

Assessing the Accuracy of Interviewers' Records of Respondents' Response Codability

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The interaction flow between interviewers and respondents receives little attention. However, research has shown that the interaction flow is related to the quality of the answers. That is, if the interaction flows smoothly without the interviewers' effortful probing, the answer quality tends to be better. Specifically, codability of respondents' first response to a survey question (response codability) has been found to be positively related to accuracy of factual answers and to strong attitudes to attitude questions. Nevertheless, such information (response codability) is currently not available but has to be collected by having coders listening to recordings afterwards. Yet, respondents' response codability is directly connected with the interviewer's next step—whether to probe or not. It should therefore be not difficult for interviewers to judge if the first response is codable or not.

This study assesses the accuracy of interviewers' records of their respondents' response codability. CATI Interviewers were briefly instructed and then asked to record the codability of first response to attitude questions in a real CATI survey. Then a coder listened to the recordings and independently coded whether the first responses were codable. We assess the accuracy by computing the proportion of correctness, and also by comparing whether the effects of codability recorded by interviewers are similar to those by the coder on several dependent variables in multilevel analysis. The CATI survey consists mainly of attitude questions, answered by about 1,565 respondents.