Multisite Videoconferencing between Developed and Developing Countries to Build and Sustain Educational Research Collaborations.

Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
Chicago, IL

April, 2007

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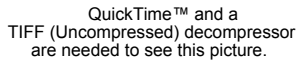
Why International Videoconferencing?

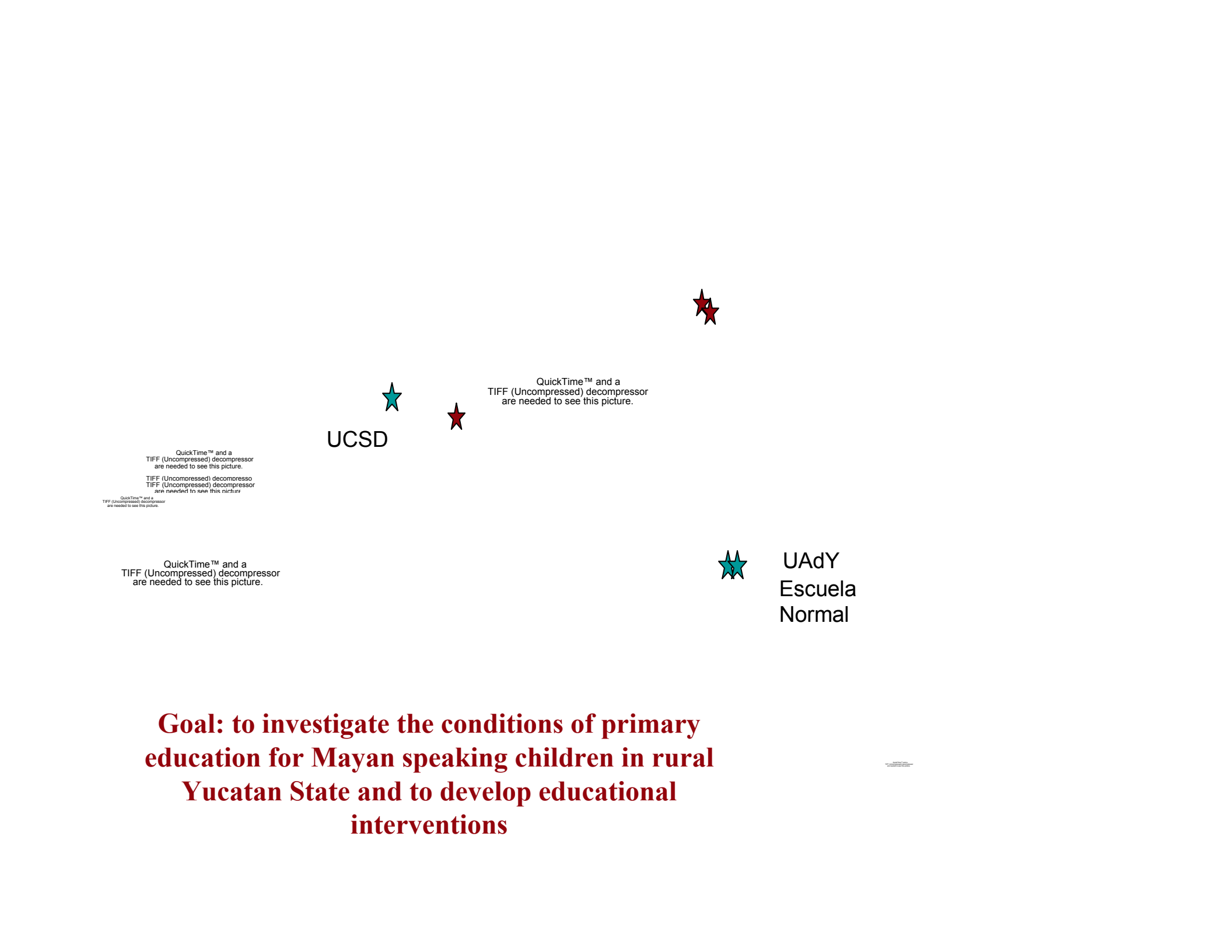


“make the strange familiar,”
AND to better understand the “familiar.”

Case Study:
Multi-site videoconferencing between Mexico and the United States

- Technical and social issues
- Potential for developing meaningful dialog
- Sustainable relationships

  Sustainability: the continuation of joint activity after special research funds have been exhausted (Cole).



Goal: to investigate the conditions of primary education for Mayan speaking children in rural Yucatan State and to develop educational interventions

- 5 videoconferences over a 15 month period.

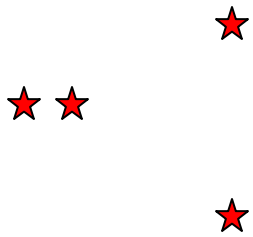
  2 “Multi-Point” conferences with 4 different sites
  U.S. (3) Mexico (1)

  3 “Point-to-Point” videoconferences 2 sites.

- Duration: 60 and 90 minutes

- Technology: Polycom Internet Protocol (IP)

Tucson
Yucatan
Chicago
San Diego



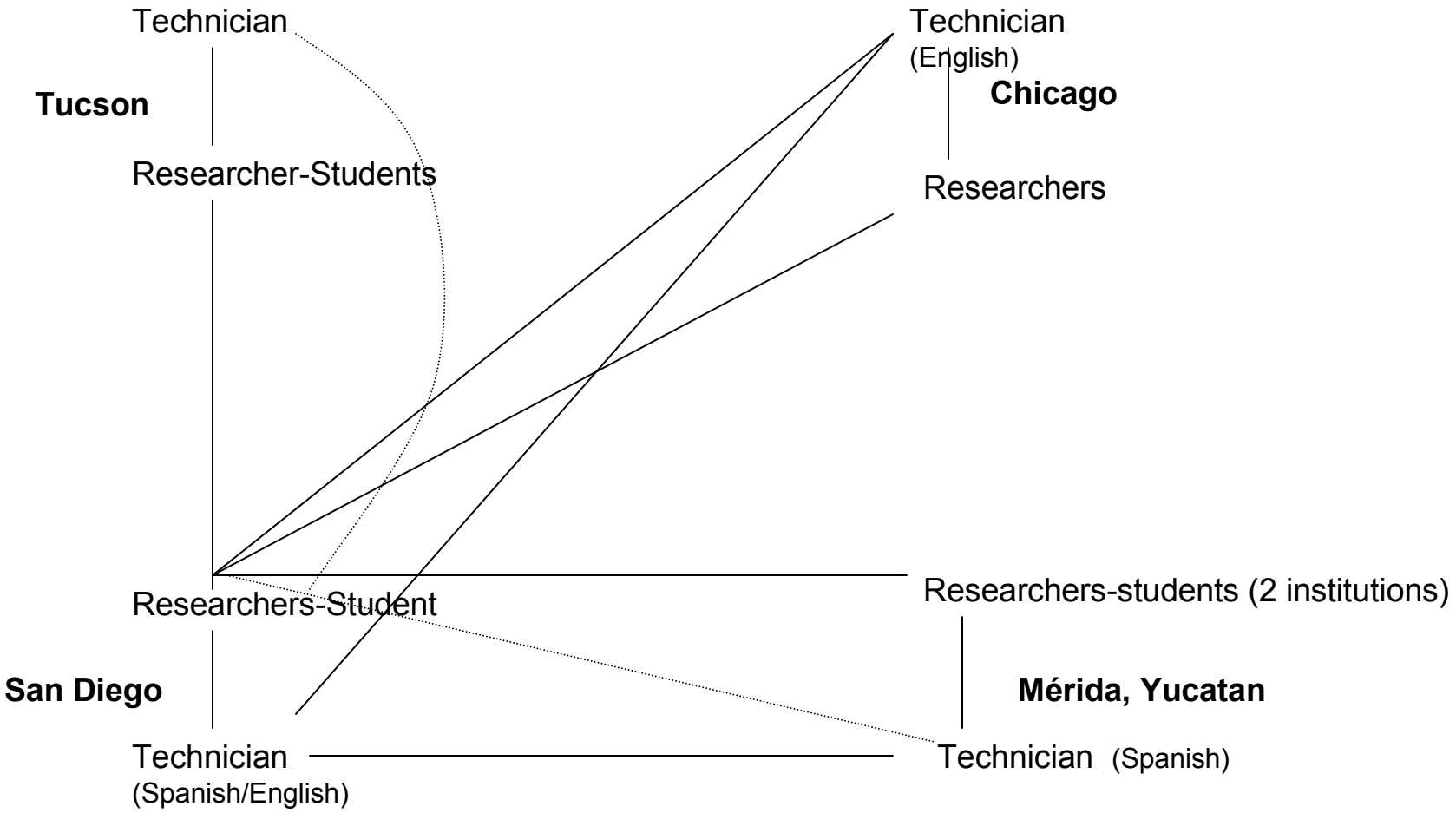
3 Time Zones

2 Nations

2 Languages

TIF

Organizing the Conferences: Email and Phone Communications among Researchers, Technicians, Students



Impact of Conferences

- coordination of the research collaboration

- Introduced new contacts for the researchers and students.

- Facilitated other kinds of exchanges that extended beyond the conferences.

- Generated considerable enthusiasm among students:
  - Dissertation
  - Foreign study for Mexican students

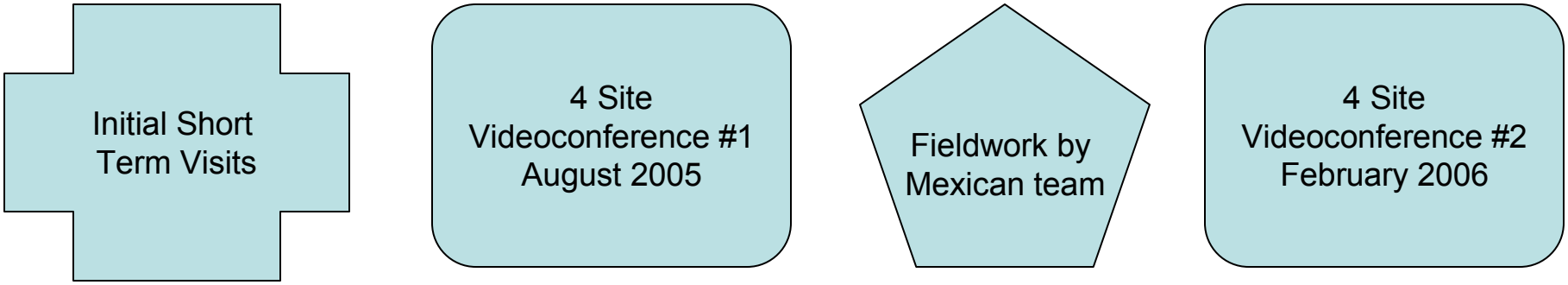
- Spawned new cross-cultural cross-national comparative study comparing home literacy in U.S. Latino families and Yucatecan Mayan families.

Videoconference #1 August 2005

Click on image below to view video clip…..

QuickTime™ and a
H.263 decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Multipoint Conference
Content Changes over Time



Question/Advice
Format
Novice-Expert Dynamic

Little Disagreement
Jointly expressed

Dialog among
researchers

Voicing of
Disagreement

Cross Cultural
Comparisons

QuickTime™ and a
H.263 decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Videoconference # 2 February 2006

Click on image at top left to view video clip…..

Mexican Researcher

What (do) you think about (it) Luis.. because probably you have the same situation with the Hispanic people in Arizona?

U.S. Researcher

…. It is similar in that the sense that the dominant language ideologies push English at the expense of Spanish. …. Now What strikes me about the data is that Maya the language does not seem to be at risk of loss.

Mexican Researcher (translating for a Mexican student)

….probably in one generation (there) could be possible loss of language because children are not encouraged to speak the Mayan language. …..

U.S. Researcher

It strikes me that the usual pathway that we propose in the literature of development of reading and writing in the first language …… may not be possible under the circumstances that you describe…..

Videoconference-Mediated International Collaborations

- Great potential but not a substitute for international exchanges.
- Costly Technical and Social infrastructure
- Technical Barriers remain
  (Skype iChat AV, etc. may be less costly alternatives for point-to-point)
- Need for greater commitment of researchers in both developed and developing countries to prioritize international collaboration.

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