

The Challenges of Exporting Cognitive Interviewing

Comparative Survey Design and Implementation

March 21, 2013

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Outline

- What we know...
 - Challenges and recommendations (and what we still don't know...)
 - *Recruitment*
 - *Respondent*
 - *Interviewer*
 - *Training protocols*
 - *Interviewing protocols*
 - Supervision
 - Analysis
 - Cross – national design considerations
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What we know...

- Cognitive interviewing is generally accepted as an effective method in questionnaire design and testing (<http://ccsg.isr.umich.edu>).
- This method is not yet widely used in developing and transitional countries but its use is likely to increase in the future (Glewwe, 2005).
- Considerable challenges in the implementation of this method among different cultural and linguistic groups and in settings where an interviewing tradition does not exist.



What we know...

- Limited literature
 - Park et al., 2009
 - Goerman & Caspar, 2010
 - Pan et al., 2010
 - Miller et al., 2011
- Recent field experiences
 - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, World Mental Health Survey (KSA)



Respondent Recruitment: Challenges

- Number of interviews?
- Iterations?
- Respondent characteristics?
- Should respondents be monolingual (target language) or bilingual?
- No interviewing tradition?



Respondent Recruitment: Lessons Learned

- Goerman & Caspar, 2010
 - Rs should be monolingual (target language)
 - Bilingual Rs may compensate, thus problems may not be illuminated
 - Sample composition should 'represent' target population
 - Iterate until no new information
 - Spend more time 'teaching' respondent the task



Interviewer Recruitment: Challenges

- Cognitive interviewing experience or substantive knowledge?
- Professional or educational background and/or experience?
- Which cognitive interviewing characteristics are inherent and which are teachable (given limited training period)?



Interviewer Recruitment: Lessons Learned

- Goerman & Caspar, 2010
 - When feasible - experienced interviewers in each language (best to conduct emergent probing)
 - Should be fully fluent in R's preferred language, able to pick up on subtle nuances in comprehension
 - Bilingual interviewers are helpful particularly in multilingual projects
 - Research team must share the linguistic and cultural background of target population, be well-trained in these techniques and thoroughly understand the goals of the undertaking



Interviewer Recruitment: Lessons Learned

- University students in psychology, sociology, social work
- Strong verbal skills – may need to be assessed
- Look for interviewers who have “inherent” characteristics/skills as some characteristic/skills are more “teachable”
 - “Inherent”
 - Fluent in both source and target language
 - Understand cultural nuances
 - Above average interpersonal skills (i.e. recognize and respond to both verbal and non-verbal communication cues)
 - “Teachable”
 - Neutral, nonthreatening behavior
 - Professional behavior
 - Cognitive interviewing techniques



Interviewer Training: Challenges

- How should the necessary knowledge and skills be transferred?
- What length of time is required?
- What materials are necessary?
- Can training be done remotely?
- *Lingua Franca?*
 - Train-the-trainer
 - Concurrent training



Interviewer Training: Lessons Learned

- Goerman & Caspar, 2010
 - General cognitive interview training (2-3 days)
 - Project specific interview training (1 day)
 - Linguistic and cultural sensitivity training (1-2 hours)
 - Brainstorm activity on potential scenarios
 - Practice interviews (at least ½ day, dependent on numbers)
 - Conduct interviewer training in survey language (when possible)
- KSA
 - Train at least one member (supervisor) of the team in-depth
 - Remote training worked reasonably well
 - **More practice sessions**
 - **Iterative approach**



Interviewing Protocols: Challenges

- Structure of cognitive interview?
 - Completely scripted?
 - Completely open-ended?
 - Combination of scripted probes and emergent probes?
- Recording (in both senses of the word)
 - Review? (*Lingua Franca*)
 - Analysis



Interviewing Protocols: Challenges

- Standardization versus localization?
 - Communication styles, norms
 - Social distance, power relationship
 - Languages
 - Low, middle, high income
 - Harmonization opportunities



Interviewing Protocols: Lessons Learned

- Goerman & Caspar, 2010
 - Clear instructions to probe on previously identified problem questions
 - Less experienced interviewers should have more scripts, more experienced interviewers should have fewer scripts
 - Provide sample scripted probes for highly experienced cognitive interviewers



Interview Protocols: Lessons Learned

- Pan et al., 2010
 - Tailor introduction/communication style specific to culture, conversational norms, and research experience
 - Practice sessions
 - Provide tailored feedback to encourage respondents



Cross-national Design Considerations

- Combine pretesting techniques to create a comprehensive design plan that takes advantage of the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of each method

(www.ccsq.isr.umich.edu/):

- Focus group (problematic items and terms)
- Expert review of source (with drafting team and translation experts)
- Technical
- Advance translation
- Cognitive interviewing with iterations
- Formal pretesting



Questions not answered...

- Information on more the operational aspects or lessons learned
- Testing of alternative approaches
- More research on:
 - How different cultural groups respond to various techniques
 - The effectiveness or appropriateness of interviewing styles (open-ended vs. scripted), types of probes, etc.
 - Interviewer effects and interviewer-respondent interaction in different cultures
 - Interviewing recruitment, monitoring and supervision
- Finding the balance between standardization and culturally appropriate implementation

