Cognitive Interviewing in the Context of Evaluating Questionnaires with a Flexible Personal Interview Mode of Administration

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The Cognitive Interview Study

- Study of the Organ & Tissue Donor Risk Assessment Interview
- Administration is designed to be flexible
- Attended interviewer training
- Observed a live interview
The Methodological Question

How will (or should) this style of survey administration affect the cognitive interviewing method?

Most cognitive interview studies involve evaluating…

1. Self administered questionnaires
2. Standardized interviewer administered questionnaire (telephone or face-to-face)
Typical Cognitive Interview Method

- Administer the survey question in a manner that most closely reproduces the survey setting
- Obtain an answer to the survey question
- Initiate cognitive probes, either concurrently or retrospectively, but generally AFTER obtaining an answer to the survey question
Administration Method for the Donor Risk Assessment Interview

- Interviewers are trained to probe respondents, particularly and especially when they answer ‘yes’ to a question
- The probe techniques look very much like what we do in a cognitive interview
Example

Did she/he recently have any symptoms such as a fever?

IF YES: When? Describe the fever and reasons.
Method for Cognitive Interview: Probing Style

- Focus primarily on false negatives – always most difficult task in a cognitive interview
- Use respondent’s story telling to uncover false negatives and avoid the “cross examination”
Method for Cognitive Interview: Probing Style

- Focus secondarily on false positives
  - Impacts interviewer burden
  - Impacts respondent burden