SQP Coding system

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Introductory remarks

The URL for the web page is

http://www.surveymethodology.eu/sqp/introduction/

The program is best viewed in Mozilla Firefox, although it also works in Internet Explorer versions 7 and 8. If you have an older version of Internet Explorer, please update your system or use Firefox. Links to download other browsers are provided on the bottom of the introduction page.

On the introduction page there is an instruction video. This video is a draft that is still under development. It can be a bit confusing and can therefore be ignored.

SQP Coding instructions

1. From the introduction page, click 'Start'.

2. Fill in your username and password

3. Click 'log in'. The next page may take some time to load the first time you do this.

4. At the top left you can select the study, language and country of the questions you want to code.

5. Select 'France' as country and wait for the page to reload. (the language French is automatically selected.)

6. The result of the selection is that question B5-trstprl is shown in the coding window on the right

7. In the top of the coding window you see three fields: introduction, question text and answer categories. These have already been filled out for you. This particular question (B5) has no introduction, but it does have question text and answer categories. You can see this also in the ESS questionnaire and showcards available from the ESS archive at NSD.

8. Because the question text and answer categories are already provided for you, you do not need to fill out these fields.

9. Click on 'Next characteristic' button further down the coding window. If you have a smaller screen you may need to scroll down in order to

see this button.

10. The first characteristic to be coded appears. This characteristic concerns the domain (topic) of the question.

11. You are asked to indicate which of the choices provided apply to the question you are coding (in this case still B5-trstprl or 'Trust in Parliament').

12. Whenever you are in doubt about the meaning of the characteristic, you can always get help by clicking on the help icon

13. When you click the help icon, a yellowish window appears that you can scroll through to read an explanation. Once you are done reading this explanation, you can click the same help icon again to close the explanation.

14. After you have made your choice for the characteristic, click 'Next characteristic' again. If you were coding the domain of the question, you will now be asked for a more detailed specification of this domain.

15. On the right hand side, the pane 'Coding history' provides an overview of all the choices you have made previously for this question. It should now display your choice for the domain. The names of the characteristics in this history are clickable.

16. At any time you can go back and make corrections. This can be done in two different ways:

    i. By clicking the 'Previous characteristic' button, taking you to the choice you made previous to the one you are currently coding;
    ii. By clicking any of the choices you have made earlier in the Coding history pane. This will take you directly to that characteristic.

17. Continue coding the characteristics, asking for help where things are unclear.

18. Once you have coded all the necessary characteristics for this question, two things will happen:

    i. You will be shown a page saying 'Congratulations', which again provides an overview of all the choices made for this question. In this overview you can click on any of the characteristics to correct choices if you should wish to do so. At the bottom of the page is a button that allows you to go directly on to coding the next characteristic.
    ii. A 'done' icon will appear in the list of questions on the left-hand side of the screen next to the question. This indicates that this question has been completely coded.

Special considerations:

Automatic codes

Some characteristics can be guessed by the program. These guesses are always suggestions. You should check whether the program's guess was accurate where possible and feasible (for number of syllables this may be too much work but we recommend doing a random check every once in a while).

The program provides automatic guesses for the following characteristics:

- Introduction available?
- Number of categories
- Number of sentences in introduction
- Number of sentences in the question
- Number of syllables in answer categories
- Number of words in answer categories
- Number of words in introduction
- Number of words in question
- Total number of nouns in answer categories
- Total number of nouns in request for an answer
- Total number of syllables in question

Most of the time the characteristic will be filled in using the suggestion, at the moment you are on the coding page for that characteristic. In some cases such as number of nouns, the suggestion is not filled in but only provided above the number field as an indication.

For the *number of nouns* suggestion, an extra help button is shown. When you click this button the program shows you how it coded the sentences using so-called 'part-of-speech tags'. For French the tag for a noun is 'NOM'. However, this varies by language (in English nouns are marked 'NN', for instance).

A full table of the meaning of the French tags is available at
http://www.ims.uni-stuttgart.de/~schmid/french-tagset.html.
For the other languages please see
http://www.ims.uni-stuttgart.de/projekte/corplex/TreeTagger/.

Looking through the tags provided gives you an insight into why this number of nouns was suggested. It can also reveal mistakes made by the program.

Copying codes from other questions and correcting the differences

Sometimes you are coding a question which is in almost all respects similar to another question you have already coded. In that case it can be handy to start by copying all the codes from the already-coded question to your to-be-coded question by using the Copy Tool.

This tool can be found at the bottom of the first page you see when you click a question.

After you have copied codes from another question, some codes will be wrong: it is unlikely the new question will have the same number of syllables, or the same domain, for instance.

By default, these choices are kept the same as in the original, until you decide to change them. Even choices which are automatically made by the program such as the number of syllables and number of words are not adjusted to the new question when you copy codes! This is done to give you full control over the codes you make, and prevent surprises.

Thus, after having copied codes from an already coded question, you will want to correct the codings that are different. You can use the Coding History pane to navigate to characteristics that need to be changed, or you can use the Next Characteristic button to go through the entire coding sequence, with the choices already filled in for you.

In order to adjust automatic codes you need to navigate to the coding page for that characteristic. Most suggestions will then be coded based on the new question the moment you go to this page. In some cases such as the number of nouns, the new suggestion based on the current question will be given just above the code for the original question.

Further questions, queries, or comments

If you encounter any problems or have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me:

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