

Advanced Topics in Cognition and Survey Research

SURV 699J/SURVMETH 895.001

1218 LeFrak Hall (JPSM Conference Room)

300 Perry Building

Tuesday 1:00-3:40 pm

January 9 – April 17, 2007

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Overview of the Course

This course will be an in-depth examination of four topics in which findings from the cognitive sciences can be applied to problems in survey research. The four topics are improving comprehension of survey questions, conversational analytic approaches to the interactions between interviewers and respondents, visual effects in the design of self-administered and web questionnaires, and cognitive interviewing. The course presupposes familiarity with the growing literature on cognitive aspects of survey methodology; SURV 632 or SURV METH 632 is a prerequisite unless permission is obtained from the instructors.

Readings

There will be two required textbooks for the class:

Maynard, D. W., Houtkoop-Steenstra, H., Schaeffer, N.C., and van der Zouwen, J. (2002).

Standardization and tacit knowledge: Interaction and practice in the survey interview.

New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Willis, G. B. (2005). *Cognitive interviewing: A tool for improving questionnaire design.*

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

The other required course readings can be downloaded from the University of Michigan web site via C-Tools. Instructions for accessing these readings will be provided on the first day of class.

Course Requirements and Grading

Grades for the course will be based on:

- Participation in class discussion demonstrating understanding of the required readings (20% of grade);
- Four short papers, in which the student will design a study to fill some gap or resolve some issue on each topic (20% of grade each). The four papers will also be the basis for in-class presentations.

Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1 (January 9): Organizational Meeting

Topic 1: Comprehension and Definitions of Survey Terms

Week 2 (January 16): Introduction to Comprehension Problems

Tourangeau, R., Rips, L., and Rasinski, K. (2000). *The Psychology of Survey Response*. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 2.

Suessbrick, A., Schober, M.F. & Conrad, F.G. (2000). Different respondents interpret ordinary questions quite differently. In *Proceedings of the American Statistical Association, Section on Survey Methods Research* (pp. 907-912). Alexandria, VA: American Statistical Association.

Schober, M.F., Conrad, F.G., and Fricker, S. (2004). Misunderstanding standardized language in research interviews. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 18*, 169-188.

Week 3 (January 23): Definitions and Instructions

Conrad, F.G., Couper, M.P., Tourangeau, R., and Peytchev, A. (2006). "The Use and Non-Use of Clarification Features in Web Surveys." *Journal of Official Statistics, 22*, 245-269.

Redline, C.D, and Dillman, D.A. (2002). The influence of alternative visual designs on respondents' performance with branching instructions in self-administered questionnaires. In R. M. Groves, D. A. Dillman, J. L. Eltinge, and R. J. A. Little (Eds.), *Survey Nonresponse* (pp. 179-193). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Redline, C.D., Dillman, D.A., Dajani, A.N., and Scaggs, M. A. (2003). Improving navigational performance in U.S. Census 2000 by altering the visually administered languages of branching instructions, *Journal of Official Statistics, 19*, 403-419.

Tourangeau, R., Conrad, F.G., Arens, Z., Fricker, S., Lee, S., and Smith, E. (In press).
“Everyday Concepts and Classification Errors: Judgments of Disability and Residence.”
Journal of Official Statistics.

Week 4 (January 30): Student Presentations

Topic 2: Conversational Approaches to the Respondent-Interviewer Interaction

Week 5 (February 6): Introduction to Conversational Approaches

Schaeffer, N.C. (1991). Conversation with a purpose or conversation? Interaction in the standardized interview. In P. P. Biemer, R. M. Groves, L. E. Lyberg, N. A. Mathiowetz & S. Sudman (Eds.), *Measurement errors in surveys* (pp. 367-391). New York: Wiley.

Suchman, L., & Jordan, B. (1990). Interactional troubles in face-to-face survey interviews. *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 85, 232-241.

Dykema, J., Lepkowski, J. M., and Blixt, S. (1997). The effect of interviewer and respondent behavior on data quality: Analysis of interaction coding in a validation study. In L. Lyberg, P. Biemer, M. Collins, E. de Leeuw, C. Dippo, N. Schwarz, & D. Trewin (Eds.), *Survey Measurement and Process Quality* (pp. 287-310). New York: Wiley.

Week 6 (February 13): More Recent Examples

Maynard, D. W., & Schaeffer, N.C. (2002). Standardization and its discontents. In D. W. Maynard, H. Houtkoop-Steenstra, N. C. Schaeffer, and J. van der Zouwen (Eds.), *Standardization and tacit knowledge: Interaction and practice in the survey interview* (pp. 3-45). New York: Wiley.

Schober, M., & Conrad, F.G. (2002). A collaborative view of standardized survey interviews. In D. W. Maynard, H. Houtkoop-Steenstra, N. C. Schaeffer, and J. van der Zouwen (Eds.), *Standardization and tacit knowledge: Interaction and practice in the survey interview* (pp. 67-94). New York: Wiley.

Schaeffer, N.C. (in press). The contemporary standardized survey interview for social research. In Conrad, F.G & Schober, M. F. (Eds.), *Envisioning the Survey Interview of the Future*. New York: Wiley.

Houtkoop-Steenstra, H. (2002). Questioning turn format and turn-taking problems in standardized interviews. In D. W. Maynard, H. Houtkoop-Steenstra, N. C. Schaeffer,

and J. van der Zouwen (Eds.), *Standardization and tacit knowledge: Interaction and practice in the survey interview* (pp. 243-259). New York: Wiley.

Moore, R. J. & Maynard, D. W. (2002). Achieving understanding in the standardized survey interview. In D. W. Maynard, H. Houtkoop-Steenstra, N. C. Schaeffer, and J. van der Zouwen (Eds.), *Standardization and tacit knowledge: Interaction and practice in the survey interview* (pp. 281-311). New York: Wiley.

Couper, M. P., & Groves, R. M. (2002). Introductory interactions in telephone surveys and nonresponse. In D. W. Maynard, H. Houtkoop-Steenstra, N. C. Schaeffer, and J. van der Zouwen (Eds.), *Standardization and tacit knowledge: Interaction and practice in the survey interview* (pp. 161-177). New York: Wiley.

Week 7 (February 20): Student Presentations

Topic 3: Visual Aspects of Survey Questionnaire Design

Week 8 (March 6): Introduction to Visual Issues

Smith, T. W. (1995). Little things matter; a sampler of how differences in questionnaire format can affect survey responses. *Proceedings of the American Statistical Association, Survey Research Methods Section*, pp. 1046-1051.

Schwarz, Norbert, Grayson, Carla E., and Knäuper, Barbel (1998), Formal features of rating scales and the interpretation of question meaning. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 10, 177-183.

Christian, Leah M., and Dillman, Don A. (2004). The influence of graphical and symbolic language manipulations on responses to self-administered questions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 68, 57-80.

Week 9 (March 13): More Recent Work

Tourangeau, R., Couper, M., & Conrad, F. (In press). Color, labels, and interpretive heuristics for response scales. *Public Opinion Quarterly*.

Tourangeau, R., Couper, M., & Conrad, F. (2004). Spacing, position, and order: Interpretive heuristics for visual features of survey questions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 68, 368-393.

Couper, M.P., Tourangeau, R., & Kenyon, K. (2004). Picture this! Exploring visual effects in Web surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 68, 255-266.

Week 10 (March 27): Student Presentations

Topic 4: Cognitive Interviewing

Week 11 (April 3): Introduction

Willis, G. B. (2005). Cognitive interviewing. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Chapters 3-8, Chapter 13.

Ericsson, K.A., & Simon, H.A. (1980). Verbal reports as data. *Psychological Review*, 87, 215-257.

Wilson, T.D., LaFleur, S.J., & Anderson, D.A. (1995). The validity and consequences of verbal reports about attitudes. In N. Schwarz & S. Sudman (Eds.), *Answering questions: Methodology for determining cognitive and communicative processes in survey research* (pp. 91-114). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Week 12 (April 10): More Recent Work

Beatty, P. (2004). The dynamics of cognitive interviewing. In S. Presser, J. Rothgeb, M. Couper, J. Lessler, E. Martin, J. Martin, and E. Singer (Eds.), *Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires* (pp. 45-66). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Blair, J., Conrad, F., Ackerman, A.C. & Claxton, G. (May, 2006). The effect of sample size on cognitive interview findings. *Proceedings of the American Statistical Association, Section on Survey Research Methods*. Alexandria, VA: American Statistical Association.

Conrad, F. G., and Blair, J. (2004). Data quality in cognitive interviews: The case of verbal reports. In S. Presser, J. Rothgeb, M. Couper, J. Lessler, E. Martin, J. Martin, and E. Singer (Eds.), *Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires* (pp. 67-87). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

DeMaio, T., & Landreth, A. (2004). Do different cognitive interview techniques produce different results? In S. Presser, J. Rothgeb, M. Couper, J. Lessler, E. Martin, J. Martin, and E. Singer (Eds.), *Methods for Testing and Evaluating Survey Questionnaires* (pp. 89-108). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Week 13 (April 17): Student Presentations