OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS IN SURVEYS

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Abstract

The use of open-ended questions in survey research has a very long history and the value of open-ended questions has been rediscovered in survey research (Neuert et al., 2021);(Singer & Couper, 2017). Open-ended questions are an important but challenging way to obtain informative data in surveys. Open-ended question data usually requires extra time investment (Fielding et al., 2013), but open-ended questions are particularly useful if researchers do not want to constrain respondents' answers to pre-specified selections. Open-ended questions allow respondents to provide diverse answers based on their experience, and some answers are probably never thought of by researchers. (He & Schonlau, 2021.) In this paper we look at the use of open-ended responses as part of the analysis of survey data. To accompany our research, we have built an R package which will enable researchers to more easily analyse open-end survey responses in Finnish. The package contributes to the growing suite of tools available for analysing Finnish text data. Our work is part of a national infrastructure project (https://www.dariah.fi/).

Keywords: open-ended questions.

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