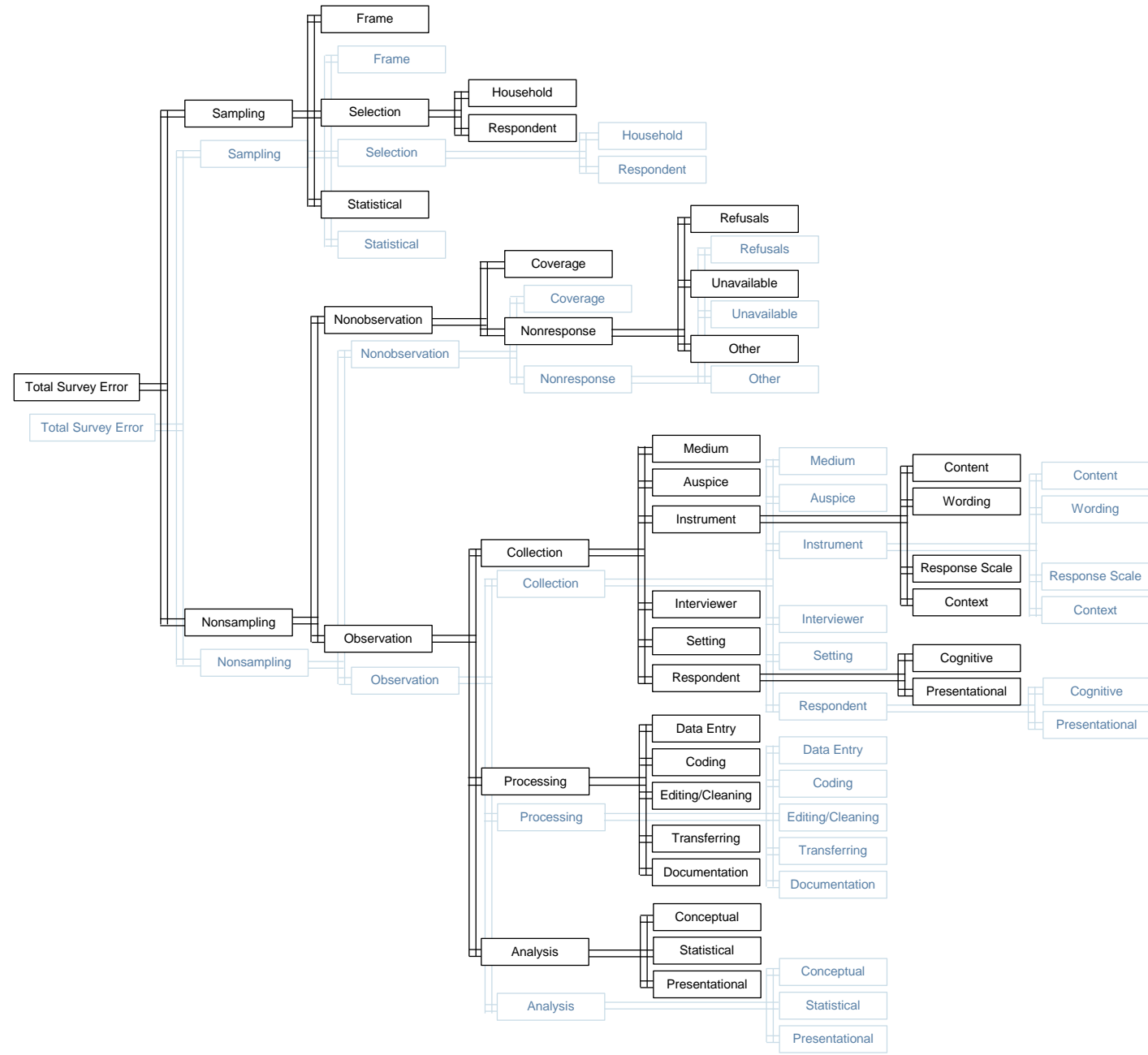


Using Experiments to Reduce Comparison Error
in Cross-National Surveys
with Special Focus on Question Wording

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CSDI, Mannheim
March, 2017

Total Survey Error: Comparison Error



General Uses of Experiments

- **Methodological and Substantive Experiments of Questions in the Master/Source Language**
- Experiments Testing Alternative Translations

ISSP 1993 & 2000:

In general, do you think that a rise in the world's temperature caused by **the 'greenhouse effect'** is extremely dangerous for the environment, very dangerous, somewhat dangerous, not very dangerous, or not dangerous at all for the environment?

ISSP 2010

In general, do you think that a rise in the world's temperature caused by **'climate change'** is extremely dangerous for the environment, very dangerous, somewhat dangerous, not very dangerous, or not dangerous at all for the environment?

Lorraine Whitmarch, “What’s in a Name? Commonalities and Differences in Public Understanding of ‘Climate Change’ and ‘Global Warming,’” Public Understanding of Science, 18 (2009), 401-420.

General Uses of Experiments

- Methodological and Substantive Experiments of Questions in the Master/Source Language
- **Experiments Testing Alternative Translations**

Tom W. Smith, “An Evaluation of the Spanish Questions on the 2006 and 2008 US General Social Surveys,” in in Surveying Ethnic Minorities and Immigrant Populations: Methodological Challenges and Research Strategies,” edited by Joan Font and Monica Mendez. Amsterdam: IMISCOE-Amsterdam University Press, 2013.

- General Social Survey 2006 and 2008

Hispanics Respondents (2006)

- Monolingual Spanish
- Bilingual Done in Spanish
 - <Focus
- Bilingual Done in English
- Monolingual English

2008 Experiment

2006 Wording

New 2008 Wording

Stout, Patrick E. et al, “Testing Languages Effects in Psychiatric Epidemiology Surveys with Randomized Experiments: Results from the National Latino and Asian American Study,” *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 168 (2008), 345-352.

“To our knowledge, our study was the first to use a randomized survey experiment to test whether a carefully prepared translated version of an epidemiological battery was empirically equivalent to the version in the original language (English).”

Monolingual Spanish

Bilingual

< Randomly assigned to English or Spanish

Monolingual English

Analysis examines differences across all four with special focus on two bilingual groups