# Use of Remote Video and Graphics in Qualitative Interviews

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RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

# Background Information

I wanted to do a study of social networks of Deaf Entrepreneurs. The goal was to obtain rich descriptive data about these networks and generate a grounded theory from that data.

Budget, time and resources were an issue. If I had to fly to each city to do the interviews, it would cost significant amounts of money and time.

Got some funds through the NTID Scholarship Portfolio Development Initiative (SPDI) to purchase the coding software and to help pay for the transcription of ASL interviews.

First, I researched different methodologies to do social network analyses. The one method that resonated with me was the one in which visual means were used to help depict social networks.

# Method- Qualitative Interviews with Sociograms

The use of a visual social network map in conjunction with a qualitative interview gives a broader perspective (Hintermair, 2009).

The problem in trying to get information about networks is that networks are complicated to explain verbally.

The network map provides an easier way to comprehend and accurately describe one's social network for both the participant and interviewer (Hintermair, 2009).

Since the participants were Deaf, it made sense to find something that was visually based.

The participant is in complete control of the construction of these maps.

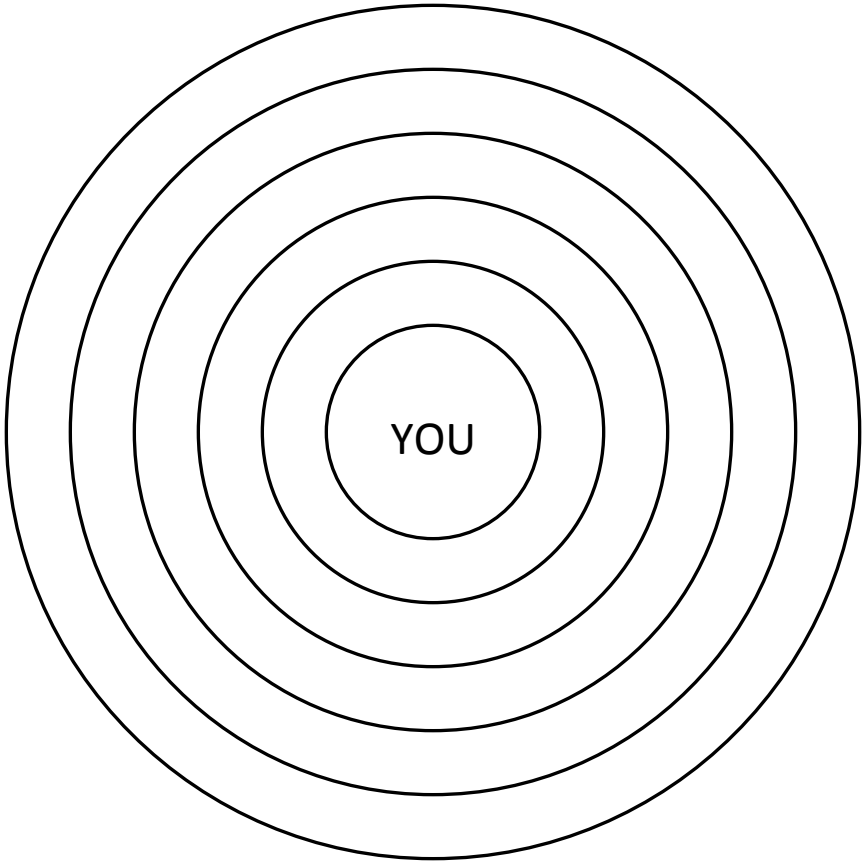
# Method

For the purpose of the study an ego-centric (Wellman, 1993) network map is constructed (participant in the center of the map). This is called a sociogram.

Normally, tools used are a big piece of paper with seven concentric circles and push pins.

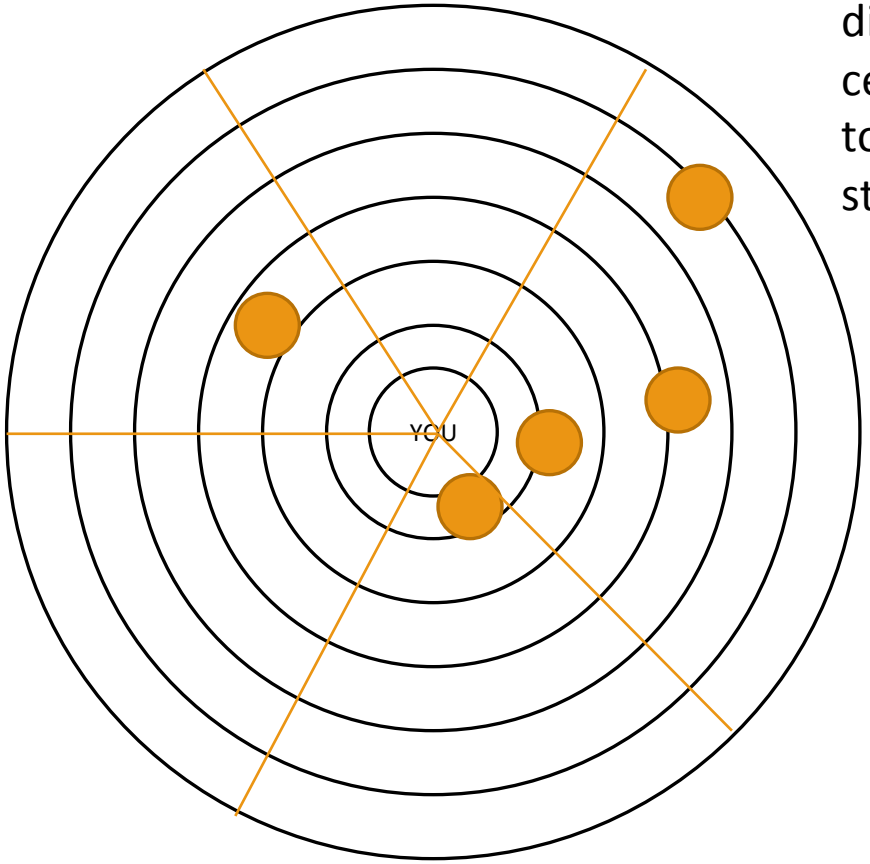
Since I was trying to find a way to do this from a remote distance, I needed to find a way to allow participants to draw on these sociograms via video. (more about this later)

Ego-centric Sociogram



Small circles represent individuals within network in relation to strength of tie to the interviewee

Ties measured in relation to the interviewee (YOU) by distance from the center. The closer the tie to the center, the stronger it is.




In an actual interview, interviewees will be given blank sociograms and colored stickers and labels. This will help in the visual depiction of their network as they explain it in detail

Lines used to separate specific groups (vendors, customers, family members, etc).

# Options

Last spring, I talked with Wesley Blue of the Sprint Learning Center about various options.

- BlueJeans
- Adobe Connect
- Skype
- GoToMeeting
- The use of Video Phone software used for VRS and Point to Point Video (this seemed to be a good logical option since most Deaf people have VP).

# Selecting the Best Option

Adobe Connect was selected:

- This had the ability to support both video and graphics. This option provided the best option to allow participants to draw on the sociogram.
- This was fully supported by RIT through a commercial licensing arrangement.
- This allowed the participants to participate in the interview and have complete control of the sociogram.
- This allowed for me to record all of the interviews for transcription purposes.
- This required the participants to have a video camera on their computer or tablet.

# Process of Study

Recruited participants for study through different organizations (National Association for the Deaf, Facebook group (Deaf Business Owners).

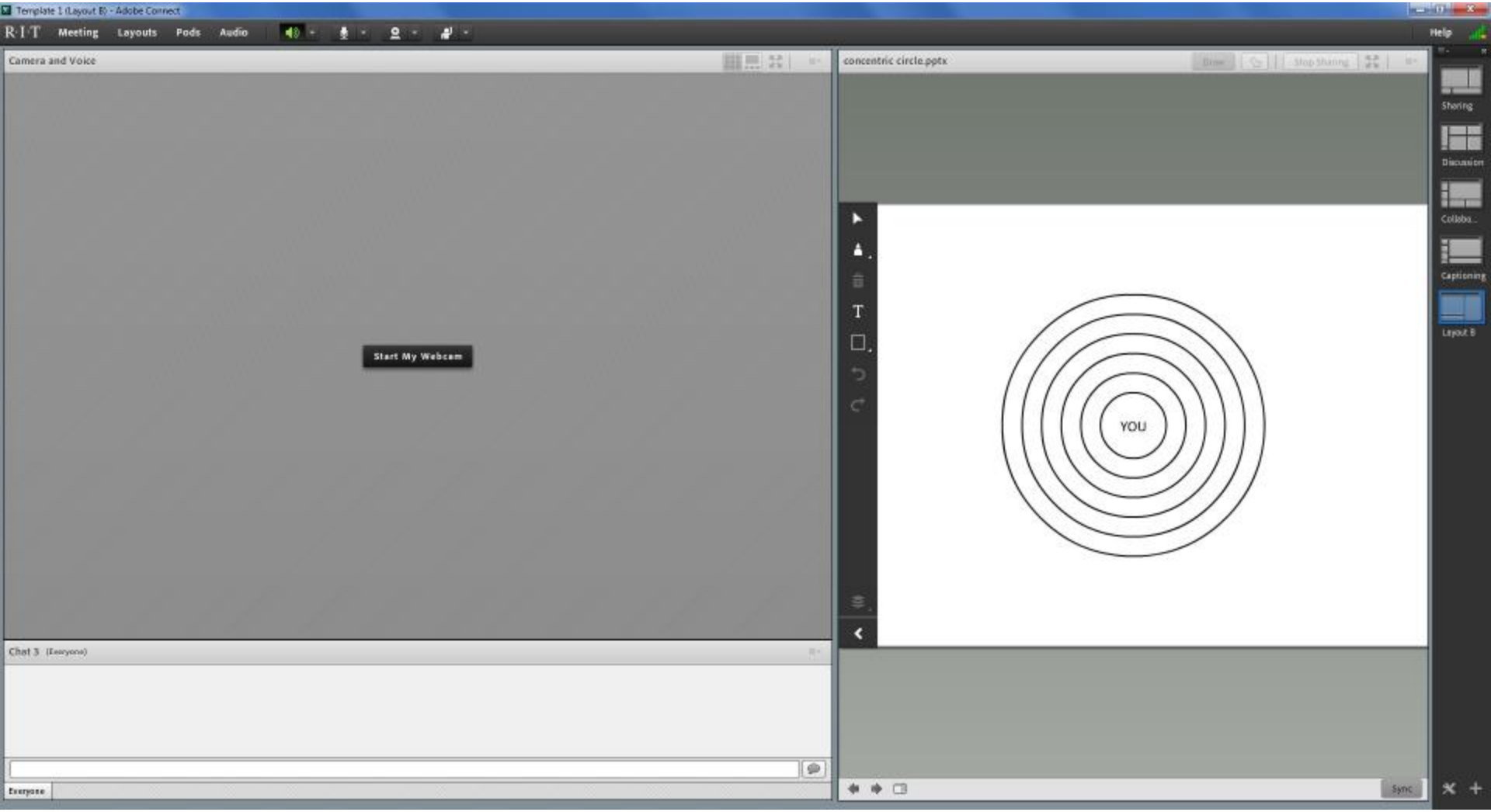
Each participant received an email with the following:

- Description of the study
- Technical requirements
- Consent form

Each participant was able to log into Adobe Connect using an unique code.

All Interviews were recorded and the transcriptionist had access to these interviews remotely.

Transcripts uploaded to NVivo for coding.


Template 1 (Layout B) - Adobe Connect
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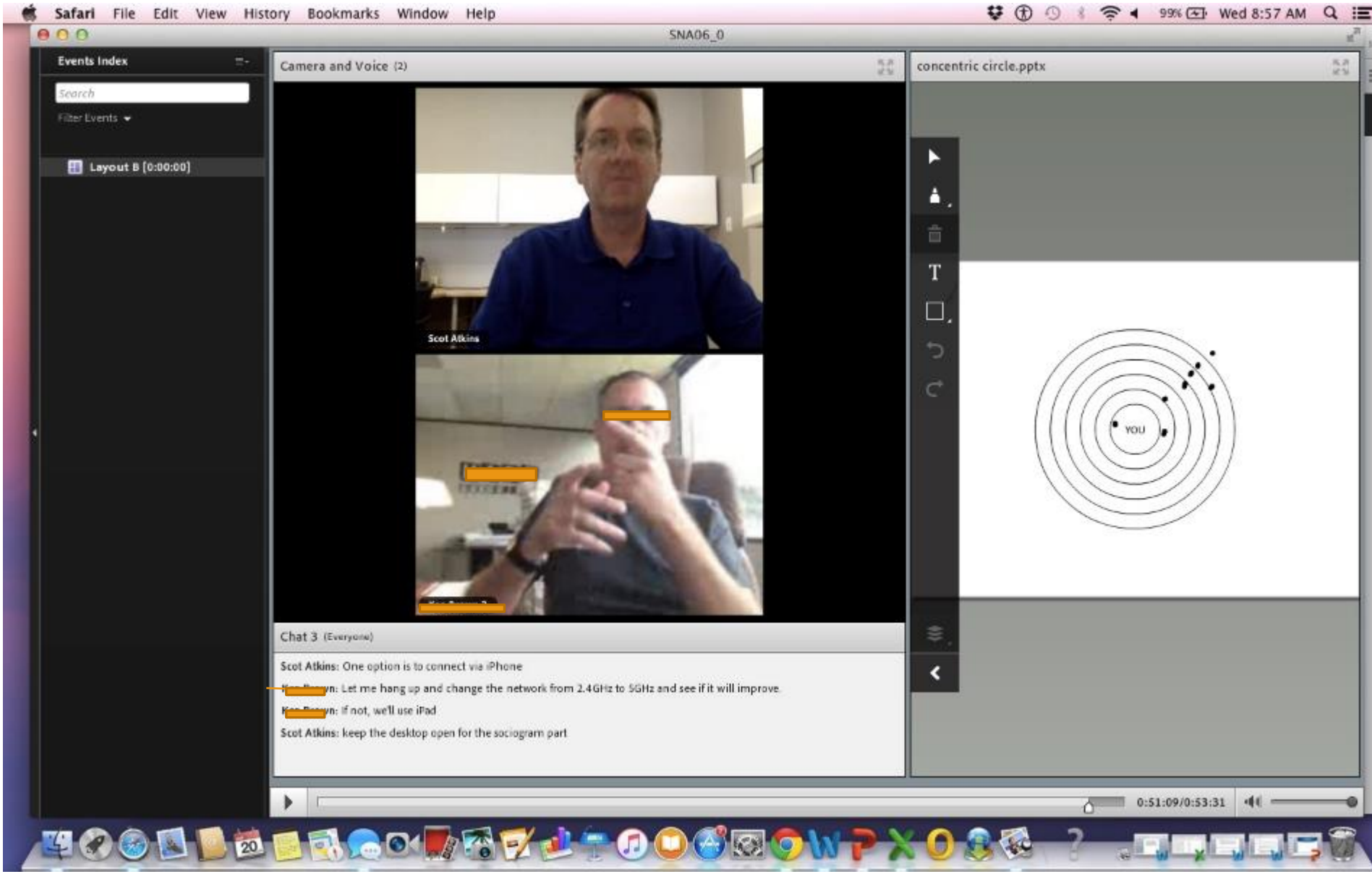
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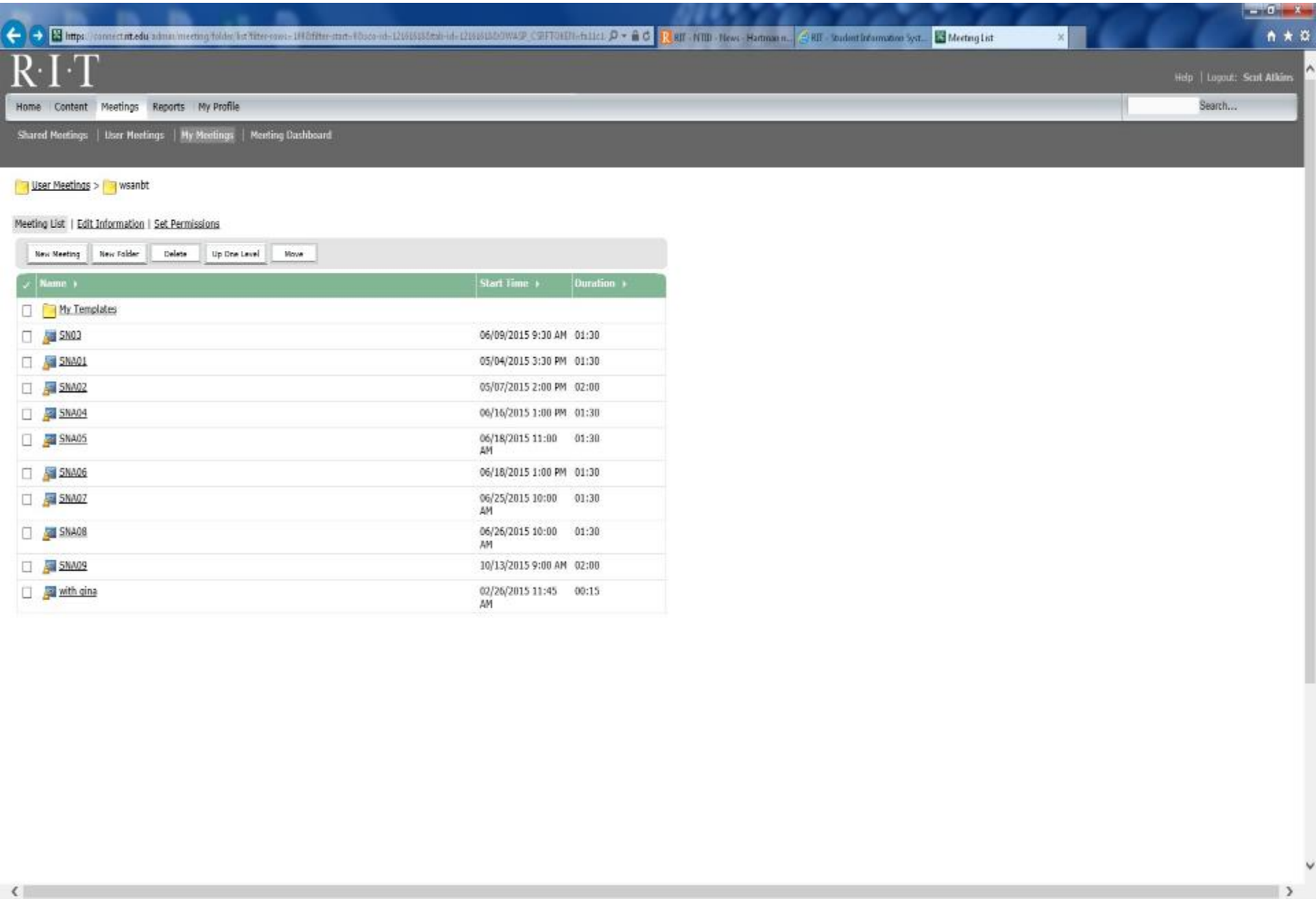
YOU
Chat 3 (Everyone)
Scot Atkins: One option is to connect via iPhone
: Let me hang up and change the network from 2.4GHz to 5GHz and see if it will improve.
: If not, we'll use iPad
Scot Atkins: keep the desktop open for the sociogram part
0:51:09/0:53:31


R·I·T
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# Strengths of Process

The method was very well received by the participants in the study who thought it was beneficial to see their own network in a visual form.

Able to store all interviews indefinitely with the use of protected password.

Support available for Adobe Connect through RIT licensing agreement.

Helped with the iterative process of coding- easy to go back and review the interviews.

If you are proactive and give instructions ahead of time, the process works well.

Quality of videos was for the most part, good.

Ease of ability to schedule at anytime! One interview was with a deaf business owner in Tokyo, Japan.

# Challenges

Bandwidth for a few of these participants were a challenge. Some of these entrepreneurs work out of coffee shops.

It helped to have a list the technical specifications for the participants (pre-emptive) ahead of time.

One participant had to get up and use the rest room- the recording got cut off when the recording was paused.  No fail-safe way to avoid this- you need to double check and triple check!

# Outcomes/Next Steps

I have data for a preliminary analysis. Need to conduct more interviews to achieve data saturation for a complete analysis.

Goal is to generate a grounded theory with this data.

Final outcomes are to publish articles and to present at peer-reviewed conferences.

# Recommendations

Research several options and find the best option that fits your method.

Work with technical experts to help you evaluate your choices. They will think of things that you would never have thought of.

Test, test and test!! Try different environments for testing. For example, test using coffee shops, home, etc.