Interviews

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Louis Theroux behind Bars (2008)

Goals

- **When** are interviews useful?
- **How** to do interviews?
- **What** is difficult about interviews?
- **How** to collect data?

Exercise

Team up in pairs:

- Conduct **5 minutes**, mutual interviews with your peer
- Topic: **»How was your start of the semester?«**
- Try and take some **notes** during the interview.
- Discuss 5 minutes **what is difficult**

How useful?

Complement observations

- Clarify »What is going on?«
- Ask for explanation

When observations not **practical** or **acceptable**

- Sensitive situations, eg doctor's visit (or prison)
- Unpredictable situations
  difficult to schedule for the right time,
  eg telemedicine consultation on acute patient
- Wanting to access a greater number of participants

How useful?

Exploring issues **not so easily observable**

- Experiences, attitudes, values, opinions, knowledge…
- Events that take place over extended time, when you can't be there

Types of interviews

Quantitative - structured

Follow strict set of questions, no deviation

Qualitative - less structured

Unstructured (open questions)

Semi-structured (leading questions)

Researcher skills

- Asking questions in a way that don’t suggest answers
- Active listening
- Follow leads

Unstructured Interview

- **No** interview **guide**
  (Although researcher is aware of the overall focus)
- Often used in **conjunction** with observation in fieldwork
- Conducted as an **informal**/impromptu conversation
- Triggered by **emergent** situations, for clarification etc
- To conduct initial **explorations**
- For basic **understandings** of work/culture/terminology
- To be able to **identify** what things might be important

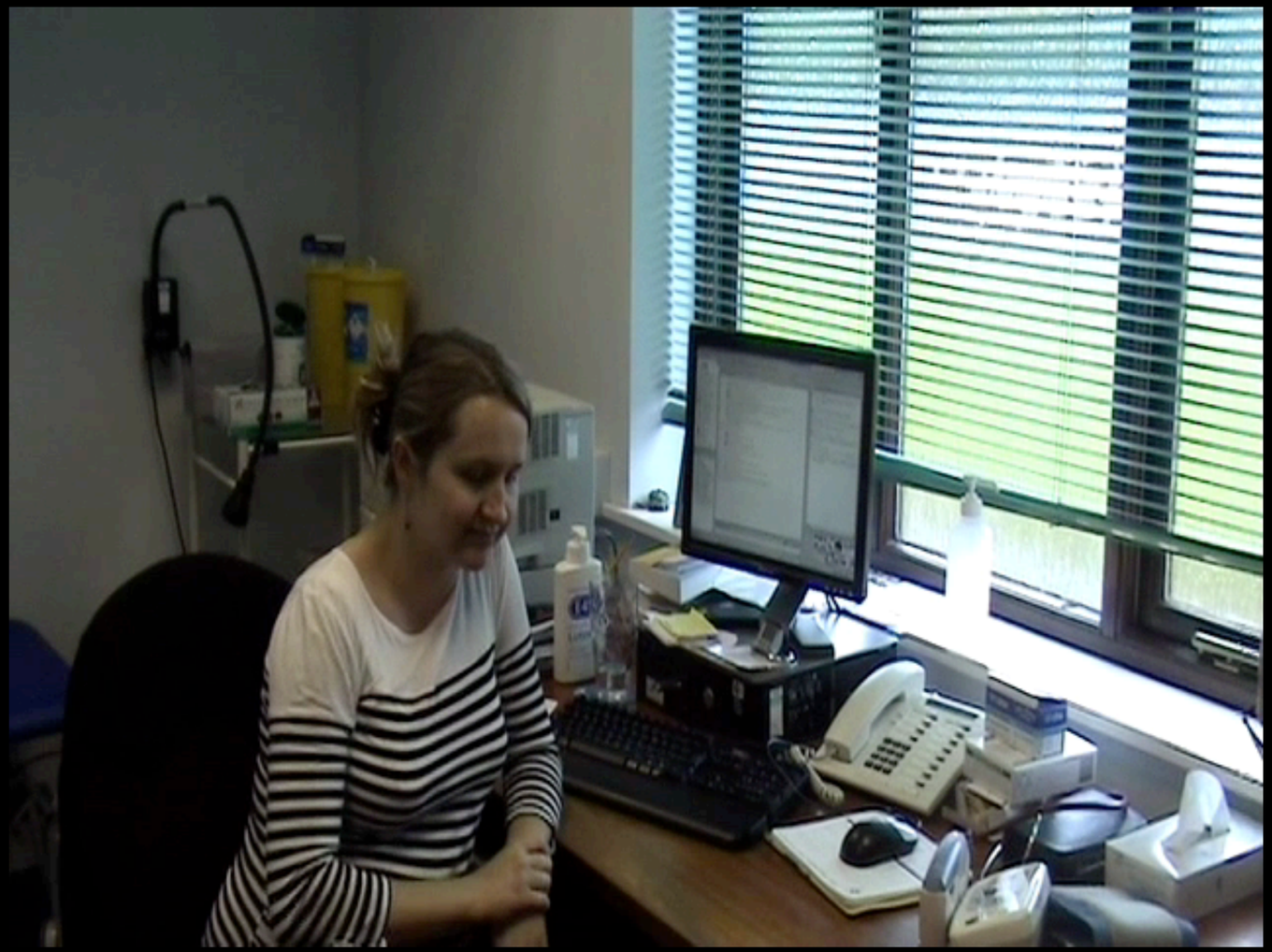
Un-structured interview

Semi-structured Interviews

Also conducted as a conversation, but with a stronger sense of what questions to ask (leading questions, core themes etc in the **interview guide**)

On **location**

Often best in the **participant's own context** (eg office, home etc) because you can be the visitor conducting contextual enquiry. Also surprising what you can see (eg. post-its on screen, papers, notes, etc). But can be anywhere.



Semi-structured interview

Interview Guides

- List of broad topics and themes to explore
- Example questions
- Overall aim/sense of what you want to get at
- Deviations from guide encouraged!
- Serves as a back pocket resource if/when needed

Look at the examples in TUWEL

CHAWTON: 'Back-pocket' guideline questions for the kids
July 12 2006 trial

NOTE: please state your own name and the name of the child into the tape at the beginning of the session.

Expectations
What were you told about today and what did you expect?

Overall experience
- so how was it… tell us all about what you've been doing today
- what bits did you like best? why?
- how would you explain what happened today to your friends? [*might be an alternative way to ask about overall experience and what they understand if you don't get a reasonable answer above*]
- what things have you learnt today?
    - *(about chawton house, history, jane austen, technology, how to write…)*

Discussion of story writing aspects [and trying to get at how experience/activities helped]
- Can you show me what you have done so far with your story writing
- Can you talk me through the story ideas you have
- What places inspired you most for your story
- Can you talk about the different activities you did… which ones did you like, why
    - *Reminders: Audio clips, recording your own role plays, writing in your books,*
- How do you think they helped?
    - *Hints if not getting an answer: did they help with knowing about Chawton, about the history, about ideas for story writing*
- How do you normally go about getting ideas for story writing?
- How does this compare?
- How do you plan to develop your story from here? What things would help you?
    - *Trying to get at whether they think they would like access again to the clips they heard/recorded, or to images or whatever*
    -

Differences to other fieldtrips - general
- When was the last time you did a fieldtrip?
    - What was it for? Where did you go? What was it like? Do you like them?
- How does this trip compare with that other fieldtrip?

Differences to other fieldtrips – focussing on media/tech
- How was doing the fieldtrip with the device different from walking around with a clipboard?
    - *(assumes they've walked around with a clipboard)*
    -

Teachers role
- Something about what role do they think their teachers played in all this? How is it different to the role the teachers normally play?
    - [*thinking of kids last time saying they could almost hear their teachers' voices]*

Usability of technology: iPAQ [skip this if running out of time]
- have you used a device like this before?
- what was easy about using it? what was hard? why?
- when did you look at the iPAQ?
    - *(need to get at, did it distract them from their surroundings)*

Understanding of the technology: the networked experience
- How do you think the technology aspects of the fieldtrip worked?
    - *Trying to get at their perceptions of*
        - *how it worked, their understandings,*
        - *whether they had any sense of whether the system 'knew' where they were or not and how it did it or why it did it?*
        - *Probing on how they interpret 'location' cf the infrastructure view of location (might be hard to do this)*
        - *Did they feel it was leading them or they were leading it?*
- Did the technology behave/respond in the way you expected it to? Were you surprised by anything the device did?
    - *(information they received, when they received it etc?)*

Final reflections
- So any final comments?
- Any suggestions for we might be able to do it better or differently next time?

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- How does thi

Differences to
- How was doi clipboard?
    - *(a*
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Teachers role
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Usability of te
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- when did you
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Understanding
- How do you t
    - *T*

- Did the techr surprised by
    - *(i*

Setting up

- Approaching people **takes time**
- **Contacts are precious** - treat them well:
  be punctual, open, welcoming and friendly... smile :-)
- Double check your **equipment** and bring **backup**
- Be **respectful** of participants' time
  stick to time-frame
- Ask **permission** to record (video, audio, notes...)
- **Introduce** yourself, explain why you are here

Asking questions

- Importance of the **first question**
  sets tone, puts them at ease, gets them talking
- **Start easy**: eg. what they do, a typical day...
- Move on to more complicated / **controversial** topics
- Ask questions about the **present** before questions about past or future
- Value of appropriate **humour** and **small talk**
- **Follow-up** and seek to clarify when necessary
- Awkward **silence** is part of the game
- **Last questions** to bring up any other issues they think might be important or overall impressions/opinions...

Open vs Closed Questions

CLOSED

»Do you like that?«

»What is it that you like and dislike about that?)«

OPEN

Neutral vs Opinionated

Neutral

»What is it that you like here?«

»Wouldn't you say that this is pretty good?«

Opinionated

Simple vs Complicated

Simple

»What is it that you like here?«

»In case you like what you see, what would you think could this button do, and should it not be red or better white? Of course, we can also put it on the back, hide it a little...«

Complicated

Best friend questions

»Tell me more about that«

Why? Encourages people to go deeper and unpack

»And what else?«

Why? Encourages people to move past the obvious top of head answers, to think more

Mind and body

Be **mindfully present**

Be **relaxed**, breathing slowly, sitting/standing comfortably

Be **focussed**

- Listening actively and intuitively
- Be comfortable with silences, don't rush to fill them, gives time and space for further reflection

Be a **reflective practitioner** What worked (not so) well?

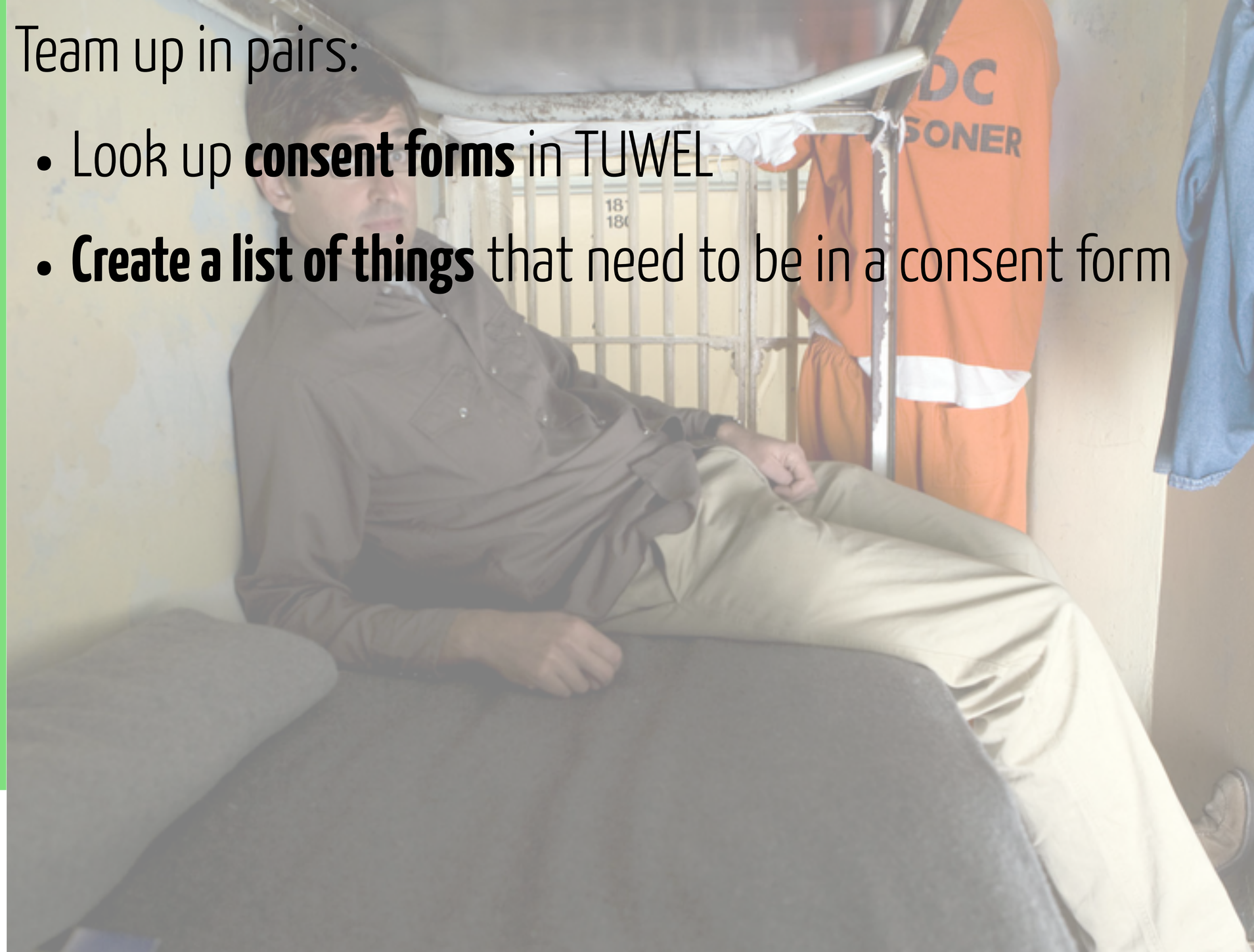
Closing

- **Thank** participants for their time
- Ask if they want to **receive information** about the outcomes / results
- Have some **token of appreciation** to give away
- Pro / Contra **rewards** (financial, credits, flowers...)

Exercise

Team up in pairs:

- Look up **consent forms** in TUWEL
- **Create a list of things** that need to be in a consent form



Consent

- **Who** you are
- **What** you are doing and **why**
- **What** you asking of the participant
- How you will **collect data** (notes, video, audio, logs etc)
- How you will **handle the data**
- Non-disclosure, anonymity, use of images, storage of data, etc
- **Rights** of participant - stop at any time without reason
- Explicit consent for images/video as
- **Contact** details – you and some non-involved other

Research

When Interviews Go Wrong

By Mia Northrop

April 18, 2011 1 Comment 52 Shares

Despite our best efforts to prepare for and run an interview smoothly, there are often challenges that crop up in the heat of the moment. Ideally, our interviewees are cooperative, well motivated, eloquent, knowledgeable, truthful, consistent, concise, precise, and coherent, states Steinar Kvale in his book *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. However, like the *typical user*, the ideal interviewee does *not* exist. Some people are harder to interview than others, and sometimes, interviews drift off into unproductive territory due to factors beyond our control.

> The ideal interviewee does *not* exist. Some people are harder to interview than others, and sometimes, interviews drift off into unproductive territory due to factors beyond our control.

In this article, I'll introduce you to six types of people who can potentially jeopardize the quality of the data you're able to collect during stakeholder and behavioral interviews or usability tests.

- The Chatterbox
- The Clam
- The Pollyanna
- The Unraveler
- The Distracted & Evasive
- The Attitude Problem

The Chatterbox: Identifying Characteristics

People who fit the profile of The Chatterbox

- give lengthy responses to every question?
- won't stop talking—either because they're uncomfortable with silence or unaware they're rambling
- go off on irrelevant tangents
- answer every question with a story, because they enjoy chatting and revealing their whole life story

Problems you might encounter when interviewing The Chatterbox include the following:

- being unable to cover the entire scope of your questions within the allotted interview time
- producing irrelevant material, thus making analysis more difficult

What to Do

Mia Northrop
https://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2011/04/when-interviews-go-wrong.php

Alan Dix

Home about Alan blog code calendar

← Previous Next →

Making the most of stakeholder interviews

Posted on August 29, 2015

Recently, I was asked for any tips or suggestions for stakeholder interviews. I realised it was going to be more than would fit in the response to an IM message!

I'll assume that this is purely for requirements gathering. For participatory or co-design, many of the same things hold, but there would be additional activities.

See also HCI book chapter 5: interaction design basics and chapter 13: socio-organizational issues and stakeholder requirements.

Kinds of knowing

First remember:

- *what they know* – Whether the cleaner of a public lavatory or the CEO of a multi-national, they have rich experience in their area. Respect even the most apparently trivial comments.

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Alan Dix

http://alandix.com/blog/2015/08/29/making-the-most-of-stakeholder-interviews/

VU Exercise

- Team up in **pairs**
- Conduct **2 semi-structured interviews** (1 each)
- Create a **interview guide** together
- Find one of my colleagues at **HCI group** (list provided)
- Arrange a **date & time**
- Interview them about
  what they do and
  how they work (methods & tools)

Put your interview guide on the Wiki

HCI People

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Deadline 25 October