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SEQUENTIAL DETECTION OF COMPROMISED ITEMS USING RESPONSE TIMES IN COMPUTERIZED ADAPTIVE TESTING



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- Computerized Adaptive Testing (CAT)
- **A GLARING SECURITY ISSUE**
 - items are sequentially selected
 - maximize information selection method: highly **unbalanced item exposure**



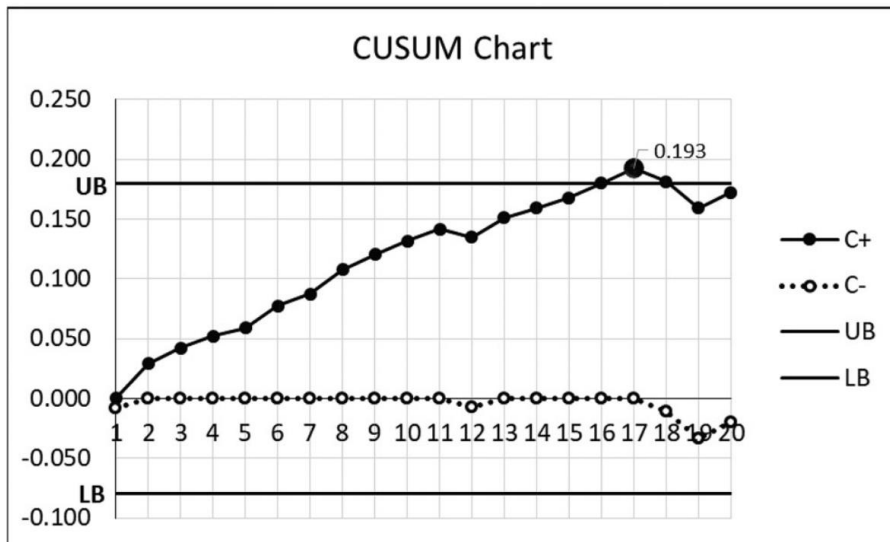
- ① Simpson–Hetter (SH) method
- ② a-stratification techniques
- ③ ...



a realistic item pool size \ll the number of examinees

spot anomalous behavior of both examinees and items!

- From the **examinee** perspective
 - detect an aberrant pattern of responses or response times (RTs)
- From the **item** perspective ✓
 - detect item parameter drift (IPD)
 - ☹ CUSUM: need to repeat item calibration at each sequential step



➔ **inadequate sample size**
tremendous computational burden

[Xiaofeng Yu & Ying Cheng, 2020, figure 1]

- From the **examinee** perspective
 - detect an aberrant pattern of responses or response times (RTs)
- From the **item** perspective ✓
 - detect item parameter drift (IPD)
 - detect an aberrant pattern of responses or RTs across all examinees that have been administered the item

Belov, 2014

O'Leary & Smith, 2017

McLeod & Schnipke, 1999

need to identify a larger set of potentially aberrant examinees first

- From the **examinee** perspective
 - detect an aberrant pattern of responses or response times (RTs)
- From the **item** perspective ✓
 - detect item parameter drift (IPD)
 - detect an aberrant pattern of responses or RTs across all examinees that have been administered the item

Belov, 2014

O'Leary & Smith, 2017

McLeod & Schnipke, 1999

need to identify a larger set of potentially aberrant examinees first

Lu & Hambleton, 2003

Han & Hambleton, 2004

Zhang, 2014; Zhang & Li, 2016

- ✓ real-time detection procedure
- ✓ quick & relatively high accuracy

Δ responses / every exposure



Δ RTs / every exposure
PURPOSE

- Response model

$$- P(X_{ij} = 1|\theta) = P_j(\theta_i) = c_j + \frac{1 - c_j}{1 + e^{-a_j(\theta_i - b_j)}}$$

$$- I_j(\theta_i) = -E \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial \theta_i^2} \log L(\theta_i | x_{ij}) \right) = a_j^2 \left(\frac{1 - P_j(\theta_i)}{P_j(\theta_i)} \right) \left(\frac{P_j(\theta_i) - c_j}{1 - c_j} \right)^2$$

unbalanced item pool usage

$$- SE(\hat{\theta}_i^{ML}) \approx \frac{1}{\sqrt{I^{(k)}(\hat{\theta}_i^{ML})}} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^k I_j(\hat{\theta}_i^{ML})}}$$

at greater risk of compromise

How to reduce item exposure?

- the Simpson–Hetter (SH) method

$p(S)$ → the probability that an item is **‘selected’**

$p(A)$ → the probability that an item is actually **‘administered’**

➔ $p(A) = p(A|S) \times p(S) \leq r_{\max}$

↓
to adjust $p(S)$ such that $p(A)$ is less than or equal to r_{\max}

a random number is less than $p(A|S)$: administer
otherwise: select next item

- the Simpson–Hetter (SH) method

$p(S)$ → the probability that an item is ‘**selected**’

$p(A)$ → the probability that an item is actually ‘**administered**’

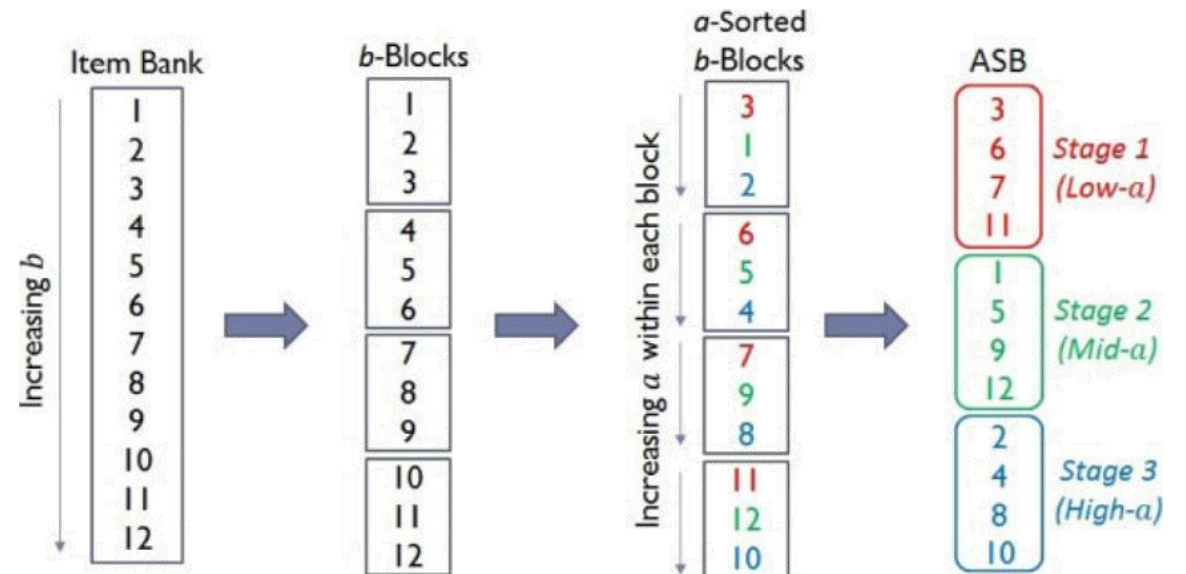
➡ $p(A) = p(A|S) \times p(S) \leq r_{\max}$

unable to increase exposure for underexposed items

- ✓ • a-stratification with b-blocking (ASB)

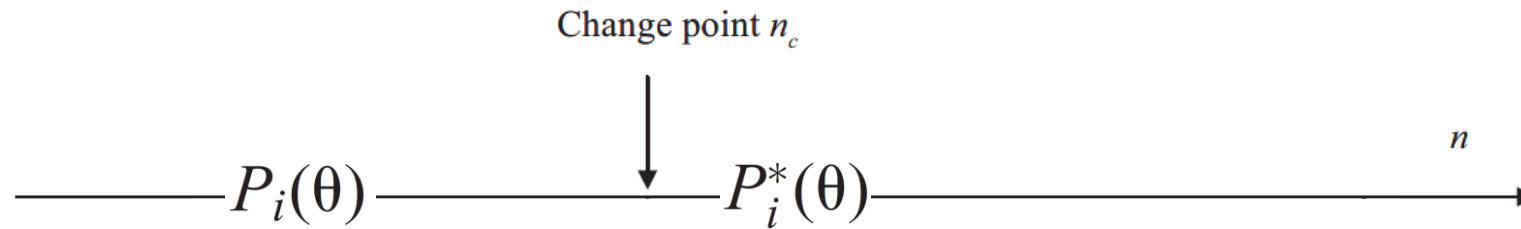
at any given stage:

$$\text{maximize } B_j(\hat{\theta}_i) = \frac{1}{|\hat{\theta}_i - b_j|}$$



- Using Responses (based on IRT)

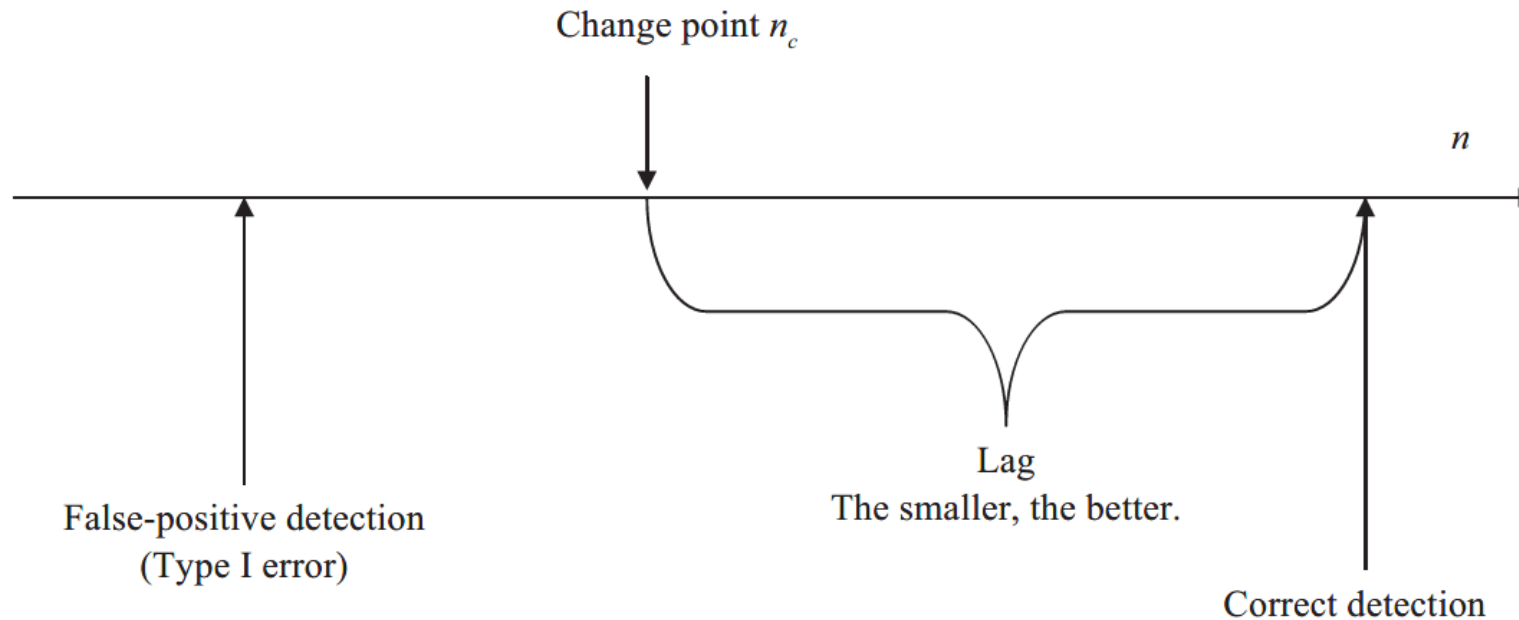
Examinee Sequence n for One Item



➡ $P_i(\theta) \leq P_i^*(\theta)$ at each θ level

- Using Responses (based on IRT)

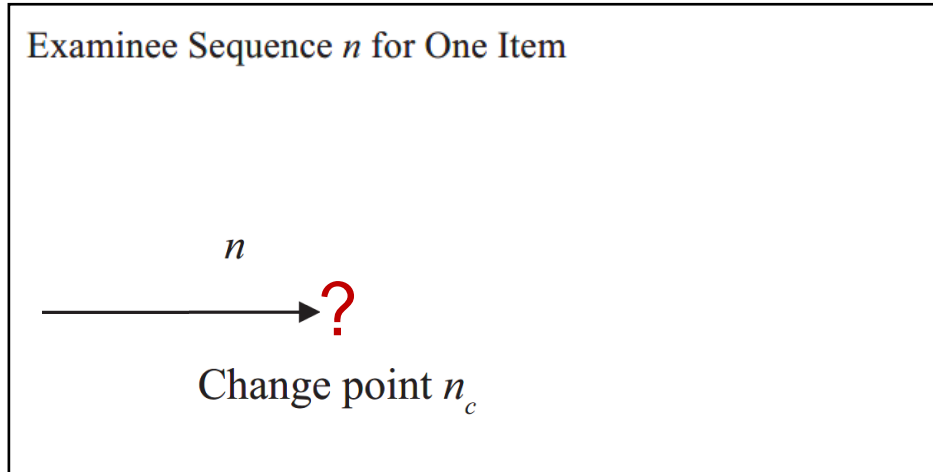
Examinee Sequence n for One Item



The objective:

- ✓ detect **significant increase** in the number of correct responses as soon as possible
- ✓ control the rate of false detections

- Using Responses (based on IRT)



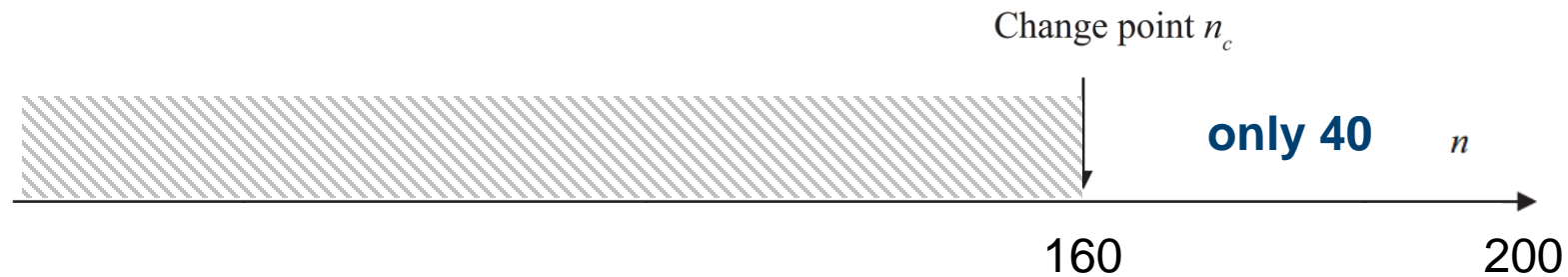
$$H_0 : \sum_{ij}^n X_{ij} = \sum_{ij}^n P_j(\theta_i)$$
$$H_1 : \sum_{ij}^n X_{ij} > \sum_{ij}^n P_j(\theta_i)$$

- The observation: $\sum_{ij}^n X_{ij}$
- The expectation: $\sum_{ij}^n P_j(\theta_i)$

(benchmark value: when the item is not compromised)

- Using Responses (based on IRT)

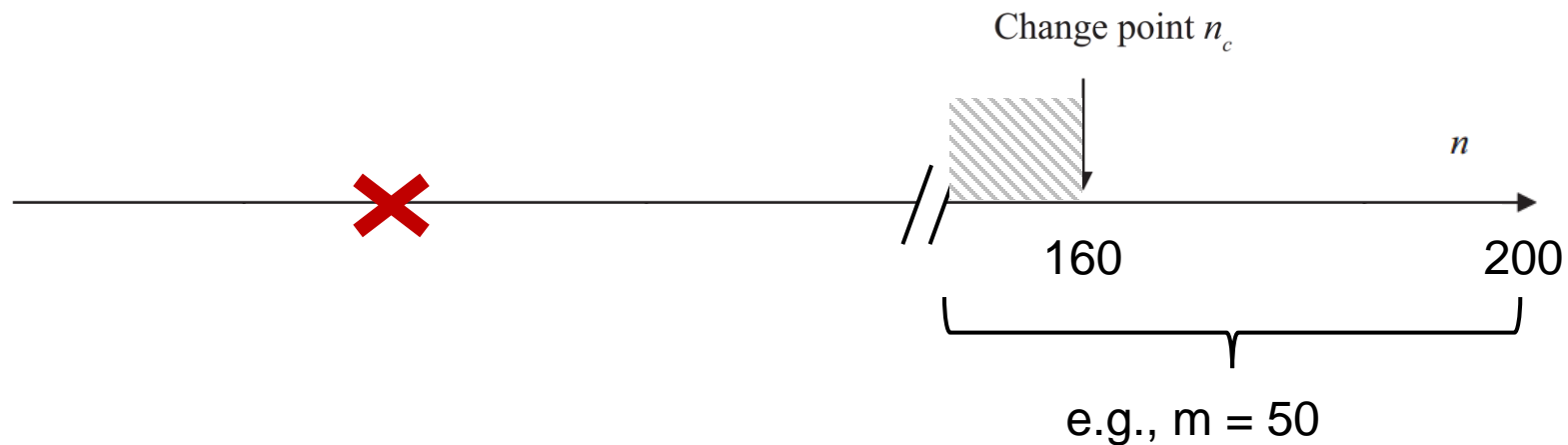
Examinee Sequence n for One Item



160:40

not sensitive to the change

➡ **moving sample**: use the **most recent** responses instead

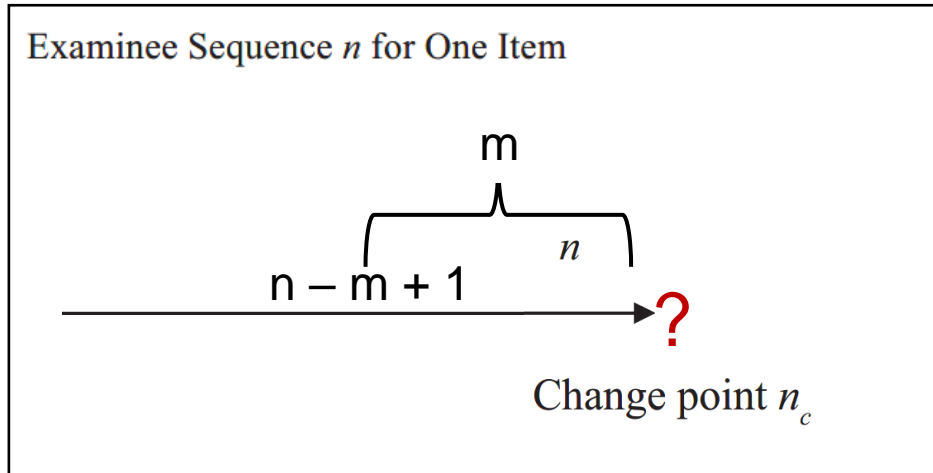


1 → n

$n - m + 1$ → n

10:40

- Using Responses (based on IRT)



$$H_0 : p_j^{(m)} = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i) / m$$

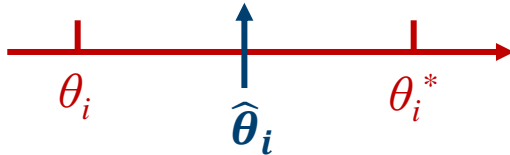
$$H_1 : p_j^{(m)} > \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i) / m$$

- The observation: $Y_j^{(m)} = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n X_{ij}$ and $\hat{p}_j^{(m)} = Y_j^{(m)} / m$

- The expectation: $E(Y_j^{(m)}) = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i)$

- Using Responses (based on IRT)

$$H_0 : p_j^{(m)} = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i) / m \rightarrow \text{true } \theta_i \text{ is never known}$$

$$H_1 : p_j^{(m)} > \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i) / m$$


- to construct a test statistic:

positively biased → diminish the power

- X_{ij} is a Bernoulli random variable

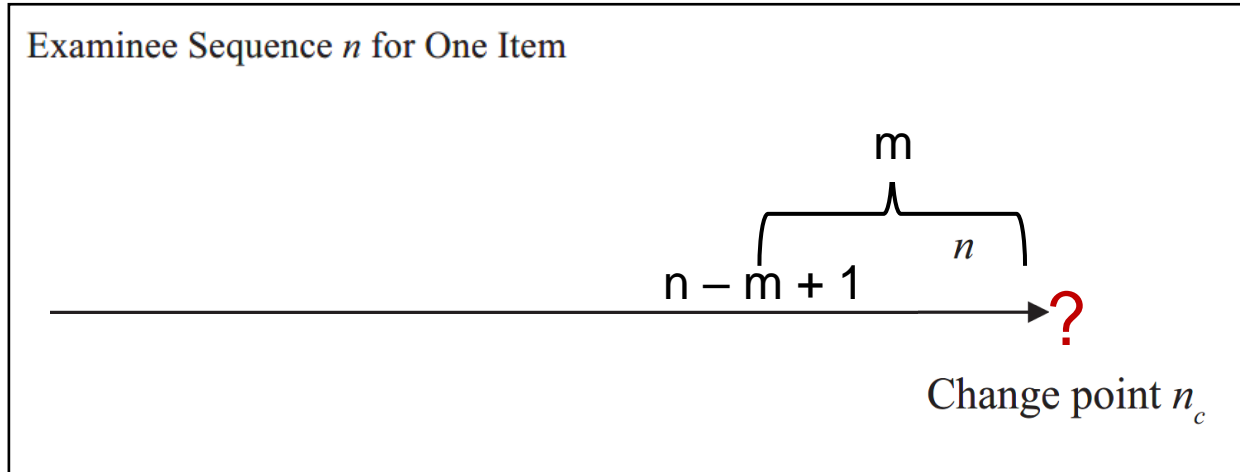
$$E(X_{ij}) = P_j(\theta_i), \quad \text{Var}(X_{ij}) = P_j(\theta_i)(1 - P_j(\theta_i))$$

- $Y_j^{(m)}$ is a Poisson-binomial random variable

$$E\left(Y_j^{(m)}\right) = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i), \quad \text{Var}\left(Y_j^{(m)}\right) = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i)(1 - P_j(\theta_i))$$

➔
$$\frac{\hat{p}_j^{(m)} - \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i) / m}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=n-m+1}^n P_j(\theta_i)(1 - P_j(\theta_i)) / m^2}} \xrightarrow{d} \mathcal{N}(0, 1) \text{ under } H_0$$

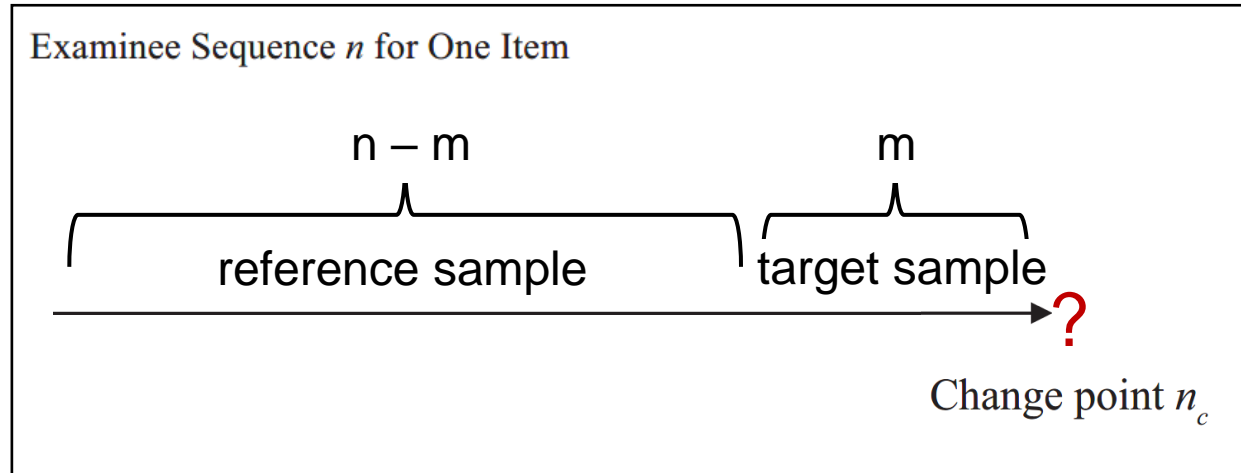
- Using Responses (based on CTT)



- The observation: $Y_j^{(m)} = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n X_{ij}$ and $\hat{p}_j^{(m)} = Y_j^{(m)} / m$
- The expectation: ?

Find a reference sample (when the item is not compromised)

- Using Responses (based on CTT)



$$H_0 : p_j^{(m)} = p_j^{(r)}$$

$$H_1 : p_j^{(m)} > p_j^{(r)}$$

- The observation: $Y_j^{(m)} = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n X_{ij}$ and $\hat{p}_j^{(m)} = Y_j^{(m)} / m$
- The expectation: $\hat{p}_j^{(r)} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n-m} X_{ij}}{n-m}$ (empirical benchmark)

- Using Responses (based on CTT)

$$H_0 : p_j^{(m)} = p_j^{(r)}$$

$$H_1 : p_j^{(m)} > p_j^{(r)}$$

- to construct a test statistic:

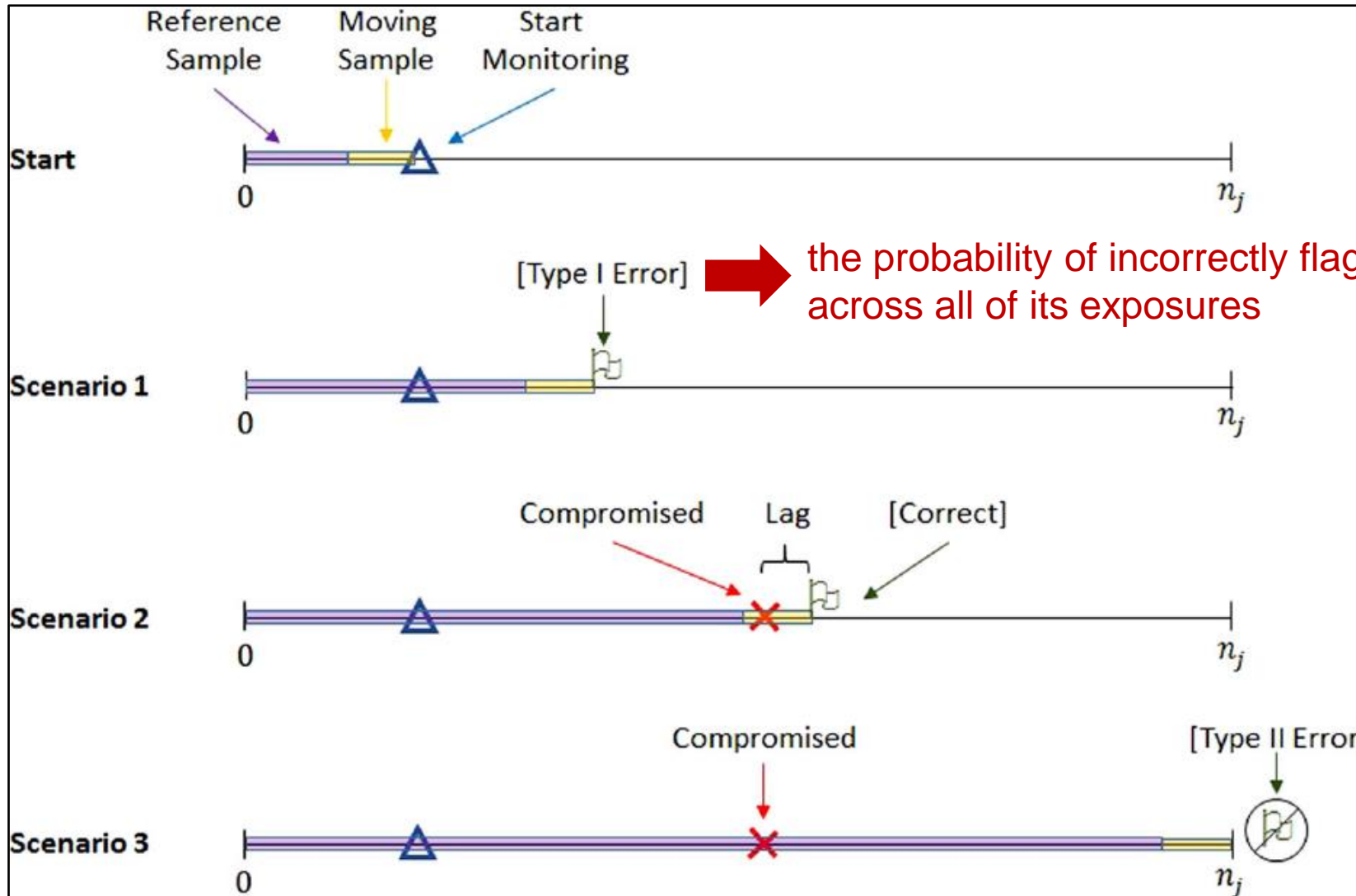
$$\text{Var}(\hat{p}_j^{(m)} - \hat{p}_j^{(r)}) = p_j(1 - p_j) \left(\frac{1}{m} + \frac{1}{n-m} \right) \rightarrow \hat{p}_j = \frac{(n-m)\hat{p}_j^{(r)} + m\hat{p}_j^{(m)}}{(n-m) + m} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n X_{ij}}{n}$$



$$Z_j = \frac{\hat{p}_j^{(m)} - \hat{p}_j^{(r)}}{\sqrt{\hat{p}_j(1 - \hat{p}_j) \left(\frac{1}{m} + \frac{1}{n-m} \right)}} \xrightarrow{d} \mathcal{N}(0, 1) \text{ under } H_0$$

$$= \frac{\hat{p}_j^{(m)} - \hat{p}_j^{(r)}}{\sqrt{\hat{p}_j(1 - \hat{p}_j)/m}} \sqrt{\frac{n-m}{n}}$$

comparing it to a chosen critical value: z_c



- A series of statistical tests:
 - the number of items in CAT tests
 - the number of examinees
- z_c : **case-based**
(Monte Carlo simulations)

- Using Response Times: method 1
 - the goal is to detect a **significant decrease** in RTs
 - the lognormal model:

$$f(t_{ij}|\tau_i) = \frac{1}{t_{ij}\sqrt{2\pi(1/\alpha_j)^2}} e^{-[\log t_{ij} - (\beta_j - \tau_i)]^2 / [2(1/\alpha_j)^2]}$$

$$\log T_{ij}|\tau_i \sim \mathcal{N}[\beta_j - \tau_i, 1/\alpha_j^2]$$

- the average log RT of the last m examinees for item j

- ✓ The observation:

$$\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)} = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n \log T_{ij}$$



$$H_0 : \mu_j^{(m)} = \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n (\beta_j - \tau_i) / m$$

$$H_1 : \mu_j^{(m)} < \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n (\beta_j - \tau_i) / m$$

- ✓ The expectation:

$$E(\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)}) = \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n (\beta_j - \tau_i), \quad \text{Var}(\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)}) = \frac{1}{m\alpha_j^2}$$

the test statistic:

$$\frac{\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)} - \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n (\beta_j - \tau_i) / m}{(1/\alpha_j) / \sqrt{m}} \xrightarrow{d} \mathcal{N}(0, 1) \text{ under } H_0$$

- Using Response Times: method 1

– the test statistic:

$$\frac{\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)} - \sum_{i=n-m+1}^n (\beta_j - \tau_i) / m}{(1/\alpha_j) / \sqrt{m}} \xrightarrow{d} \mathcal{N}(0, 1) \text{ under } H_0$$

– to avoid having to determine specific τ_i 's for each item $[\tau_i \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 1)]$:

$$f(t_j) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(t_j | \tau_i) g(\tau_i) d\tau_i = \frac{1}{t_j \sqrt{2\pi (1 + 1/\alpha_j^2)}} e^{-[\log t_j - \beta_j]^2 / [2(1 + 1/\alpha_j^2)]}$$

$$\log T_j \sim \mathcal{N}[\beta_j, 1 + 1/\alpha_j^2]$$

this convenient formulation only holds when θ_i and τ_i are independent

✓ The expectation:

$$E(\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)}) = \beta_j, \quad Var(\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)}) = (1 + 1/\alpha_j^2) / m$$



$$H_0 : \mu_j^{(m)} = \beta_j$$

$$H_1 : \mu_j^{(m)} < \beta_j$$

the test statistic: $\frac{\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)} - \beta_j}{\sqrt{(1 + 1/\alpha_j^2) / m}} \sim \mathcal{N}(0, 1) \text{ under } H_0$

- Using Response Times: method 2
- moving sample **v.s.** reference sample

✓ reference sample:

$$\hat{\mu}_j^{(r)} = \frac{1}{n-m} \sum_{i=1}^{n-m} \log T_{ij}$$

✓ the variances of log RTs:

$$\hat{\sigma}_j^{2(m)} = \frac{\sum_{i=n-m+1}^n (\log T_{ij} - \hat{\mu}_j^{(m)})^2}{m-1} \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{\sigma}_j^{2(r)} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n-m} (\log T_{ij} - \hat{\mu}_j^{(r)})^2}{n-m-1}$$

➡ the pooled sample variance: $\hat{\sigma}_j^2 = \frac{(m-1)\hat{\sigma}_j^{2(m)} + (n-m-1)\hat{\sigma}_j^{2(r)}}{n-2}$

➡ $H_0 : \mu_j^{(m)} = \mu_j^{(r)}$
 $H_1 : \mu_j^{(m)} < \mu_j^{(r)}$

the test statistic: comparing it to a chosen critical value t_c (reject H_0 when $W_j < t_c$)

$$W_j = \frac{\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)} - \hat{\mu}_j^{(r)}}{\sqrt{\hat{\sigma}_j^2 \left(\frac{1}{m} + \frac{1}{n-m} \right)}} = \frac{\hat{\mu}_j^{(m)} - \hat{\mu}_j^{(r)}}{\hat{\sigma}_j / \sqrt{m}} \sqrt{\frac{n-m}{m}} \sim \mathcal{T}(n-2) \quad \text{under } H_0$$

- Using Responses and Response Times Jointly

- Dual Univariate (DU) Procedures

- ✓ **either** responses **or** RTs is sufficient evidence:

$$\text{DU - 1: Flag item } j \text{ if } [(Z_j > z_c) \cap (W_j < 0)] \cup [(Z_j > 0) \cap (W_j < t_c)]$$

↓
the insignificant result is in the direction of H_1

- ✓ **both** responses **and** RTs are necessary:

$$\text{DU - 2: Flag item } j \text{ if } (Z_j > z_c) \cap (W_j < t_c)$$

- Single Multivariate (SM) Framework [1 = response, 2 = RTs]

- ✓ moving sample:

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(m)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\mu}_1^{(m)} \\ \hat{\mu}_2^{(m)} \end{bmatrix}$$

↓
 $\hat{p}^{(m)}$

and

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{(m)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\sigma}_1^{2(m)} & \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(m)} \\ \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(m)} & \hat{\sigma}_2^{2(m)} \end{bmatrix}$$

↓
 $\hat{p}^{(m)}(1 - \hat{p}^{(m)})(m/(m - 1))$

- ✓ reference sample:

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(r)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\mu}_1^{(r)} \\ \hat{\mu}_2^{(r)} \end{bmatrix}$$

and

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{(r)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\sigma}_1^{2(r)} & \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(r)} \\ \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(r)} & \hat{\sigma}_2^{2(r)} \end{bmatrix}$$

- Using Responses and Response Times Jointly
 - single multivariate (SM) framework [1 = response, 2 = RTs]

✓ moving sample:

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(m)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\mu}_1^{(m)} \\ \hat{\mu}_2^{(m)} \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{(m)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\sigma}_1^{2(m)} & \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(m)} \\ \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(m)} & \hat{\sigma}_2^{2(m)} \end{bmatrix}$$

✓ reference sample:

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(r)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\mu}_1^{(r)} \\ \hat{\mu}_2^{(r)} \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{(r)} = \begin{bmatrix} \hat{\sigma}_1^{2(r)} & \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(r)} \\ \hat{\sigma}_{12}^{(r)} & \hat{\sigma}_2^{2(r)} \end{bmatrix}$$



the mean vectors of the joint distribution: asymptotic **bivariate normality** (multivariate CLT)

✓ the unbiased pooled covariance matrix:

$$\hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}} = \frac{m-1}{n-2} \hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{(m)} + \frac{n-m-1}{n-2} \hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{(r)}$$

✓ the two-sample Hotelling's T^2 statistic: $T^2 = [\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(m)} - \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(r)}]' \left[\hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}} \left(\frac{1}{m} + \frac{1}{n-m} \right) \right]^{-1} [\hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(m)} - \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^{(r)}]$

$$H_0 : \boldsymbol{\mu}^{(m)} = \boldsymbol{\mu}^{(r)}$$

$$H_1 : \mu_1^{(m)} > \mu_1^{(r)} \quad \& \quad \mu_2^{(m)} < \mu_2^{(r)}$$

$$F = \frac{n-3}{2(n-2)} T^2 \sim \mathcal{F}(2, n-3) \quad \text{under } H_0$$

comparing it to a chosen critical value F_c (reject H_0 when $F > F_c$)

- Simulations based on real data (high-stakes CAT)
 - 2000 examinees
 - item pool: 500 items (3PLM & HLNM)
 - estimation for α_j , β_j , θ_i , and τ_i :
 - MCMC routine that fixed a_j , b_j , and c_j
 - center the distribution of τ_i at 0
 - 10,000 MCMC draws with a burn-in size of 5000

- Simulation Design

- item selection: the ASB

- 5 strata of about 100 items each

- test length: 30 items

- the first 5 were chosen randomly

- maximum exposure rate = 0.2

- response:

- Bernoulli distribution with $p = P_j(\theta_i)$

- response time:

- $\log \mathcal{N}(\beta_j - \tau_i, 1/\alpha_j^2)$

- two broad manifestations of item compromise:

1. give **any test-taker** an opportunity to gain preknowledge of **any leaked item**

2. one or more **subsets of examinees** gain preknowledge of different **subsets of the item pool**

- the preknowledge distribution:

1. responses:

$$P^*(X = x) = 0.999^x \cdot 0.001^{(1-x)} \Leftrightarrow X \sim \text{Bernoulli}(0.999)$$

2. response times:

$$f^*(t_{ij}) = \frac{3.5}{t_{ij}\sqrt{2\pi}} e^{-3.5^2(\log t_{ij}+2)/2} \Leftrightarrow \log T \sim \mathcal{N}(-2, 1/3.5^2)$$

(range from about 2 to 30 s with a mean of about 8.5 s)

- Simulation Design

- the probability of any examinee having preknowledge of any given compromised item (ψ):

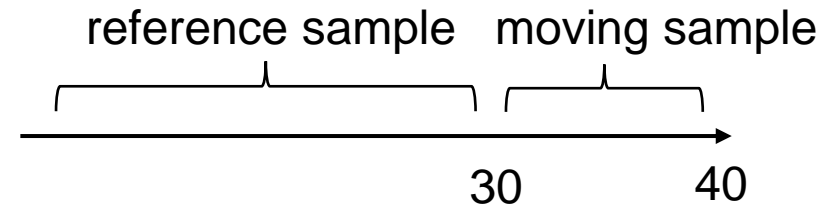
$$\psi = P(\text{preknowledge} \mid \text{compromised})$$

➡
$$\tilde{P}_j(\theta_i) = \psi P^*(X_{ij} = 1) + (1 - \psi)P_j(\theta_i)$$

$$\tilde{f}_j(t_{ij}|\tau_i) = \psi f^*(t_{ij}) + (1 - \psi) f_j(t_{ij}|\tau_i)$$

- the monitoring process:

- ✓ start for every item at the 40th exposure (e.g., $m = 10$)



- compromised items:

- ✓ random quarter of the item pool (about 125 items)
- ✓ each starting at a randomized exposure count between 40 and 100

- Evaluation criteria

- C = all compromised items & F = all flagged items

- 1. type I error rate:

$$P(\text{Type I Error}) \approx P(F|C') = \frac{P(F \cap C')}{P(C')} = \frac{|F \cap C'|}{|C'|}$$

- 2. power:

$$\text{Power} \approx P(F|C) = \frac{P(F \cap C)}{P(C)} = \frac{|F \cap C|}{|C|}$$

- 3. the average lag:

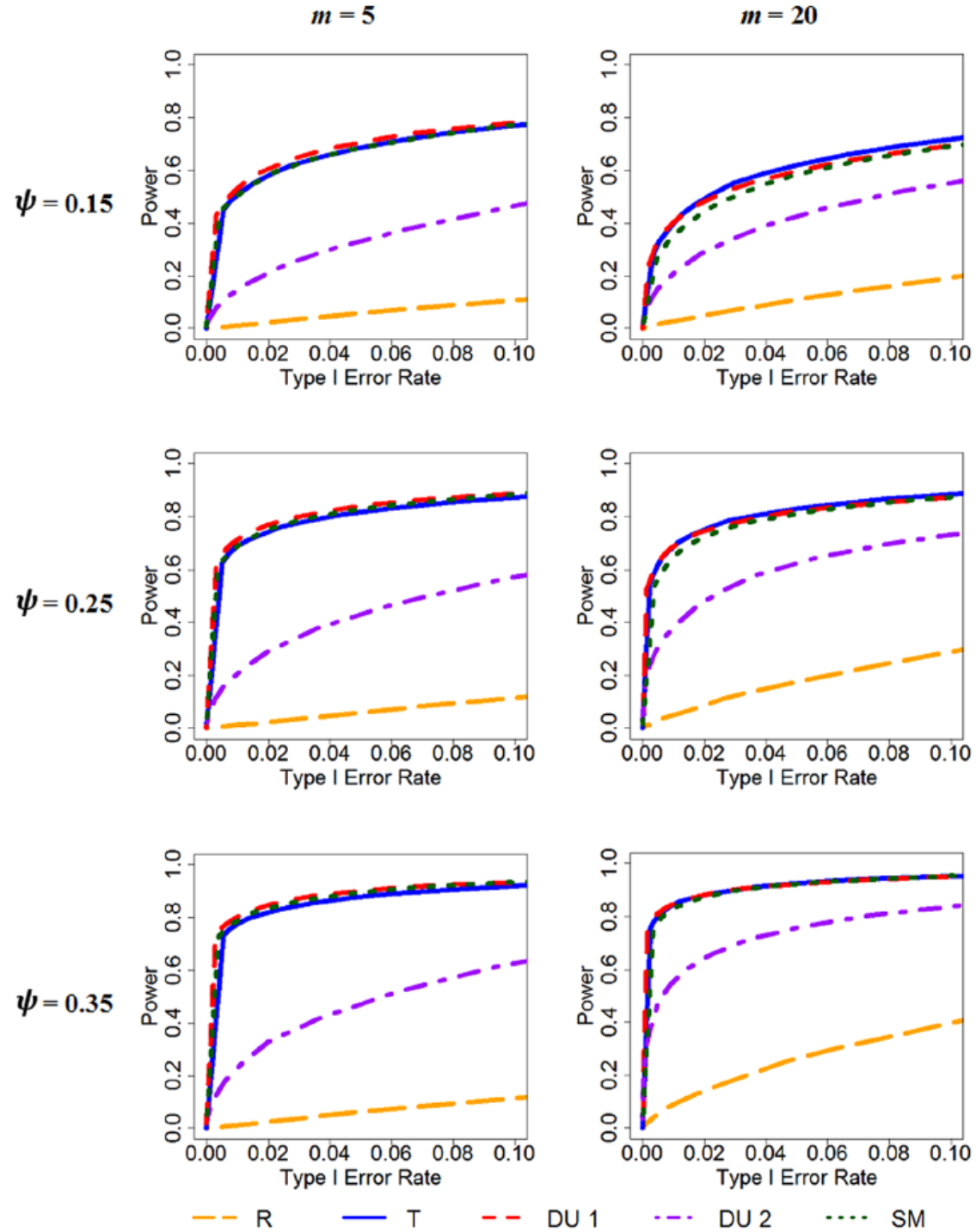
$$\bar{L} = \frac{\sum_{j \in F \cap C} (n_j - l_j)}{|F \cap C|} \quad (\text{change point } l_j \text{ to flag point } n_j)$$



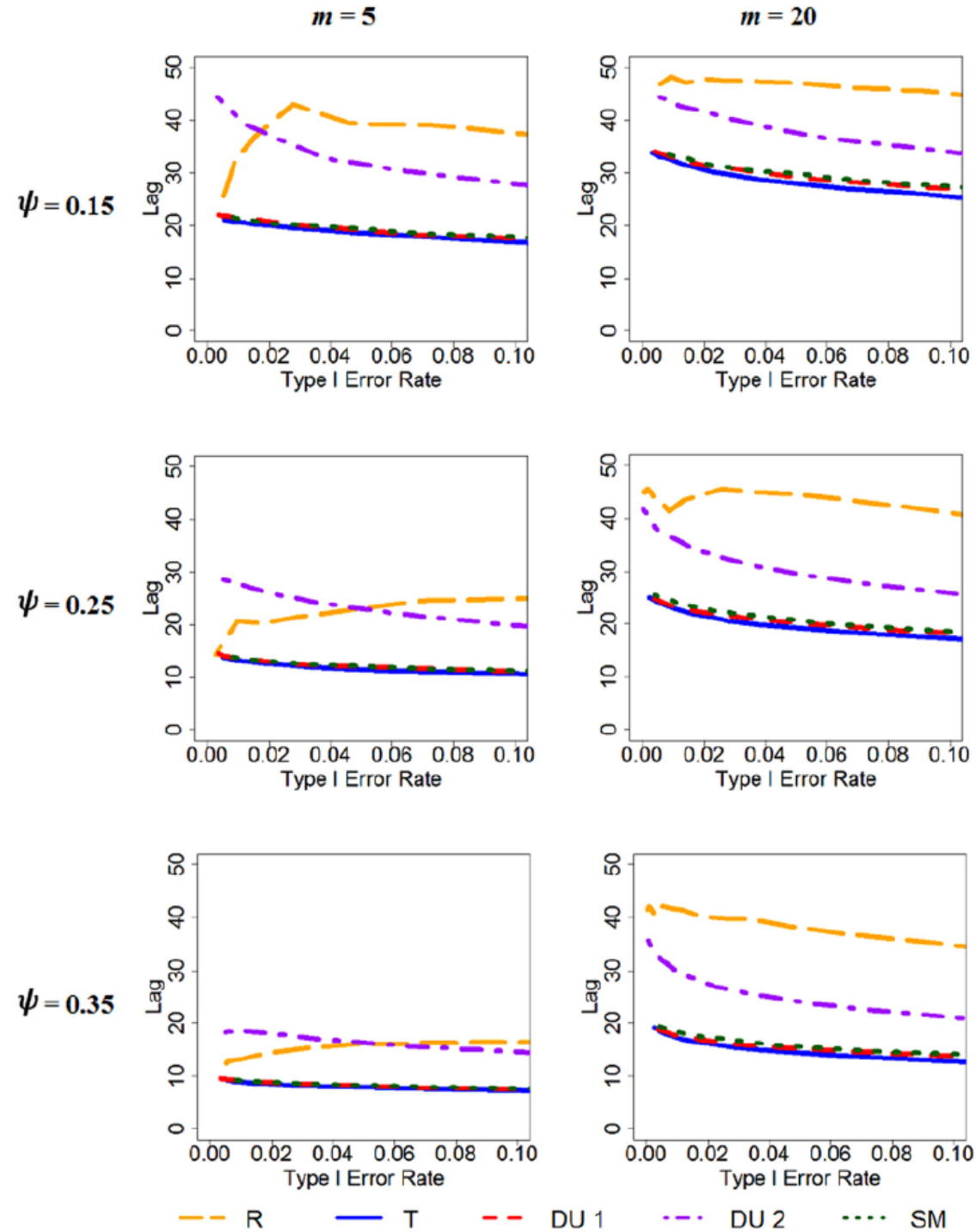
Any flagged item, whether or not in error, was recorded but otherwise **kept operational** in the item pool.

- Purpose:
 - compared the performances of the five monitoring schemes:
 1. responses alone (R)
 2. RTs alone (T)
 3. dual univariate 1 (DU-1)
 4. dual univariate 2 (DU-2)
 5. single multivariate (SM)
- Conditions:
 - moving samples: $m = 5, 20$
 - preknowledge probabilities: $\psi = 0.15, 0.25, 0.35$
 - 100 replications

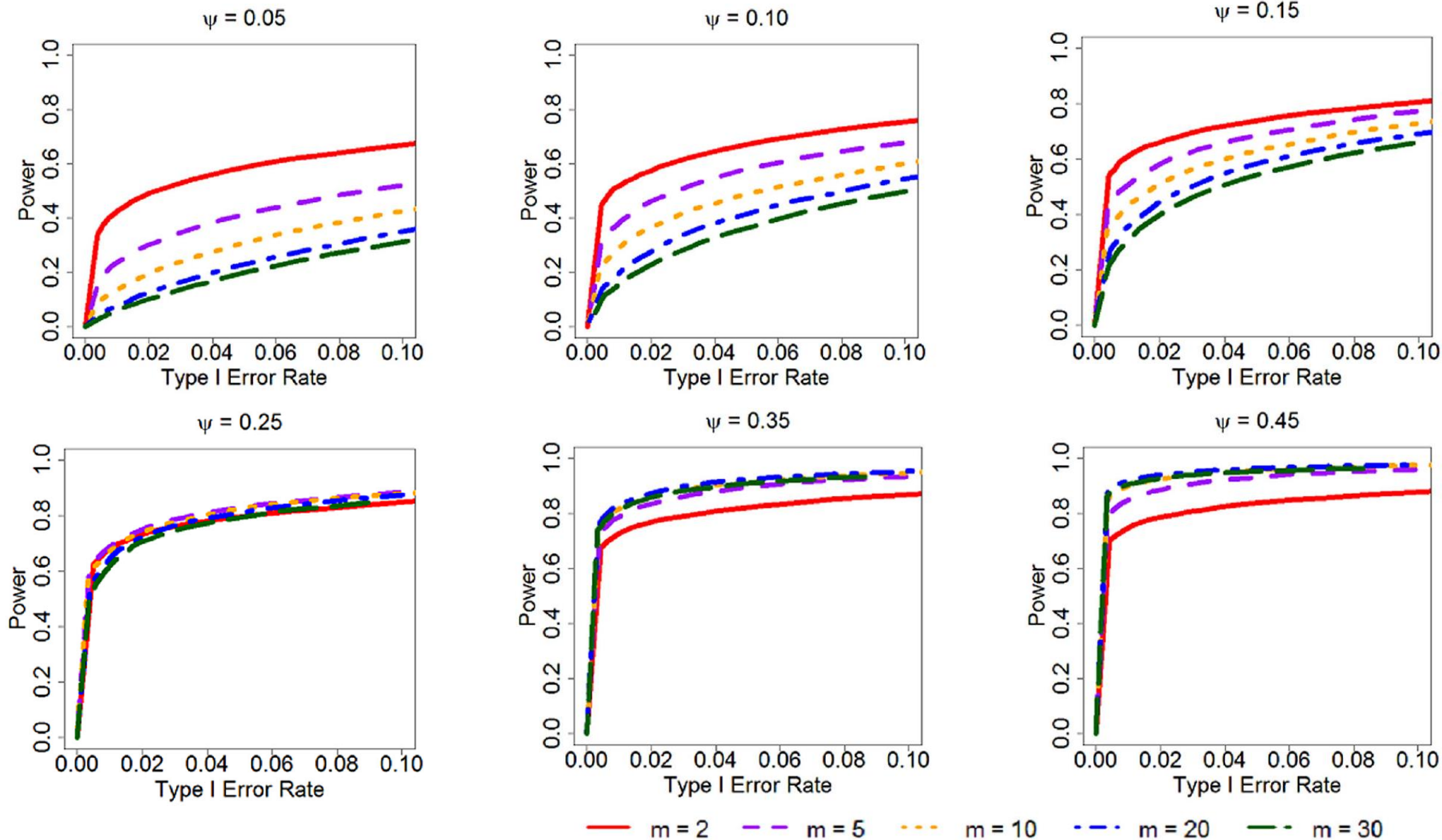
Results



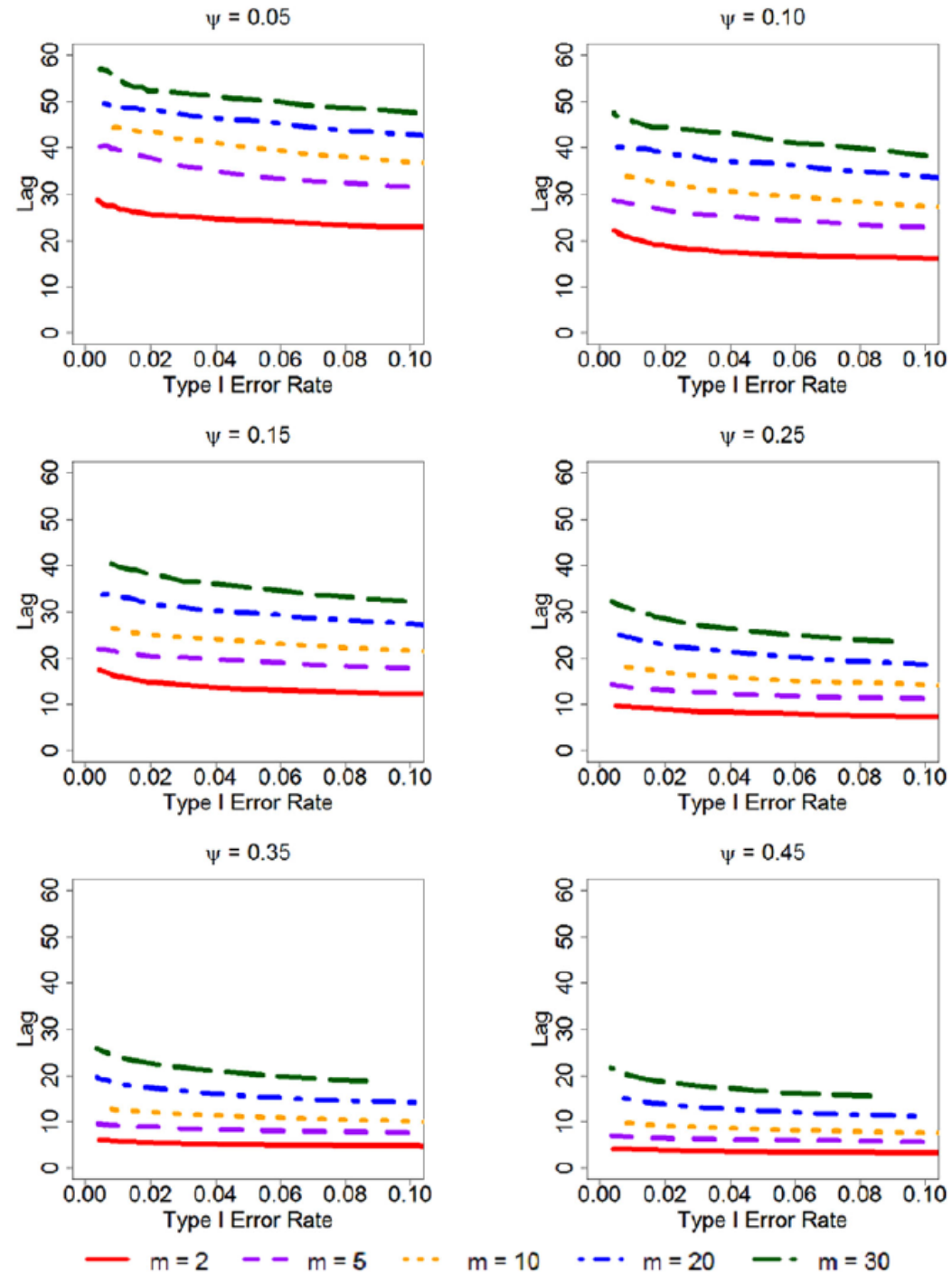
Results



- Purpose:
 - investigate the interaction between ψ and m
- Conditions:
 - monitoring scheme: SM
 - moving sample sizes: $m = 2, 5, 10, 20, 30$
 - preknowledge probabilities: $\psi = 0.05, 0.10, 0.15, 0.25, 0.35, 0.45$
 - 100 replications



Results



- Both **DU-1** and **SM** were shown to be equally superior over **DU-2**
- SM has two distinct advantages over DU-1:
 - easier to implement
 - combines all information into a single evidentiary criterion
- The choice of an appropriate moving sample size
 - find the equilibrium point ψ_e :
 - if** true $\psi < \psi_e$, **then** $m = 2$
 - else** choose the largest m
 - ➔ allow the moving sample size to **vary over** the course of **the monitoring process**

- the interpretation of power:

– a compromised item is flagged

$$\text{power} = P(F|C) \neq P(C|F)$$

= 5.5% (low base rate)

$$\begin{aligned} P(C|F) &= \frac{P(F|C)P(C)}{P(F|C)P(C) + P(F|C')P(C')} = \frac{\text{Power} \times P(C)}{[\text{Power} \times P(C)] + [\alpha \times (1 - P(C))]} \\ &= \frac{90\% \times 5.5\%}{(90\% \times 5.5\%) + \{5\% \times (1 - 5.5\%)\}} \\ &\approx 50\% \end{aligned}$$

- The particular **lognormal distribution** used to model preknowledge RTs
- Did not consider scenarios of **drastic changes in response patterns** due to reasons unrelated to item compromise
- **the probability of item preknowledge** (ψ) was assumed to be constant & **respond** correctly with near certainty (99.9%)
- the impact of the correlation between θ and τ
- non-statistical considerations
- the classic Hotelling's T^2 statistic may not be the most appropriate choice

THANKS FOR LISTENING!

REPORTER

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