

Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Heuvel, Maarten van den

Sat 2020-06-27 1:03 PM

To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo <Guillermo.MonteroMelis@mpi.nl>;

Cc: Ostarek, Markus <Markus.Ostarek@mpi.nl>;

Hi both,

Most important info in my previous email, some additions

- There is some data for discat_test_day1 now, best to look there for the output. Let's switch to this link and ditch discat_test.
- It logs everything as 'incorrect' during practice because the practice labels contain brackets and quotes (press 'z') and (press '.') the system can display that correctly but has trouble using it to check the correct answer. It does log the answer they gave, it just doesn't evaluate it correctly because the brackets get messed up in the output. This can be programmed around but it would be yet another ugly fix, so I think maybe just keeping it like this might be the lesser problem since this is practice. What do you think?
- This still has 'Event' in ColB for both 'FinalImage' and 'Timeout', I changed this now to duplicate the value in col C, so 'FinalImage' now has 'FinalImage' in both col C and B and 'Timeout' now has 'Timeout' in col B and C.
- I believe you've worked with the timing columns before, are those clear?

Best,

Maarten

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Saturday, June 27, 2020 1:26:01 AM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

Some quick answers:

tagpairedata.csv seems to be the most relevant file. I say 'seems' because I don't completely understand the structure of files but it is the file I have the most control over. The developer actually recommends the use of the JSON data that can be gotten via HTML-commands, though pretty much everyone but Teun uses tagpairedata.

I don't know how to reset the data so I've deployed a new version of discat_test as discat_test_day1.

The column names will not change though, those are fixed. This means the column headers actually do 'match' the data but the data can be confusing plus it does change when I update the experiment i.e. a lot.

I've attached a snippet of the latest trials, most output should now look something like this (this is from `discat_test`). The first bit until 'Timeout' is a trial where there was a timeout, the last bit is a trial with an answer. You'll notice that the structure changes slightly (last two rows) but I cannot change that, it's auto-logged.

It looks like there are no correct/incorrect answers in the data but that's because the file is clogged with timeouts because I constantly re-run the script in the background to check for issues. To avoid confusion, you can have a look at attached file for now and my redeployed `discat_test_day1` later.

For most of these rows, I can change columns B, C, and D to provide you with relevant info. For some I cant, in this case rows 12, 14 and 15 are auto-logged and to make things confusing the 'stale nextStimulus blocked' only pops up occasionally, I can guess from the name what it more or less means but don't know why/when it pops up. This means you need a parser that works with variable characteristics instead of structure, because the structure is not the same for each trial. Usually it's easiest to use 'EventTag' for that, which I notice has two times 'Event' for two different things, I'll change that. You'll need that kind of parser anyway because there are multiple parts to each day with a slightly different output.

Bearing in mind the restrictions mentioned above, just let me know what you want to be written and I'll update the output insofar that is possible.

I hope this clarifies things a bit, more tomorrow!

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2020 8:21 PM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Maarten,

I've quickly checked the output and I couldn't easily make sense of it. In parts:

- 1) I've checked the output of "categorization_session" and "discat_test"
- 2) For both I assume the "tagpairedata.csv" is the relevant file
- 3) A problem with both is that the data format changes in the file. This means that the column headers (1st row) don't match the later rows. I am assuming I should be looking at the bottom rows.
- 4) It would help me if you delete all the data and then we run a few trials only on the last version. To make sure column names match data.
- 5) I still tried to make sense of the output but I couldn't even see where the information is about whether the response is correct or incorrect. This was apparent in the first rows of data (at least for categorization) but not for the more recent output (i.e. the relevant one)

Could you do 4 and perhaps explain what's the deal with 5 -- and then I try to look at it again this weekend or asap.

best,
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 10:05 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

Most urgent would be checking if you can work with the output. New counterbalancing changed that slightly but not much so if you already checked and it was fine, it should be fine still.

Other (not so urgent) things:

Experiments are updated with new counterbalancing though you won't/shouldn't really notice that. Also new text colour. I think the buttons still need a different colour, which? (white doesn't work but I could go for a light grey?). I tested categorization_session just now and that works fine(except see below). Will test discat_test later.

Script got stuck (once) in the middle of testing categorization_session, first thing that this happened like this and I doubt any of the new changes did that but please let me know it happens for you. This was easy to solve by just refreshing the page (system remembers location), so no data loss but probably good to tell that to people in the instructions and/or email, plus tell them not to do in-private browsing to be sure (though it seems to work with in-private as well).

Are the feedback images 'royalty free'? I know stock image websites use web-crawlers to check for their images being used online and will sue if they find one, not very likely and not hugely expensive if removed quickly but best to not have them to begin with. If you want to use this in the main exp I'll see if they can easily be given a gray background, I think that would look neater (but probably the size needs some adjusting too).

My auto-mailer works so we have that if the other thing doesn't work.

I've taken up the general issue of the current (too long) development times in detail with our web developer and will discuss with Reiner next week. In all honesty I don't expect much because I've done that several times already and in the end the biggest issue is clearly the BQ4-project, which should be nearing completion (should). I will

however ask for a clarity on allocation of TG resources to different projects. There are other issues that aren't solved but those would, as said, require a lengthy explanation. Either way, this probably won't have much of an effect on your experiment so I won't keep you updated unless it explicitly involves your experiment, is that ok? If you want to stay updated on the general discussion to e.g. keep a check on things for NBL then I can do that of course, just let me know in that case (I feel I've bothered you quite enough with stuff that shouldn't be relevant to your research).

N.B. as said I won't work tomorrow but on Saturday.

Thanks!

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 6:43:21 PM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

OK, this all looks promising. Thanks. I haven't had time to look at the details. Is there something urgent I need to clarify at this point?

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 1:39:20 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

CC-ed you in our conversation so you can see that things are 'moving forward' albeit slowly. Seems like we would have something the week after next if BQ4 (that's Florian) doesn't come up with new requirements. If he does then we might have to get political about it after all. This seems acceptable to me unless you were planning to test actual subjects next week? I'm sorry for not requesting the auto-mailer earlier but I was told we had a system 'in place' and that is not at all how I would describe what we actually have. I'll keep you posted!

Best,

Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 11:59:09 AM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Maarten,

1- Use your work around for the lists.

2 - Keep me updated about the need of shotguns - and whether/when I, Markus or both should write to Peter.

Best,
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 11:39:54 AM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

Re your feedback, only one point (but an important one):

Change to 32 lists, because we have two additional angle groups.

The system cannot handle 32 lists (too many lines of data) but I can work around this. What I'd prefer to do then (for all sessions) is to not define the trial condition in terms of S1,S2,S3,S4, but in terms of -1.5, -0.5,-0.5,1.5 . Including condition names doubles the amount of trials in the input lists because the angle multiplier is different depending on whether the reference angle is >90 deg, meaning one list where S1 = -1.5 and another where S1 = 1.5. Since subjects don't see the condition names anyway I think we can just have the multipliers and infer the conditions during later analysis. Would that work for you? (I think we already discussed something like this before, actually)

If not then the current structure would take the script over the max number of lines so it would need a complete reprogram. I know that sounds ridiculous because there are really only four different stimuli/list but the Frinex-function that repeats/re-randomises stimuli does not seem to work reliably so I either have to define every single trial or completely work around intended system use (more than I already am).

On the plus side, batch-deployment of other exps. seems to have stopped, though I will verify that that is indeed the case before I am truly optimistic. I've swapped Friday for Saturday so I am quite sure to I'll get work done then.

Re the auto-mailer: apparently a massive miscommunication between me and my colleagues there, don't know what did it but it suddenly seems crystal clear. I just asked him about the timeline because he has two requests in queue but one is related to the BQ4-project so might be a large task. If he says weeks then I'll pressure Reiner on Monday because that won't do. In this case I can hopefully use 'politics' in our favour because that wouldn't be the first time this project is interfering with regular work and it's getting fairly extreme now.

Thanks!

Best,

Maarten

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 10:14:27 AM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi both,

I just received a much more elaborate reply so I have now sent my colleagues the entire design (we were stuck at the first hurdle previously). I hope they can implement it, will keep you posted.

Best,
Maarten

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 9:22:48 AM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

The manual solution will require running a script and will at that point check all received participant data, so if you run the script at 22:00 and the participant finishes at 23:00 then the earliest time they will get an e-mail is when you run the script again, e.g. if it's run again at 10:00 the next day they'll get the email at 10:00, if it's run at 15:00 they get the email at 15:00. The script could be hooked up to a scheduling service if the RA makes sure their PC is always on but all in all that's just really not how this should go, too much margin for error.

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 9:00:34 AM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

OK. If you also work more on the manual solution (in parallel) then feel free to come up with solutions that approach our requirements. It's more difficult for me bc it's not always clear what the constraints are.
cheers
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 8:42:03 AM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi both,

That would work if the script runs on a server, not if you run it manually, unless you can get an RA to run it at

6 in the morning.

N.B. I suspect that the Mailgun service used by Teun may allow scheduling but that still doesn't solve things, because if the subject does it at night then the RA has to run the script at night for the mail to be scheduled properly. Many other mail servers can only schedule via their web interface, not via a script. So I'll pursue the server option further.

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 7:51:33 AM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

You're right, I forgot that. To keep it simple, the email could always be sent on the next day after finishing a session, say at 6h in the morning. When they finish the experiment on Frinexe they see a screen that says: "Thank you for completing this session. Tomorrow morning you will receive a link for the next session."
Would that work you think?

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:26:02 AM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

One more thing, I assume there should be a minimum time between sessions (I think you mentioned 10 hours)? I.e. do they get the link the day after or 10h after they did the previous part or should e.g. any person who has completed session1 get the link to session2 as soon as you run the script regardless of when they completed session1? (and maybe have a reminder in the email about minimum time between sessions?)

Thanks!

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2020 12:08:05 AM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Maarten,
Great you could get so much done so quickly. We'll ask an RA to do it.
Best,
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 11:27:56 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

Thanks, I actually gave it a shot (thanks for a lighter note in this conversation, needed that) myself and also asked my colleagues but I have no idea what will happen with the latter, I don't really know the colleague who needs to implement it in the end at all and have no idea if this would be difficult for him but I really wouldn't think so. If they don't respond I'll go to Reiner first, first thing on Monday because he's away the next few days.

I prefer the server option because this kind of thing will happen more often and the 'custom script' option is clearly a crappy solution. There are ways to run scripts in the background on a regular PC but in the end this is really something that should be a Chron job on a server somewhere.

The 'tricky part' is not the mailer (though I admittedly don't have experience with that), but I just finished that and it seems to work fine. Your requirements should be no problem either. The problem is getting data out of Frinex in a fail-safe way, i.e. one that cannot raise exceptions. The Frinex built-in metadata sender should do that, but that plugs into a server. That said, I just quickly programmed something that seems to work. This is clearly not the way things should be done but it seems safe enough. It's still tricky because there may be exceptions I did not think/do not know of that could cause problems. Mainly I just don't like working with a 'black box' like this.

I'll hook my script up to a Gmail server for now (can handle 500 emails/day) I'll ask about getting a custom MPI-address for this if that can handle enough emails, which it should (you really don't want to use your own email for this, I think). Will you be managing the subjects or will an RA do that?

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 10:32:11 PM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Cc: Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Maarten,

Hmm, what a complex situation this is. Thanks for explaining. I also thought we might need to use the shotgun approach, i.e. go through Peter. From what I understand, though, you prefer to first give it a shot (ha ha) yourself. OK.

The ideal requirements -- assuming a) communication with a server and b) that it is easier to check for whether we're on a given date or date +1, +2 etc than to work with time intervals in hours -- are as follows:

- 0) initialize $i = 0$ (to refer to the sessions)
- 1) $i += 1$. IF $i > 5$, GOTO step 7.

- 2) Email is sent to participants for session i.
- 3) IF session i is completed either this day or the day after but before 6pm, then GOTO step1. (ELSE GOTO next step)
- 4) Send reminder about session i, including the link again. Say they have until tomorrow to finish it.
- 5) IF session i is completed this day or the next day, GOTO step 1. (ELSE GOTO next step)
- 6) Send email: "Sorry, your participation has been interrupted and you will not be able to continue the experiment". EXIT.
- 7) Send email: "Thank you for participating in all sessions. As a token of gratitude you will get paid for an extra session!" EXIT

Does that explain the requirements? If you're going for a semi-automatic/manual solution, then I'm not entirely sure what will be the tricky part and what would need to be compromised.

Best,
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 5:17 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo; Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Guillermo,

Sorry, I wasn't elaborate enough, didn't mean to confuse things further. I understand the tone because I share the feeling but I tried to keep it out of the emails. Very short summary (because the rest is a bit of a rant, I'm sorry): I will put my colleagues under pressure to set up an auto-mailer on a server. This is clearly what needs to be done. If you don't want to run the script manually then it is no use if I program a script.

My rant/explanation:

To concisely summarise my own frustration: if things goes on like this for the next year I will quit my job, it doesn't have anything to do with programming at all.

Auto-emailer: I was told we had an auto-emailing 'solution' but what we actually have is a one-off solution for the 80 experiment-project that's being finished right now. This is apparently complicated since the person who needs to implement the auto-mailer does not know anything about Frinex and after a 10+ emails still does not understand what needs to be done. This means that the Frinex developer probably needs to get actively involved but he is too busy to do that now. The confusion is caused by me trying to avoid seemingly blaming him or putting him under pressure because I know for a fact that he has probably worked 50+hrs/week for a year now and isn't to blame for this situation. The real problem behind that has a lot to do with internal (MPI in general) politics and is too complex to summarise here (I'd be happy to discuss that over Skype at some point if you want, nor relevant for your experiment now though). Anyway, I now emailed both colleagues again to indicate that you need a server-run script. If that does not work then I'll CC you and Reiner and Peter Hagoort, that will undoubtedly work but I consider that the nuclear option.

Teuns' solution does not seem desirable because it's a one off, might incur costs, and is dubious privacy-wise. More importantly:

- This does not run on a server, you need to run it manually. If this must be run on a server then this solution does not work or I don't know how to implement it, Teun said this himself, you have to run it manually.

- This is not really a solution at all, it's only a very minimal part of it, just the part that sends an email and that's it. It does not plug into Frinex, it does not check dates/time, etc. etc.. The only difference between that script and what I can make myself in 10 min is that Teun uses the 'mailgun' service/API, but I have no idea why that would be preferable over another email service, I asked him about that but he does not reply. The part that isn't implemented is the tricky part, i.e. plugging into Frinex. Teun has also provided something that plugs into Frinex, which works fine but does not give me what I want. That said, I can set up a script that will work when run manually.

All the other problems are due to the fact that I'm not a web-developer plus Frinex-documentation is minimal so if I'm stuck I have to wait for our dev. to answer/fix things but he is overloaded, and he isn't really to blame for that.

That said, please do send me your requirements, then I'll program the script as a backup anyway. As a final (terrible) solution, you can just have me check on subjects/send emails every day, I have to wait for Frinex builds anyway on that might be less work than the current mess.

In summary, yes, it's a mess, I'll try to make the best of it.

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 4:15:43 PM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den; Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Maarten,

Thanks for the bit about the data.

As for the auto-mailer, I have a bit of trouble understanding how things are prioritized here (not by you but by the TG if I understand correctly). So according to the TG "unfortunately Teun's solution is not desirable". At first it looks as though they can provide a quick alternative solution, which is great coming from a support group. But then it turns out that this will take weeks because of deadlines (added to the months we've been working on this already because of deadlines). And the proposed solution is that one of us has to run a script manually every day (perhaps several times a day, for weeks) -- is that more desirable? This is quite frustrating. Can't TG revise what is desirable and take into account that sending out emails manually for a longitudinal project is not desirable either?

Again, I apologize for the tone, but if Teun has proposed a solution that works, can't it just be implemented?

Best wishes,
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 3:37:22 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo; Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Both,

Thanks!

Data is always at the experiment link plus -admin so discat_test-admin, username is experiment name.

Regarding the auto-mailer: I was told to ask someone to set this up like another project but this is proving to be 'impossible' on short notice with the current deadlines. So I can program something myself in Python after all, but this depends a bit on how 'intelligent' this mailer should be? I.e. it's easiest to have it send a link for the first day, wait until data has been received for that day, and then simply send out the new session link every day (that is, regardless of if/when a subject actually did the experiment). That could work as follows:

- enter email address and subject number in an Excel 'master' file
- run script: script sends out link to that subj for day1
- script also checks if anyone has completed day1, grabs relevant values from day 1
- script mails anyone who got the link for day1 yesterday the link for day2, anyone who got the link for day2 yesterday link for day3, etc.

However, if you want mailings to adapt to the time a subject actually did the experiment, things get a little more complicated, you'd have to specify rules for minimum and maximum time between sessions, and you might need to run the script repeatedly every day (because I can't run it on the server so it has to be run manually). This is possible if it's acceptable to run the script manually every day and the requirements aren't 'tricky'. I.e. things get tricky with requirements like 'minimum 10 hrs between sessions and sessions must be on different days and maximum 24hrs between sessions', because that means you need to run the script multiple times/day to be sure the proper order is maintained for all subjects. I must admit that I really don't like this kind of solution but if you want the 'neat' one (which is to send Frinex metadata output to a server and run a mailer on that server) I think it will probably take weeks (because deadlines).

Please let me know what you think, I hope it's possible to set up some kind of mailer. Will you run the experiment yourself or should and RA do that?

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 1:49:54 PM
To: Heuvel, Maarten van den; Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Maarten,

Thanks. Yes, we received it but there was a communication issue among us (we both thought the other would do it).

Please find our comments highlighted in the attached doc.

Remarks:

- Please make sure the changes to the stimuli (last point) are unambiguous; otherwise we'll clarify.
- What's the link again to access the data? Something with admin but I couldn't find my old notes from the previous exp. Got the pw though.

Best,
Guillermo

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2020 1:43:47 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo; Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Dear both,

This just to check whether you've received my last email (Sunday)?

On a side note, I heard a rumour that in-house participant testing might resume before September after all. Just so you know, if that happens and you want to swap to in-house testing after all, let me know and I will have a Presentation version of this experiment ready within a few days.

Thanks!

Best,
Maarten

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2020 5:15:28 PM
To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo; Ostarek, Markus
Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi both,

Attached what I hope are some near-final remarks regarding the experiment. After the last few remaining things are sorted out I will deploy a separate link for each day of the experiment.

Please do check carefully for issues/errors, the script as it is now is extremely convoluted because of all the workarounds and trying to avoid re-deployment wherever possible. That said, I ran several test runs and it seems to work reliably now.

Peter Withers should hopefully have some time this week to give me some answers/fixes for issues that prevented a 'neat' script, if build times are ok now there is a chance I will test some completely different takes on the scripts after I have these answers, but the current version will do for now. (discat_test is currently around 1400 lines of code not including stimuli, it should be possible in perhaps 200-300)

I hope we are now truly nearly there!

Best,
Maarten

From: Montero-Melis, Guillermo
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 11:24:21 AM

To: Heuvel, Maarten van den; Ostarek, Markus

Subject: Re: apologies server busy from 14:30

Great, that would be excellent!

From: Heuvel, Maarten van den

Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 11:18:24 AM

To: Montero-Melis, Guillermo; Ostarek, Markus

Subject: Fw: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi Both,

See forwarded email below, I'll try to get most things done before 14:30. I think having a pretty much final version this week should still be possible.

Best,
Maarten

From: Shkaravska, Olha

Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 10:54 AM

To: Heuvel, Maarten van den; Hendriks, Cielke

Cc: Dirksmeyer, Reiner; Hintz, Florian; Withers, Peter; Bresser, Gert-Jan de

Subject: apologies server busy from 14:30

Hi, all,

First of all I need to apologise before the Frinex developers and sysadmins for the load of work I have pushed last weeks on the server, so some of you could not do your work timely. Last days I have tried to do "the big rebuilds" in the evenings or in the mornings.

Second of all: today I plan a big rebuild, session by session, that 4 times 10 +/- apps starting from 14:30.

third of all: the most likely after that there will be one more big rebuild like that, where I will be updating the sessions and their wrapper optimised for the updated electron wrapper. After that, "big rebuilds" should happen rarely and I will try to do them not in the office hours.

MVG
O.