

Q-Notes: Development and Use of Analysis Software for Cognitive Interviews to Examine Survey Question Comparability

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Recent work has shown that cognitive interviewing studies can provide essential information regarding the comparability of survey questions, specifically, how respondents interpret and process questions and whether particular sub-populations or groups may process questions differently from others. To achieve this goal, however, studies must be based on empirical evidence and systematically analyzed across interviews and sub-populations a process which can yield a massive amount of qualitative data across numerous countries and in multiple languages. To be sure, one of the biggest challenges for comparative, multinational cognitive testing is data management, that is, the organization and reduction of cognitive interview data such that it can be analyzed systematically. This paper will describe software that was specifically developed by the National Center for Health Statistics to analyze cognitive interviews in this capacity. To illustrate the software's use, the paper will draw from NCHS evaluation projects.