

Methodological Note #010

Remote Pretesting: A Protocol for Conducting Cognitive Interviews from a Distance

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August 2, 2022

Key Findings:

- LAPOP Lab developed new protocols for remote pretesting via cognitive interviews for its 2021 AmericasBarometer questionnaires
- Pretest participants were recruited through our local team networks, ads in social media, professional recruiters, and random selection
- Potential bias in the selection of pretest participants is mitigated by establishing sociodemographic characteristics that guide recruitment
- Remote pretesting provides efficiencies in terms of time and travel costs and expands opportunities to train staff and local teams in pretesting protocols
- Think aloud and probing are key techniques used by LAPOP remote pretesting
- Data gathered through cognitive interviews is carefully analyzed by LAPOP Lab staff to refine questionnaire validity and reliability



Using cognitive interviews to pretest surveys has been a standard practice for LAPOP since the 1970s. In that decade, the project's Founder and Senior Advisor, Dr. Mitchell A. Seligson, and LAPOP Research Affiliate, Dr. Susan Berk-Seligson, innovated new pretesting techniques for in-person survey research in the Costa Rican countryside.² Under the COVID-19 pandemic, LAPOP changed the survey mode for the 2021 AmericasBarometer from face-to-face to computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). Alongside this change, the lab developed new protocols for nearly every aspect of survey research,³ including pretesting remotely.

Pretests hold the potential to elucidate issues related to measurement, assist with hypothesis development, and even suggest potential explanatory mechanisms.⁴ While survey pretests were once dismissed as "subjective and unsystematic",⁵ systematic pretests have gained traction and political scientists have noted several ways that pretests make valuable contributions.⁶ And yet, despite such a growing recognition of pretests, studies rarely provide detailed information about pretest design and implementation.⁷

In this *Methodological Note*, we provide an overview of the protocols LAPOP Lab has developed for remote pretesting via cognitive interviews. We then discuss opportunities and challenges for researchers when pretesting multinational, multiregional, and multicultural (3MC) surveys remotely. Next, we briefly describe key aspects of our standard, mode-invariant pretesting practices and then present some examples from our 2021 remote pretests. We intend this report to be of interest to practitioners in the field of 3MC studies,⁸ students of survey design, and users of the AmericasBarometer survey data.

The LAPOP Lab Protocol for Remote Pretesting

A cornerstone in producing high-quality opinion data is the extensive care put into questionnaire design and instrument testing. The challenge posited by the spread of COVID-19 was that it pushed survey teams to substitute face-to-face interviews with phone and web-based surveys. With this change came the need for a new pre-test protocol that ensures the main objectives of testing are achieved. In 2020-21, LAPOP Lab developed a new *Remote Pretest Protocol* to address this need.

Regardless of the platform in which a study will be conducted, the pre-test must allow researchers to fully assess the following for all new questions in the questionnaire: structure and wording, appropriateness of vocabulary, clarity, response categories, respondent reactions, and timing. The objective of the pre-test is also to assess the structure, flow, and length of the questionnaire. This section details the pretest protocol for phone surveys carried out by LAPOP, with respect to each of these objectives.

The remote pretest protocol that LAPOP created and applied to the AmericasBarometer 2021 comprises the following phases: pretest of core modules (stand-alone modules common to more than one country which are tested in isolation), pretest of core questionnaires (which is the backbone of the comparative questionnaire with content administered across countries), and pretest and pilot of country-questionnaires (context-tailored final instruments).

Phase 1 – Cognitive interviews to test and develop new modules

When new modules are still in their early stages and not yet fully developed to be included in a questionnaire, those modules are tested separately in face-to-face interactions held via video conferences or, in some cases, via in-person interactions in selected locations.

Cognitive interviews are conducted to explore questions, response categories, potentially sensitive issues, and general reactions. These interviews are performed by seasoned LAPOP staff and/or experienced local consultants who are native speakers of the language of the interview.

Interviewees are recruited by LAPOP Lab local partners using a variety of strategies (see text box). Interviewees can even be drawn from a convenience sample (from within the broader population of interest) so long as there is variation in variables of interest (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, political leaning).

Recruiting participants

Pretest participants can be recruited through the investigators' own networks (convenience sample), by posting ads in social media, by professional recruiters, or they can be chosen randomly just like the real study participants. For the AmericasBarometer 2021, all methods listed here were used.

A key aspect is that participants recruited to participate in a pretest should vary in terms of their age, gender, education, political views, place of residence, and any other cleavage deemed relevant for the set of questions or questionnaires being tested.

Professional Recruiters

Professional recruiters can be used to identify, invite, and secure the participation of individuals in pretest interviews.

Social Media

Participants in pre-tests can also be recruited via social media (via Facebook, Twitter or Instagram paid ads).

Incentives

Individuals can be incentivized to participate in pretests by offering them modest compensations such as gift cards, cell phone line credits, or similar rewards.

Interviews can last up to an hour, and interviewees can be modestly compensated for their time, which is especially relevant to make up for the costs they might incur for their internet connectivity during the session. Video conference software such as Zoom or WhatsApp is used for the sessions. LAPOP interviewers complete standard pretest reports and propose new versions of questions and modules that are reviewed and approved by the LAPOP Lab Survey Instrument Development Unit team.

A series of at least 10 cognitive interviews per new module is conducted in each country where the test is being performed. Typically, it takes between 15 and 20 interviews in each country, after a series of iterations, to have each new module polished and ready for the new stage of pretesting.

Phase 2 – Cognitive interviews to test core questionnaire

This phase entails the test of the entire core questionnaire for a study or round. This effort is focused on assessing question wording, flow, questionnaire length, and general reactions.

The entire questionnaire is tested in several countries, typically including one Southern Cone country, one from the Andean region, and one Central American country. This selection provides a regional variation that is important in testing differences in wording but also in topic relevance and sensitivity to certain issues.

The test of the core questionnaire involves at least two full rounds of cognitive pretests in at least two or three countries. Interviews are held through video calls, and recruitment and selection of interviewers are performed in the way described above for Phase 1.

At the end of the final round of pretests of core the questionnaire, the Survey Instrument Development Unit, in discussion with the pre-testers and local experts, comes up with a new version of a core questionnaire to be used throughout the region and that includes customizable sections that will vary by country.

Phase 3 – Cognitive interviews to finalize country-specific questionnaires

This phase of a country pre-test resembles the core questionnaire pre-tests, in that it entails the test of the entire questionnaire as it is now fully customized for the country. During this stage, the researcher assesses question wording, flow, questionnaire length, and general reactions for the country where the pre-test is being carried out.

At least 10 face-to-face interviews held in person or via video conference using the final phone country questionnaire (paper-based or electronic) should be conducted to explore respondent reactions to the questions and to refine wording and flow.

Phase 4 – Full country-specific pilot

The final pre-test stage comprises a full dry run of the operation led by each local survey firm. The firm conducts a full pre-test of at least 25 complete interviews (including at least one full interview conducted by each interviewer) using the e-platform for data collection LAPOP relies on, SurveyToGo, and the calling software each company uses for data collection. LAPOP quality-control procedures and dataset processing are also applied to this reduced sample.

The goal of this phase is three-fold: first, to conduct a final assessment of questions and response patterns to questions; second, to test the platform for data collection, programming, quality control, and data processing; and, third, to provide opportunities for additional experience and evaluation of efforts by the interviewers and the quality control team.

Opportunities and Challenges in Pretesting for 3MC Settings

Rigorous efforts to assess and understand the public's reaction to drafted surveys are important to minimize design issues, measurement error, item non-response, and other challenges. Because 3MC studies confront multiple types of cross-cultural differences, pretests play a critical role in establishing the validity of data gathered from a comparative perspective.⁹ Pandemic-imposed remoteness has brought both new opportunities and challenges for cognitive pretesting. Hence, we describe them by way of three observations with regards to fieldwork in 3MC settings: participation, time, and costs.

Cognitive interviewing is used increasingly for pretesting questionnaires. It refers to the practice of administering a survey questionnaire and collecting respondents' answers together with additional pieces of information provided by the respondents, such as verbal and non-verbal cues.¹⁰ While originally cognitive interviewing focused on the "thought processes involved in interpreting a question and arriving at an answer",¹¹ the way in which they are performed nowadays in the context of survey questionnaire pretests "has more to do with understanding the meaning of responses and questions than cognitive processes per se".¹² Their objective is to determine if the questions tested actually produce the information the researcher is seeking in a consistent manner across individual interviewees. Cognitive interviews, then, aim at testing instrument comparability and validity.¹³

In this modality of survey pretesting enumerators notify respondents in advance that the interview is a practice run.¹⁴ Conducting the interview remotely, versus in-person, does not change this aspect: participants are notified in advance that they are assisting with the refinement of a questionnaire, and they are welcomed to think aloud about their responses and asked to respond to follow-up questions after a response. When conducting cognitive interviews in person, one can rely on facial or other behavioral outcomes to gauge factors such as ease of interpretation of question or comfort with a topic. This input can be retained in remote cognitive interviewing, conditional on whether the research team makes use of videoconferencing tools and whether participants agree to turn on their camera.

Another aspect of participation concerns the pool of respondents to the cognitive interviews. A challenge in remote pretesting is the representativeness of the pretest pool. While face-to-face pretests can follow the same random selection of households applied in an actual study (and likewise mirror procedures for within-household selection, as is LAPOP's practice for its standard in-person pretests), remote pre-testing participants have to be recruited differently and in advance to guarantee their availability for a remote call. All participants in the pretest must have access to a computer or a smartphone to be able to engage in the call. Due to this requirement, they might be slightly different from the overall population with access to cell phones (the frame applied in the AmericasBarometer 2021). Potential bias in this selection can be addressed by advanced planning in close collaboration with local firms who are charged with recruiting pretest participants that vary in terms of socio-economic status, place of residence, age, gender, and any other nationally relevant cleavage.¹⁵

Pretests can oftentimes be time-consuming and costly.¹⁶ An advantage of remote cognitive pretesting lies in its capacity to generate efficiencies for the research team. Our experience in 2021 serves as an example of one of these gains. For the first time ever, LAPOP compensated pretest participants.¹⁷ Yet, these expenses are minimal compared to the flights (often international) and hotel accommodations required for sending pretesting teams to the field. With travel eliminated, efficiencies are achieved both in terms of time and costs.

Additionally, less visible opportunities open up when pretesting switches to a remote mode. For one, it expands opportunities to involve more affiliates in pretesting tasks. For example, LAPOP has been able to have students observe pretests that were connected remotely. That said, other things are missed. Face-to-face pretests normally take place in tandem with the enumerators' on-site training sessions and field tests.¹⁸ In that sense, in-person field tests provide a way for the trainers to gauge enumerator skills and adherence to protocol while assessing reactions to the survey in more true-to-life interactions. Relatedly, traveling to each country has often provided LAPOP pretesters the opportunity to gather instant feedback from a quasi-random set of informants encountered during the trip.¹⁹

Mode-Invariant Pretesting Protocols

There are a number of factors that remain central to LAPOP's pretesting approach regardless of the mode. LAPOP Lab's main approach to pre-testing, cognitive interviewing is an active, participatory pretesting technique for the development and evaluation of survey instruments.²⁰ Broadly speaking, participatory survey pretests allow researchers to realize two objectives: 1) test specific questions/items and 2) test broader contours of the questionnaire. In the first place, respondents are asked about question wording and response categories, which provides insight into alternatives and permits researchers to make decisions.²¹ In the second place, the testing of questionnaire-wide aspects includes considerations of factors such as interview length, order of questionnaire modules, the need for transition statements, and so on.

Pretest Personnel

LAPOP pretesters are extensively trained. This training covers several aspects aiming at fully preparing the pretester for the task. One aspect of this effort is providing sufficient information on the background and objectives of the specific research project. It is important for all team members to understand the main goal the survey questions are supposed to address. Senior members of LAPOP's Survey Instrument Development Unit lead the pretesting team, offering a smooth transition between the desktop and expert-review stages of question development and evidence-based validation.

Pretesters are always native speakers of the language of the questionnaire and are knowledgeable about the current national context where the pretests take place. From political circumstances such as upcoming elections or corruption scandals to the latest performance of the national soccer team and relevant pop culture figures and events, LAPOP ensures pretesters are aware of the country's latest developments. The importance of this is twofold: first, it allows for a better evaluation of responses and reactions to the questions tested. Second, it provides a more natural way to build rapport and bond with interviewees. As part of this effort, LAPOP Lab selects pretesters that are nationals of the countries surveyed or with extensive expertise and fieldwork experience in them. Junior pretesters are matched with senior ones and national experts before their first solo experiences.

LAPOP Lab pretesters are aware of ethical principles guiding survey research and have all received the corresponding training and certifications. Before going to the field for pretesting, the team discusses any particular issues for the country or for specific topics that might raise ethical challenges (e.g., detecting a sensitive question that causes discomfort for the pretest subject). Likely scenarios are thoroughly discussed and strategies are designed for each.

Finally, before each round of pretests the LAPOP protocols are discussed and the specific tools and techniques are reviewed, discussed, and practiced by focusing on the expected challenges and the most suitable strategies for each topic and type of question. Adjustments to the general strategy are made based on country-specific variations in questionnaires.

Interviewees as Collaborators

While for remote pretests participants are recruited by LAPOP partner survey firms in the countries and constitute a convenience sample, for face-to-face pretest interviewees are selected from convenience samples for the early stages (test of stand-alone modules and core questionnaires) and typically at random for the final core and country-specific questionnaires.

Regardless of the selection mode, pretest participants are informed they are participating in a pretest. This is important as it helps set up expectations and allows interviewers to clearly explain what is expected from interviewees, helping dissipate potential tensions or concerns among interviewees as clearly exposed by Miller (2003).

When interviewees are informed of the fact that they are contributing to a test of the questionnaire, the pressure to provide accurate answers is removed, as the pretester explains that the main objective of the interview is learning how the questionnaire performs. When this is laid out, interviewees can more openly criticize questions that are hard to understand and might feel encouraged to offer alternative response categories or even venture in suggestions for question wording. They become a collaborator rather than a research subject.

Techniques

Think aloud and probing are the most widely known cognitive interview techniques;²² LAPOP Lab resorts to both of them during pretesting.

The think-aloud approach relies on the respondents freely verbalizing their thoughts as they provide answers to the questions asked.²³ This approach is considered less biased due to fewer interruptions by the interviewer and, related, due to the open-ended design. Drawbacks might include respondents rejecting this form of interviewing, respondents changing their own form of decision-making in this process, and respondents going significantly off-topic.²⁴

The probing technique is more specific; it helps focus attention on key aspects that are most relevant for the researcher and that might not emerge unless the interviewer asks directly about them. By asking follow-up questions after the respondent provides an answer to the survey question, probing is less intrusive and typically demands less effort from the interviewee.²⁵

Interviewers can probe respondents right after they provide answers to individual questions; this is *concurrent* probing. An alternative is to use *retrospective* probes, once the interview has been finalized.²⁶

LAPOP Lab relies more heavily on the think-aloud approach in the early stages of questionnaire development during phase 1 of pretesting for testing sensitivity and general reactions to topics, question wording, and response categories as well as perceived connections and causal mechanisms among variables in the respondents' discourse. As survey instruments are more polished, probing is the preferred technique and therefore more widely used during phases 2 and 3. During pretests, LAPOP lab relies more heavily on concurrent probing to explore reactions to specific questions. Retrospective probing is used to gather general reactions to the study and overall sensitiveness.²⁷ See Appendix 2 for examples of probes used.

Data Gathering and Analysis

LAPOP pretests are closely organized, led, and supervised by the Survey Instrument Development Unit. Pretesters work individually -in person or remotely- and usually there are no more than two pretesters conducting cognitive interviews over the same questionnaire at the same time. When this happens, it is likely that they are testing in different countries. The most common approach is one pretester in one country at a time (unless a junior member is being trained by a senior one; they team up and co-lead interviews in these circumstances).

At the end of each pretest (around 10 interviews in varied contexts), the pretesters submit a report according to a template provided by LAPOP and a commented questionnaire (that is, a questionnaire marked up with proposed edits and comments in the margins). This procedure allows for a more nuanced approach where the pretesters reports to the Survey Instrument Development Unit and collaborate to define the next steps in terms of modifications for the questionnaire and new tests. If during fieldwork the pretesters discover alternatives that could imply an improvement, they can go ahead and test them and report afterward.

Data gathering during cognitive interviews occurs in the two modes described by Willis (2015): successive aggregation and joint analysis. A pretester uses the same paper questionnaire to conduct all the interviews for a given iteration of the pretest, noting down all responses from every respondent. This allows to aggregate comments for all interviews in a way that facilitates the identification of patterns: for example, most respondents find the question challenging, those opposed to the government show uneasiness with a module, and those in rural areas say the question makes no sense to them, etc. This method also facilitates introducing notes and warning signs to follow-up in subsequent interviews if the pretester discovers the respondent hesitated or took longer than expected to answer a particular question.

When more than one pretester is involved in testing the same questionnaires, comments from all the parties are merged into one single questionnaire to evaluate their observations and comments. Joint analysis between the pretester or team of pretesters and the SIDU is used to determine if questions or blocks of questions need to be further tested, modified, or eliminated. Simple changes are made as soon as it is clear from testing that the new formulation significantly improves comprehension and questionnaire flow, and there are no potentially negative consequences.

An Example from the AmericasBarometer 2021 Remote Pretests

Here we provide an example of how remote pretesting during the AmericasBarometer 2021's questionnaire design period shaped the instrument. In that year the unfolding of the pandemic made timely the inclusion of a related batch of questions related to experiences and attitudes related to COVID-19. Previous pilot studies from 2020 and the cognitive interviews conducted in 2021 made us quickly notice that individuals showed more interest and engagement in the study when the COVID-19 questions were placed at the beginning of the questionnaire. Therefore, the bulk of the COVID-related questions was asked early on in the interview, in most cases placed right before the LAPOP classic item on interpersonal trust (IT1).

IT1. And speaking of the people from your neighborhood/area/community, would you say that people in your neighborhood/area/community are very trustworthy, somewhat trustworthy, not very trustworthy or untrustworthy?

However, the pretesters realized by some interviewees' remarks that they were actually answering the IT1 question also under the COVID-19 frame. When interviewees verbalized not really knowing what to answer and were asked to elaborate what was behind those doubts via expansive probes, some commented along the lines of "I do not really know if my neighbors can be trusted to take all the sanitary precautions" or "I can tell they wear masks

around here, but I am not sure if they do it elsewhere or all the time". With these comments, it was immediately clear that at least for these interviewees who expressed doubts, the assumption was that the question on interpersonal trust was solely circumscribed to the pandemic reality. And that was certainly not what was intended by design.

Therefore, during the following pretests a transitional statement clearly separating the upcoming interpersonal question from the previous pandemic-related batch was introduced right before the IT1 question: "Moving on from discussing the coronavirus..."

Additional follow-ups with confirmatory probes gave us confidence in that the transitional remark was fulfilling its objective.

Concluding Remarks

For LAPOP, the pandemic offered an opportunity to innovate in remote pretesting. This *Methodological Note* provides an overview of core aspects of the efforts we engaged in during this process—focusing on those that are particular to remote engagement and those that are mode invariant. We hope that the discussion is useful to those seeking to implement their own pre-tests as well as those looking to gain a better understanding of the processes that undergird the data generation process for LAPOP's AmericasBarometer.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Results from JSTOR keyword search of “pretest” and “survey”

Author(s)	Year	Publication Type
Andrews	2017	Journal article
Banks and Hicks	2019	Journal article
Bauer	2017	Journal article
Bauer and Carpinella	2018	Journal article
Bilewicz et al.	2017	Journal article
Blair et al.	2017	Journal article
Brookman et al.	2017	Journal article
Casas and Williams	2019	Journal article
Clayton et al.	2019	Journal article
Clifford and Jerit	2018	Journal article
DeVries and Hobolt	2020	Book
Druckman et al.	2018	Journal article
Fafchamps and Labonne	2017	Journal Article
Fattke	2017	Journal article
Feezell	2018	Journal article
Gabriel and Masch	2017	Journal article
González-Torre et al.	2017	Journal article
Groenedyk	2019	Journal article
Hoffman and Nugent	2017	Journal article
Jost	2020	Book
Kane and Barabas	2019	Journal article
Kaplan et al.	2019	Book
Klar and Shmargad	2021	Book
Kropko and Banda	2018	Journal article
Larson and Lewis	2017	Journal article
Lupton	2020	Book
Mares and Young	2019	Journal article
Mattes and Weeks	2019	Journal article
McConnell et al.	2018	Journal article
Moaddel	2019	Book
Mullinix	2018	Journal article
Ogbo et al.	2021	Journal article

Author(s)	Year	Publication Type
Ryo	2017	Journal article
Shepherd et al.	2017	Journal article
Speckhard et al.	2018	Journal article
Sydnor	2020	Book
Sydnor	2019	Book
Ugarriza and Nussio	2017	Journal article
Wang and Chen	2019	Journal article
Wegren et al.	2017	Journal article
White and Laird	2020	Book
Wintemute	2019	Journal article
Woodall	2018	Journal article

Appendix 2: LAPOP Pre-Designed Probes

Paraphrasing

- What do you think we mean by asking this?
- If you were to put this in your own words, how would you ask this question?
- Does there occur to you a simpler way to ask this that could be easily understood by others?

Cognitive Probes

- Can you tell me what you understand by “X”?
- What do you think we are looking for here?

Confirmatory Probes

- So you said you experienced “x”?
- And this happened in the last 12 months or before?
- Please, take into account that we are asking about your own experience

Expanding Probes

- When you think of this, what other ideas come to mind?
- Can you think of any other responses?
- Do you think there are missing response choices?

Confirmatory

- When you think of this, what other ideas come to mind?
- Can you think of any other responses?
- Do you think there are missing response choices?

Check Feelings

- How did this make you feel?
- Do you think this topic/question might make others feel uncomfortable?

Notes

1. The authors wish to thank Nikki Aminmadani for her impeccable research assistance in this project and Laura Sellers for her editorial review.
2. For example, the researchers “discovered that non-response is a common occurrence when respondents are first read a question” and that “[...] using non-directed probes [increased] response rates” (Seligson 2005: 52; see also Seligson and Berk-Seligson 1978).
3. See Larrea, Schweizer, and Zechmeister 2021.
4. See Chong and Junn 2011, 417-8; Kapiszewski et al. 2015: 290; Mutz 2011: 86.
5. Fowler 1992: 219.
6. Pretests help to cull out sensitive wordings for control items and “avoid ceiling and floor effects” in list experiments (Mares and Young 2019: 64); pretests can also confirm that certain “names cue candidate gender” (Bauer 2017: 285); and pretesting can reduce measurement error (Wang and Chen 2019: 285).
7. A JSTOR search with “pretest” and “survey” as keywords in political science publications yielded 43 results within the last four years. Only 16% of the publications provided information about their pretest design and procedure. See Appendix 1.
8. AmericasBarometer surveys are fielded in a multicultural, multinational, and multiregional context (hence 3M) that covers nearly every country in the Americas.
9. Fitzgerald and Zavala-Rojas 2020; Smith 2004.
10. Beatty and Willis 2007, 289.
11. Presser et al. 2004, 112.
12. Beatty et al. 1997, 5.
13. AAPOR and WAPOR 2021.
14. This contrasts with an undeclared pretest or a pilot, i.e., a survey interview that is conducted as if it were part of the real data collection process.
15. In pretesting for the 2021 AmericasBarometer, local survey firms were asked to recruit participants for pretesting. Participants were told they needed to be available for 60 minutes and have a decent internet connection to engage in a Zoom or WhatsApp call or video call.
16. Lyberg and Weisberg 2016: 27-28; see also Smith 2004; Smyth 2016.
17. In pretesting for the 2021 AmericasBarometer, as an incentive for their participation (and also to cover potential internet connection costs participants might have incurred), firms were allowed to provide a small stipend that could not exceed the cost of two movie tickets.

18. During their intensive training, enumerators engaged in role-playing exercises, and practice their skills with potential respondents in field tests as well. The LAPOP pretester who typically also engages in training activities, therefore, has more hands-on involvement in detecting shortcomings and making recommendations to enumerators and partner organizations alike.
19. See Fujii 2013. For example, in one LAPOP experience, very spontaneous but illuminating conversations with cab or rideshare-app drivers, bellhops, or housekeepers in a hotel in Tegucigalpa were critical to pin down and fine-tune a less loaded equivalent of “stop migrants at the border” in Spanish for the wording of an experiment.
20. Beatty and Willis 2007: 288. In this note, we use “questionnaire” and “instrument” interchangeably to refer to a question–answer-based measurement form.
21. Hunt, Sparkman, and Wilcox (1982) stipulate a third use for survey pretests: testing data analysis procedures. While for independent researchers this might be indeed a useful utilization of a survey pretest, LAPOP does not typically conduct pretesting for this purpose.
22. Beatty and Willis 2007; Willis and Antino 2013.
23. Willis and Antino 2013.
24. Haeger et al. 2012.
25. Willis 1994; Beatty and Willis 2007.
26. Beatty et al. 1997.
27. There are many different ways to classify probes. For example, Willis (2005) distinguishes between probes that are anticipated (pre-designed and proactive), spontaneous (constructed during the interview but initiated by the interviewer), conditional (pre-designed but triggered by interviewer response), or emergent (constructed during the interview and in reaction to respondent behavior). Another categorization of probes includes paraphrasing (requesting that respondents express what was asked with their own words), confidence ratings (soliciting from interviewees how sure they are of a previously given answer), and sorting, which consists of requesting that respondents categorize words or concepts with the objective of establishing the grounds for common attribution of meaning to questions and response categories (Lenzer et al. 2016). When categorized based on the main objective they are intended to achieve, probes can be classified as cognitive (e.g., focused on the ability to understand the question), confirmatory (aimed at checking in responses are accurate), or expansive (with the goal of asking for more perspective on a topic) (Beatty et al. 1997, Priede et al. 2014). LAPOP uses these different types of probes, with their different goals, across different stages of the pretesting. Appendix 2 provides an overview of the main probes that LAPOP uses.

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This report was edited by Laura Sellers. This report was translated by Camilo Plata and J. Daniel Montalvo. Formatting, production, copy editing, graphics, and report distribution were handled by Mariana Rodríguez and Laura Sellers. Our data and reports are available for free download on the project website. Please follow us on Twitter to stay in touch.

As a charter member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Trans-parency Initiative, LAPOP is committed to routine disclosure of our data collection and reporting processes. More information about the AmericasBarometer sample designs can be found at vanderbilt.edu/lapop/core-surveys.

This *Methodological Note* is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Vanderbilt University. The contents of this Methodological Note report are the sole responsibility of its author and LAPOP and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the United States Government or any other supporting organization. LAPOP's AmericasBarometer surveys are supported predominantly by USAID and Vanderbilt University.

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