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Abstract

Traugott notes that large differences exist in the distribution of the "political interest" variable between the 1984 pre-election wave and the Rolling Cross Section wave. Traugott finds that the political interest differences are not associated with differences in interviewing modes or the level of education of respondents. Instead, she attributes this difference to question order effects and slight alterations in question wording between the surveys. Traugott concludes that the differences in the political interests response distributions demonstrate that similarly worded questions may be actually quite different measurements of a particular underlying concept.