



Managing the Cognitive Pretesting of Multilingual Survey Instruments: The Pretesting of the U.S. Census Bureau Bilingual Spanish/English Questionnaire

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Introduction

- Question: Why pretest a survey translation?
 - Example: “Dear resident” / “Estimado residente”
- Goal of paper: contribute to formation of best practices for management of multilingual pretesting projects
- Significantly more challenging than standard monolingual pretesting project

Logistical Issues for Management of Bilingual Cognitive Testing Projects

1. Composition of the research team
2. Creation of interview protocols
3. Cognitive interviewer training
4. Respondent recruitment
5. Summarizing and analysis of data
6. Reporting of results

Background on the Bilingual Questionnaire Pretesting Project

- First U.S. Census Bureau bilingual questionnaire for use in 2010 Census
- 2 iterative rounds of cognitive testing
 - Round 1: 44 Spanish-speaking respondents
 - Round 2: 66 Spanish speakers, English speakers and bilingual respondents

The Bilingual Questionnaire

Person 1

→ Next, if an owner or renter of this house or apartment lives here, print the person's name below. If an owner or renter does not live here, print the name of any adult living here. This is Person 1. *(On the next page, we will ask about the other people you counted in Question 1.)*

5 What is Person 1's name? *Print name below.*

Last Name

First Name MI

6 What is Person 1's sex? Mark ONE box.

Male Female

Persona 1

→ Ahora, si el inquilino o dueño de esta casa o apartamento vive aquí, escriba en letra de molde a continuación el nombre de la persona. Si el dueño o inquilino no vive aquí, escriba en letra de molde el nombre de algún adulto que viva aquí. Éste será la Persona 1. *(En la próxima página preguntaremos sobre las otras personas que usted contó en la Pregunta 1.)*

5 ¿Cuál es el nombre de la Persona 1? *Escriba a continuación el nombre en letra de molde.*

Apellido

Nombre Inicial

6 ¿Cuál es el sexo de la Persona 1? Marque UNA casilla.

Masculino Femenino

1.1 The Research Team for Multilingual Projects

- Need for researchers with experience in:
 - Substantive topic areas covered by survey
 - Protocol development
 - Respondent recruitment
 - Cognitive interviewing
 - Analysis of findings/reporting of results
 - Linguistic/cultural knowledge

1.2 Cognitive Interviewer Characteristics

- Interviewer effects widely studied in context of standardized field interviews
- Cognitive testing, lack of research
- Interviewers must be fully fluent in language/s and must have cultural knowledge as well
- Complete training in cognitive interview techniques

1.3 Research Team in the Bilingual Questionnaire project

- Project sponsors: Mostly monolingual English speakers
- Team leads: 1 monolingual English speaker, 1 bilingual (Spanish/English) speaker
- Interviewers/recruiters: The bilingual team lead and 3 additional bilingual researchers

1.4 Interviewers for the Bilingual Questionnaire Project

- All bilingual interviewers, each conducted interviews in English and Spanish
 - 2 native Spanish speakers, fluent in English
 - 1 native English speaker, fluent in Spanish
 - 1 native speaker of other language, fluent in English and Spanish

2.1 Interview Protocol Development for Multilingual Projects

2 main issues

1. Type of protocol to employ: scripted, emergent or a combination
2. Simultaneous v. sequential development of different language versions

2.2 Protocols in the Bilingual Q'naire Project: Combination protocols

- Round 1 of project
 - Scripted and emergent probes
 - Problems (No required probe reading)
- Round 2 of project
 - More sample probes provided
 - Required asking about certain issues, flexible with probe wording
 - Emergent probes allowed in addition to scripted

2.3 Protocols in the Bilingual Q'naire Project: Sequential Development

- Development in English first but aimed for cultural appropriateness in Spanish
 - Creation of “master list” of terms of interest in each language, to be probed in both languages
 - Bilingual researcher kept ease of translation in mind while working on English version
 - Aim to avoid literal, unnatural sounding translation
 - Kept English version open for revision

3.1 Cognitive Interviewer Training for Multilingual Projects

Recommended components of training

1. General cognitive interview training
2. Project specific training
3. Linguistic/cultural issue training
4. Practice interviews

3.2 Interviewer Training in Bilingual Questionnaire Project

All interviewers were experienced

1. Project specific training
2. Discussion of linguistic/cultural issues
3. Mock interviews not included (we would recommend even for experienced interviewers)

4.1 Respondent Recruitment for Multilingual Projects

Challenges:

- Identifying researchers with linguistic/cultural knowledge and connections to communities to do recruiting
- Screening eligible respondents who fit criteria
 - Need for monolingual respondents to effectively test translation

4.2 Respondent Recruitment in Bilingual Questionnaire Project

- Need to distinguish between monolingual Spanish speakers and bilingual Spanish dominant speakers
 - Problem with respondents under-reporting English
- Need for respondents from different national origin backgrounds, ages, education levels

5.1 Summarizing and Analysis of Data in Multilingual Projects

- Individual interview summaries common practice in monolingual studies
- Challenge with multilingual project
 - Choice of language in summaries
- Analysis: Coding of results across cases
 - Creation of coding scheme

5.2 Summarizing/ Analysis of Results in Bilingual Q'naire Project

Summaries: 2 different methods used

- Round 1: Listened in Spanish, created summaries directly in English
- Round 2: Maintained key terms/interactions in Spanish but included English translation

Analysis:

- Creation of Coding Scheme

6.1 Reporting of Results in Multilingual Projects

- Need to provide all results in *lingua franca*/ language of project sponsor(s)
- Necessary components of reports
 - Key terms in testing language
 - Translation of terms /glossing or explanation of meaning in *lingua franca*
 - May be necessary to translate reports into multiple languages.

6.2 Reporting of Results in Bilingual Questionnaire Project

- Data collected in English and Spanish
- Final report in English but many findings/recommendations on Spanish terms
- Example: Foster child / Hijo de crianza
- Recommendation: Hijo de crianza del programa Foster del gobierno (child by upbringing through the gov't foster program)

Areas for Future Research

1. Interviewer effects in cognitive interview setting
2. Cognitive Interview protocols for use in multilingual studies: Ideal amount of probe scripting
3. Comparison of cognitive interview findings and data across languages

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