suggest omitting comment on p. 4 about a conversation recalled between interviewer's father and respondent's husband. Should we make use of interviewer's prior knowledge of the respondent? - Example of how I'm using two types of brackets in the transcripts. p 4. Round brackets for non-verbal description of the interview. Square brackets for interviewer's comments. Need to make sure this is consistent for all interviews.
3	<p>Male, one of the founders of Fogolar Federation of Canada (Cultural Organization). First Friulano then Italian. Never been married which is rare. Full time organizer of the Organization. Produce to preserve culture and heritage. Mutual benefit society , funds come from Italian government. To preserve culture he thinks Friulians should marry other Friulians.</p>	<p>He made a discriminatory comment regarding southern Italians to the interviewer prior to the interview. Talked about the organization in detail and depth. Seems like a strong believer in the organization. Never talked about himself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interview ends abruptly at p. 4. Part missing? - Another good example of interviewer notes describing how she knows the respondent. - Delete interviewer comment on p. 4 where she interprets R's views as "snobbery." - Language of interview is not stated. Sometimes she gives alternate words in brackets. Could be because of a translation difficulty, or her own interpretation... not sure. Believe the interview was in English, because Italian interviews were noted.
4	<p>Husband and wife in their 70s. They came here in the 50s and work was hard to find. Two sons. Came to Canada looking for work.</p>	<p>Talked about their son who is still not married. They were worried. Asked question to the interviewer to see if she was interested in him. A</p>

	Talked in detail about wedding differences from then and now. Don't want to go back to Italy because no close relatives.	<p>lot of information about weddings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This is a brilliant example of cross purposes and motives of interviewer and respondent. Shows that respondents' motives in the interview may be as strong as the interviewer. Interviewer did not discourage the couple from trying to set her up with their son because it revealed much about their interests and beliefs. Yet finally, on p. 7 she returned to her own course of questioning. - Interesting discussion of funeral arrangements and purchase of cemetery plots. Parents' death arrangements are discussed in close association with sons' jealousy.
5	Female, 63 years old, widowed and has one son and two daughters. She recently lost her husband. Daughter was present at the interview. Brother who lived here already called her here. She was engaged to her husband for 8 years. They married for love and had a good marriage. Her children are all married. Two of her children speak Italian and they don't follow Italian customs much. She wants to retire here and stay here with her children. Canada is her home.	<p>The daughter added some comments. Talked about how Montreal Italians celebrate weddings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who is Gianni Lombardi? (R. comes from his home town.) (p. 2) - Daughter who participates in the interview has married an Iranian, non-Catholic. Mother expresses preference that children's and grandchildren's spouses be Catholic. Illustrates the accommodation that is practiced in families.
6	Female, 88, widowed, has three boys and three girls. Husband came here first looking for work. When the depression hit, they lost everything and practically begged. They opened a post office and served mostly Italians. They used to go on picnics with other families. She says divorce is too easy and people don't try hard enough. First child dies in Italy. Three oldest children speak Italian imperfectly, but grandchildren do not. Only one of 18 grandchildren married an Italian. Family is the most important thing to Italians. She loves Toronto and would not leave it for any other place. If a pride in being Italian continues, there will be a future for the upcoming generations.	<p>Referred to her house owner as "Jewish woman." She and her husband bought cemetery plots for themselves and their children so they could be together after they are all dead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of interesting references to gender relations in the interview, including the story of buying cemetery plots. Story also indicates closeness and priority of parent-child relations, and parents providing for children as a way of achieving their togetherness.
7	Husband and wife, have three daughters. Lived in Windsor first then moved to Toronto. Have many Italians and non Italian friends but its easier to communicate with Italians. All children are married. Husband thinks weddings are too much nowadays. Only few of their grandchildren speak Italian. Have some relatives living in Toronto. Staying united is important. Wants to live in Canada because their family is here. They have dual citizenship but want to be known as Italian.	<p>Ideal family an Italian should have is with two boys and two girls. Talks about how a mother watches out for her children and how young people should watch out for the kind of people they associate with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - husband remarks that children may intermarry, "as long as the person is not black" (p. 5). - Comments on sibling jealousy parallel interview 5.
8	Female, 54, widowed, two sons and one daughter. Never worked outside the house.	Daughter was present at the interview. Daughter and the interviewer talk after the interview

	<p>none of her children are married. Husband saw her in a festival and decided to marry her. There is no order in marriages nowadays, when they married it was for love. Doesn't favour divorces. All the children speak Italian. Unity is important. She feels like an Italian but a Canadian as well.</p>	<p>finished. Daughter is a Italian teacher. Thinks today's youths are not attached to their customs. Says she put up with a lot because she is a women.</p>
9	<p>Female 59, married, has two sons. Her sister sponsored the whole family here. Likes to promote Italian language therefore likes to speak in Italian. Came for children's future. Thinks weddings are more flashier nowadays. Both sons are not married.</p>	<p>Childcare was #1 priority. Short interview.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incomplete interview. Ends abruptly at p. 4. - Interview reinforces some aspects of other interviews. Particularly interesting is her discussion of gender patterns (p. 3): women "keep peace" and act "passive" whereas men are "tough." She's fatalistic about these roles, but says younger women have changed. May want to include interview for these passages even though it is incomplete.
10	<p>Husband 62, wife 56, a son who died when he was 20, and two daughters. Settled in Northern Quebec first then moved to Toronto. Worked in the mines, talks about the hard time he had working there. Owned a grocery store. Wife's parents didn't approve of their wedding because he was Italian. Unity staying together. Not interested in going back to Italy because he has no one there. All his relatives are here.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - he argues that his wife's marriage to him was better than any of his wife's sisters' marriages because his wife now owns a home whereas none of the sisters do. This comparison is telling: he takes home ownership to be indicative of marital success. Also mentions his wife's hard work as a related to their successful union. (p. 4) - wife's discussion of Quebecois and Italian cuisines is richly revealing. She laments loss of practice of French cuisine because of her intermarriage (cooking for husband is major aspect of patriarchal marriage relations), but she notes that the younger generation is interested in neither French or Italian traditional cuisine. Homogenization of culture through consumer practices and changing dietary standards/beliefs (e.g. low cholesterol) are stronger forces of assimilation than intermarriage. (pp. 5-7) 	<p>Wife is French Canadian who speaks Italian fluently and follows Italian customs. Husband is very traditional. Mentions that John Deifenbaker was the prime minister and those times were hard. Sold the store because couldn't stand to work in the same place where his son worked who passed away. Wife talked about making home made jams and tomato sauce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - respondent forgot the year of his marriage; gave the wrong date. Questioned by interviewer. Good example of how respondents don't always supply the correct "facts" about their lives (p. 3). Interviewer may need to check and do follow up interviews when there are inconsistencies or contradictions, or when things in the account don't add up. - Interview ends abruptly at p. 4. "Document error" note. Skips to last section. Will it be possible to retrieve these partial interviews.
11	<p>Second generation, male. Critical of certain aspects of the older generation: large weddings, regional marriages, Italy's position in the war, macho men, members of his generation who are still dependent on their parents or living in the parental home. Drastic change in ideal number of children:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In her comments the interviewer openly states her expectation about the interview: second generation Italians are "losing" their culture. She is surprised at the result of the interview, but explains why this particular respondent is an exception to her hypothesis. Use this as example of the complexity of

	<p>parents are from large families, they had two, his sister is in her 30s, but has “lots of time.” Inter-ethnic marriage is expected in his generation. His parents’ marriage is between two regions of Italy... he’s aware of the different branches of his cultural/genetic heritage (e.g. not identifiably “Italian” by appearance. Notes the Jewish and Austrian roots of his family). Even though intermarriage might not seem like an issue, it is interesting that he is highly aware of ethnicity and sub-ethnicity. E.g. his sister’s husband (third generation Ukrainian, Irish). Ethnic origins are clearly important to him.</p>	<p>qualitative research, and the need to state one’s expectations at the outset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tells story of parent’s marriage that depends on telling father’s name. Find pseudonym for “Luigi”, p. 3. - R. comments about the Anglicization of his name from Lorenzo to Larry. We need to find appropriate substitutes for these names. Pseudonyms for all interviews? - Rich narrative. Some aspects of interview not covered because he is unmarried and without children. This interview may be an example of the kinds of results students will get if assigned to interview members of the second generation who are their age (early 20s).
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