

Analysing the commission and constructing the problem statement

Exercise

MODEL ANSWER

REMINDER OF THE INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Analyse the commission:
 - a. Identify the polysemous terms.
 - b. Comment on the validity of the questions asked (in terms of form and content).
 - c. What clarification questions would you ask?
- 2) Prepare an interview with the commissioner of the study by formulating a dozen questions that you would like to ask her.

MODEL ANSWER:

1) *Analysis of the commission:*

- a. **Polysemous terms:** territory, place
- b. **Comments on the commission statement**
 - "Agri-environmental measures" imply that if subsidies and other forms of aid are withdrawn, efforts will no longer be made to keep the area open or maintained. And thus that without incentive measures, actors will have not necessarily have the will to maintain the area?
 - "inhabitants and local actors": there is a mix of different types of users.
 - "The notion of sylvopastoralism": it is not a notion!
 - A researcher supervising the students during this study made the following comment: *"The question of the CPIE and the technicians, "How do you think agropastoralism will evolve on your territories?" is presented to actors on the Causses. However, the word, 'agropastoralism' is technical jargon that is not used in everyday French. Of course, the practice was known to farmers well before it was first given a name by a researcher or technician, as farmers always have used all accessible space to feed themselves and their herds, including the forests, but, in my opinion, the approach of an outside technician is understood inside this word. There is thus a strong chance*

that farmers will assess this approach rather than the notion itself. I understood that during my surveys in Cameroon: as soon as I used the word, "Forest" in French to speak about the bush, I saw peoples' faces close up, even after it was translated into the local language. As soon as this word was pronounced, the interlocutor thought we had come to create a nature reserve or to impose on him all kinds of constraints. Others imagined the arrival of a project and the benefits they could draw from it. Very few imagined that we were simply talking about the evolution of the wooded area that they visited every day, and even fewer the perceptions that they had of it..."

c. Clarification questions:

- "on the Causses Méridionaux territory": territory in what sense of the word? A geographic or anthropologic approach. How did the manager appropriate this term?
- "information campaigns": under the framework of "nature" weekends? For which actors? Are there conflicts of interest that require additional information for the actors of the Causses region?
- "complementary management activities": Complementary to what? For whom?
- "The commissioner is a stakeholder": what role/function does our study play/fill? Are we seeking to legitimize the activity of the CPIE? How do livestock farmers and land owners perceive the CPIE and its activities?

2) Preparation of the interview (with the responses given by the CPIE director, the commissioner of the study in italics)

- Who will the study benefit?
→ *"The study will feed the discussion of the association's technical committee and board of directors, composed of elected officials, socio-professionals, and associations".*
- What concretely is the aim of the study? Can you flesh out the objectives that you have indicated to us?
→ *"The study will serve to discover the views of the people questioned regarding the evolution of the Causses and, in particular, of pastoralism, in order to take them into consideration in the definition of activity programmes to implement on this territory."*
- Who are all of the people involved?
→ *"I will give you CPIE's flyer and my April field report in which all of the partners and members of the CPIE are listed. They are the ones who are concerned most of all."*

- In your opinion, what are the stakes of the study for these different people and groups?
 - *As we operate in partnerships and have the status of an association, we are accustomed to being reactive. There are no negative repercussions, only an enrichment of information that will facilitate our discussions. Furthermore, in terms of symbolism, the association has now been operating for 15 years. It therefore would be interesting to pause and take stock. You should know that in parallel to your research, we are working on a strategic plan for the next four years.*
- How sensitive is the topic that you have confided in us?
 - *"It is not a controversial topic, but we are worried about the evolution of agriculture financial and regulatory mechanisms. In addition, agropastoralism in the Mediterranean area often does not enter into any category of planned assistance grants at the national level. Our form of extensive agriculture in a Mediterranean climate really is special.*