

Virtual Communication for Autism Interview Questionnaire

Introduce the researchers and the research project.

Remind the respondent that they can pause the interview by saying so out loud. They can also skip answering any question they do not feel comfortable with. They can leave the room (or ask the researchers to leave the room) for a short period of time if they would like. They can also stop/terminate the interview at any time.

- Demographics
 - If a student: How far have you come in your education so far? E.g. High school, university, community college, graduate schools
 - If university, what was your major? Why did you choose this major?
 - Do you currently have a job(s)?
 - If so, what do you do for work? What does that look like on a daily basis?
 - How old are you?
- Video Conferencing Experiences
 - What video conferencing applications have you used? (e.g. Skype, Google Hangouts, Apple FaceTime, etc).
 - What devices do you use for video calls (VC)? (desktop + # of monitors, laptop, phone)
 - How frequently do you use video conferencing?
 - For what reasons do you speak to people using video conferencing? (e.g. Fun, work, gaming, catching up, etc).
 - Who do you talk to? (e.g. Family, friends, work colleagues, strangers, etc.)
 - Do you give presentations online?
 - Do you find it easier or more difficult than in-person? Why?
 - Do you watch other people's presentations?
 - If so, do you find it difficult to follow someone's presentation? Why?
 - Other than for presentations, do you ever have video conferences with multiple people at the same time? (e.g., online team meeting)
 - What is your role during these VCs with multiple people?
 - Does it make anything easier or more difficult than in-person meetings or VC with just one other person?
- Likes and Dislikes of VC
 - When you are going to have a VC, what do you anticipate that experience will be like?
 - How do you prepare for a VC?
 - Do you make any adjustments to your environment? (e.g. Ambient lighting, items in background)
 - What are your worries about using VC?
 - What do you like about using it?
 - What do you not like about using it?
 - Do you make any adjustments to your VC application to make it work better for you?
 - (e.g. Screen configuration: open group chat, adjust screen brightness, open up note-taking application)
 - Audio: quality, volume
 - Video: seeing yourself on video, seeing other person, brightness of their video
 - Are there aspects of the VC interface that are distracting to you?

- (e.g. Screen configuration: group chat, sharing screen, presentations, notifications from other applications)
 - Audio quality, volume
 - Video: seeing yourself on video, seeing other person, background objects, pets
- Do you leave the camera on or turn it off?
- Do you try to make eye contact?
- When you're not looking at their eyes, where do you look? At their face? Or somewhere else altogether?
- Do you notice the behavior of your or your partner's web camera? E.g., Auto-centering; auto-focusing of camera?
- Are there aspects of their video that are distracting or irrelevant? (e.g., the person's background, lights, face, hands, eyes, body gestures, body movement)
- How well do you interpret the tone of voice of the person you're speaking with? Is it easier or more difficult in VC than in-person?
- What is the impact to you when there is a technical difficulty during the VC? How much of an impact is it?
 - Internet connectivity
 - Your sound? Your video?
 - Partner's sound? Partner's video?
 - Any other technical difficulties?
- Conversation Topics
 - We think that the content of a conversation affects how difficult or easy it is. We would like to know your opinion of this. Do you find conversations to go differently based on whether they are about "stuff", "people", or "you" specifically?
 - Can you recall differences in talking about things versus people versus you?
 - Can you recall a VC that was about "stuff"? Who was it with? What was the topic?
 - Can you recall a VC that was about "people"? Who with? Topic?
 - Can you recall a VC that was about "you"? Who with? Topic?
 - Which was more emotional? What types of emotions?
 - Comparing these three examples, which was most difficult for you? Why?
 - Can you recall an especially difficult VC experience? What was difficult? Who with; purpose of VC?
 - What made it difficult? (e.g., topic? miscommunication? technology?)
 - Did you end the VC worrying about how it went?
- Reading Body Language
 - During a VC (or FtF if turn off video in VC):
 - Do you find that conversations flow easily? For example, do you follow the conversation easily? Is it easy to know it's your turn to speak? How to end a conversation?
 - What is your experience like reading people's body language? Do you find that difficult or not a problem? Example?
 - Do you have any difficulties reading other people's facial expressions? Tell us about it.
 - What advice do you give to people about interacting with you?
 - Do you think other people have difficulty reading your body language or facial expressions? Tell us about this.
 - Do you wonder (or have gotten feedback) about how loud or quiet you are talking?
 - What is the impact of these difficulties? Do they impact the effectiveness of the pair / group communication and mutual understanding of what's being discussed?

- Are there things you wished your communication partners would do differently to make communication clear or more comfortable?
- Do you get bored during VC? If so, in what scenarios? What else do you do during a VC?
- Other characteristics to probe if participant does not have major issues with any of the above areas:
 - Hyper- or hypo-sensitivity to sounds and lights
 - Difficulty concentrating
 - Difficulty focusing on conversation topic
 - Prefer information delivered as text as opposed to verbally
 - Difficulty figuring out the big picture from the details
 - Difficulty understanding people's intentions or predicting their behavior
- VC Compared to In-Person
 - How different do conversations seem to you when held via VC instead of in person?
 - Do you do anything to try to adapt your communication, body language, or eye contact when in a VC or in person?
 - Does VC change the difficulty you have in reading people's body language or facial expressions? How so?
 - How do you feel about making eye contact in person?
 - Is this easier/harder/same to do in VC versus in-person conversations? Why?
- Preferred Communication Mode
 - Which do you like more, in person or VC? Why?
 - If you could always have your way, what manner would you prefer to communicate with others? (E.g. in person, text, email, phone, audio conferencing, video conferencing)
 - What makes one better/worse than the other? (for each interesting pair)
 - In general, does it take more work for you to communicate in certain ways than others?
 - Do you feel more drained or energized by certain types of communication? Why?
- Autistic Interactions
 - Based on our conversation so far, do your preferences and difficulties change when you interact with autistic people, especially over VC?
 - Do you tend to know if you are interacting with an autistic person, even if they haven't told you they are?
 - Do most people you communicate with over VC know you have autism?
 - Do you try to mask being autistic?
- Closing
 - Any additional thoughts?

Thank the interviewee.