



*Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca  
Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per la Toscana*



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## Qualification for Minor Migrants Education and Learning Open access On line Teacher Training ( QuaMMELOT)

# FOCUS GROUP

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## Definition

“The Focus Group is a qualitative data collection technique, used in social research, which is based on information emerging from a group discussion on a topic or topic that the researcher wants to investigate in depth”

Zaummer, 2003





## Focus Group a qualitative research method

The source of information is not the individual subject but a group of people.

### The qualifying elements

Interaction between a group of people  
Presence of one or more moderators  
Focus on a specific topic





## Focus Group a research design

Instrumental use in the initial phase of research

### Definition of the research design

- To bring out a series of hypotheses to be submitted for empirical verification
- To grasp concepts close to the life experience of the subjects
- To identify the range of possible opinions on the topic and the socio-cultural differences
- To take on language and patterns conceptualized by the target





## Sampling in the focus groups

### Quantity of the sample and groups

The number of focus groups is difficult to predetermine rigidly

The research team decides what are the characteristics that participants must have.





## The Focus group stages

HOW to utilize FG and WHAT to do with the data that they produce. This section present some useful guidelines to use for QuaMMELOt project

Focus Group can be executed in:

1. Planning
2. Conduct of the interviews
3. Analysis of the data



- The planning is critical for Focus Group success because, in this phase, the researcher considers the intent of the study and the users of the information, besides developing a plan that will guide the remainder of the research process, including the elaboration of the subjects and the participants' selections.
- The interview phase consists of the moderation of the meetings.
- After the sessions, in the analysis phase, the researcher take the transcripts of the meetings, evaluate them and articulate them in a report.



## Generale Objectives

The planning begins with reflecting on the purpose of the meetings.  
The researcher ponders such questions as ( Krueger, 1994):

Why should such a study be conducted?

What types of information will be produced?

What types of information are of particular importance?

How will this information be used?

The answers to these questions are then organized in a logical way





## The number and size of the groups

The number of groups is one of the first topics of the planning phase to be discussed.

With respect to the number of participants in the session, the usual approach is to use groups of moderate size, ten to twenty people.

**We have 3 groups with ten / twenty people**

Uniformity of the participants: identify the participants who represent the group of teachers and who do not behave with many variations.

A measure in which the selected participants will provide valid information for the research.







## Duration

The duration of the Focus Group can go from half an hour to about two

It is possible to create subgroups of participants





## The role of the moderator

The role of the moderator is **non-directive**

The intervention is marginal , the moderator provides indications  
The intervention is limited, makes targeted interventions on the dynamics of interaction of the groups

The role of the **managing** moderator

The intervention is broad and there is considerable control of the content of the discussion( for example, he raises specific questions on the dynamics of the group)





## The questions

The questions are the essence of a Focus Group interview. They should seem spontaneous for the participants, but have been selected carefully and elaborated as a function of the expected information.

Typically, an interview in a FG will include about twelve questions.

The questions can be classified in the following categories:

Opening questions	introduce the general topic of discussion
Focus questions	address the study. They are of two to five questions
Ending questions	close the discussion
Summary question	
Final question	

Source: Krueger, 1994





## Elaboration and analysis of the collected information

- The information must be processed at the end of each Focus Group
  - You can look for feedback from the participants at the end of F.G
- The ideal basis for analysis is in the integral transcription of F.G.

Method of analysis: construction of a reading grid, analysis of the content





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## The interview content

A list of topics or a line of questioning may be used to conduct the sessions. The topic guide lists words or sentences remind the moderator of the topics of interest.

This approach seems more spontaneous for the participants and is more appropriate when the moderator treats all the sessions the same.

Differing approaches may cause bias in the results.

The same line of questions is used for a series of sessions with the aim of obtaining similar content, which allows more efficient analysis

Use of the topic guide is most appropriate when the moderator of the sessions is not always the same.



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## The questions

### **The questions are the essence of a FG interview**

They should seem spontaneous for the participants, but the questions must be selected carefully .

Typically, an interview in a FG will included about twelve questions. The questions can be classified in the following types:

Opening questions

Introductory questions

Key questions

Ending questions

Summary question

Final question



## Time allocated for schedule of activities

### Example of chronological plan

**Planning** To develop the plan  
To elaborate the questions  
To identify the participants

**Interviews** 1st session  
2dn session  
3rd session

**Analysis** To transcribe  
To process data  
To analyze the data  
To write the report

Source: adapted of Krueger, 1994

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