



ESS6 SQP Coding Guidelines¹

A. Specifications for coders

In ESS Round 6, the National Coordinators (or one of their co-workers) will be asked to perform a check of ‘form differences’ in their national translation using the SQP coding system developed by Willem Saris and Irmtraud Gallhofer².

The objective of SQP coding is to prevent deviations between the source questionnaire and the translated versions by checking the formal characteristics of the items. SQP coding is meant to improve translations by making National Coordinators (NCs) more aware of the choices that are made in creating a translation, and the impact these choices have on comparability and reliability of the question.

The communication about the result of the coding, which includes a comparison with the codes made for the source English version, will be between the CST members at UPF-RECSM and the NC in each participating country. The reports given by UPF to the NC provide information that is meant to help NCs improve the comparability of their translations, both for round 6 and in the future.

The procedure for ESS round 6 will be as follows:

1. After cApStAn verification has been completed, each NC will receive an email asking for the final versions of the main and supplementary questionnaires and showcards.
2. The NC (or one of their co-workers) should send their final country versions (once cApStAn suggestions have been incorporated) to Diana Zavala and Brita Dorer.
3. The team at UPF will provide a username and a password to allow NCs to access the SQP coding system (<http://www.sqp.nl/>). The system assigns the user a “task”. It includes all 48 questions that have been preselected in R6 and will appear in the screen.
4. Once in the SQP coding system (<http://www.sqp.nl/>) the coder should code all the items in the task, according to the instructions given.
5. The team at UPF will compare the codes made by NCs in the target language with those made by UPF for the English source version. The codes for the English source version have been coded separately by two different expert coders at UPF, after which a consensus was reached for each code.

¹ This document was written for the European Social Survey (ESS). The Core Scientific Team of the ESS requests that you use the following form of words to cite this document: European Social Survey (2012). *ESS Round 6 SQP Guidelines*. Barcelona, European Social Survey, Research and Expertise Centre for Survey Methodology Universitat Pompeu Fabra.

² SARIS, W.E., and GALLHOFER, I. (2004) "Operationalization of Social Science Concepts by Intuition", *Quality and Quantity*, 35; pp.235-258.

6. The NC (or their co-worker) will then receive a report from UPF of the form differences between the translation and the source. These may fall into one of four categories:

Type of difference found (source vs. translation)	Action taken
A) Mistake in coding by UPF or NC	The mistake is corrected in the coding by UPF
B) A true difference that is unavoidable (e.g. number of words in the introduction etc.)	No action
C) A true difference that may or may not be warranted	UPF will ask the NC for the reason for the difference. Amendments may be recommended by UPF to keep the principle of functional translation.
D) A true difference that cannot be warranted, such as a different number of response categories or leaving out a “don’t know” option	The translation should be amended ³

7. In cases A) and B) the coding is immediately signed off by UPF. In cases C) and D) NCs should document if the recommendations were implemented so the process can be signed off. It is important to take into account that SQP only checks the formal properties of a small number of items; therefore suggestions could also apply to other parts of the questionnaire that were not coded and that may need changes. It is important that NCs check the rest of the questionnaire for consistency.⁴

B. The coding process

All countries will code 48 items from the main and supplementary questionnaires in the first language of the country. However in countries where the survey is translated into multiple languages, NCs are very welcome to code the same questions in other minority languages (the SQP program will be set up to allow for this). Countries coordinated by two NCs should code their respective questionnaires; this applies, for instance, to items implemented in the Flemish speaking and French speaking parts of Belgium, which should be coded by each team.

In Round 6, the selection of items to be coded is B32-B34, D5, D7, D9, D31-D33 and E20-E22 from the main questionnaire and all test questions (IF1-IF36) from the supplementary questionnaire. The items from the main questionnaire have been chosen as they all feature in the test questions in the supplementary questionnaire. In Round 5, SQP coding produced valuable information to detect deviations in translations that would affect the quality of the items as well as the design the experiments. All countries should set aside one and a half working days to complete the task.

³ In the unlikely event that the item concerned was also verified by cApStAn and that both quality checks end up with diverging results, NCs should inform cApStAn (as well as the translation team at GESIS and the City team in London) of the intended change prompted by SQP.

⁴ NCs should avoid making changes to existing items. In case of serious deviations, proposed changes should be discussed in advance with CST members at City University and GESIS.

C. The characteristics of a ‘request for an answer’ asked by the program

Before NCs start coding in SQP, it is recommended that they familiarize themselves with some general guidelines and the sequence of characteristics presented in the program in order to facilitate the coding effort.

The program assigns a “task” to code some characteristics of a “survey item”. A survey item typically consists of two core components: The “request for an answer” (usually called question) and the “response scale” (or answer).

The program uses the term “request for an answer” because the texts are not only questions. There are also instructions and other combinations of linguistic forms which are not interrogative sentences (“questions”). However, no matter the kind of texts, they are all requests for an answer.

There are other components which are optional but can be inserted in the request for an answer, such as interviewer and respondent instructions, definitions of a concept or a scale, introduction and motivation. If present, the introduction is placed before the request for an answer and usually indicates the topic of the request. See screenshot number 5 to see the layout of the items in the program.

Based on this decomposition of the survey item, SQP studies its components in the following sequence:

1. the characteristics of the request of an answer;
2. the basic response or answer scale choices;
3. the presence of optional components: instructions of interviewers, of respondents, definitions, additional information and motivation;
4. the presence of an introduction is studied in terms of linguistic characteristics such as the number of sentences, words and subordinate clauses;
5. linguistic characteristics of the request for an answer;
6. linguistic characteristics of the response scale;
7. the characteristics of the show card, if used.

When coding, the program displays a help option on each screen indicated by a yellow box, which defines some aspects of the characteristic asked and gives examples based on ESS and other survey items. The content of those screens is fully downloadable from the intranet as a PDF document called SQP Codebook <https://essdata.nsd.uib.no/ESS6/>. We advise you to read the help screens or the Codebook very carefully in order to familiarise yourselves with the definition of the characteristics and their sequence as presented in the program before making a coding choice.

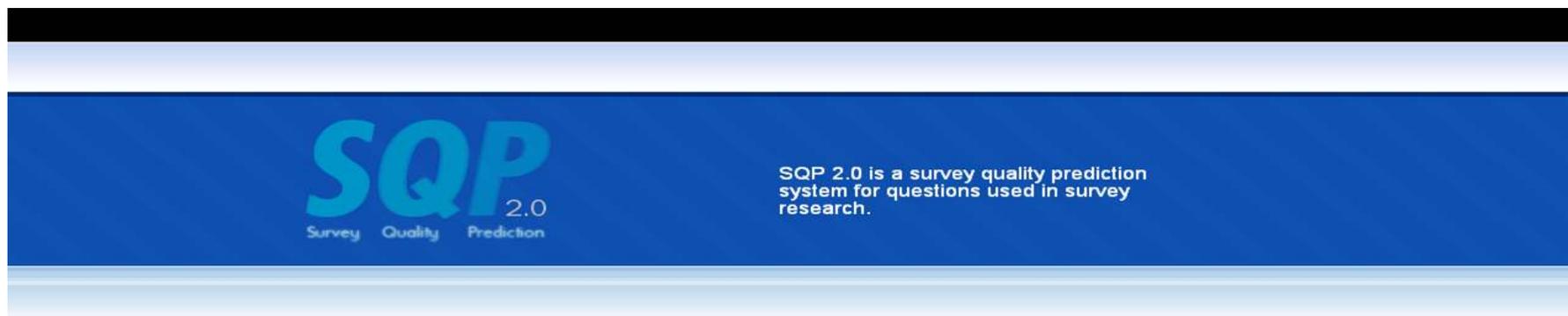
It is possible to go back and revise an earlier coding if necessary.

On the next few pages we provide some annotated screenshots as an explanation of the various parts of the program. First a summary of what each screenshot contains.

If coders experience any difficulties or have any queries they should contact Diana Zavala for support.

1. Log in session

The first screens provide information of the program and your tasks. After login, the program tells you the number of questions you are assigned to code. By clicking “work on my assigned questions” you can start coding.



SQP 2.0 allows survey researchers to create questions and obtain a quality prediction. It also provides information about Multitrait Multimethod (MTMM) experiments done on more than 3000 questions.

For each question researchers provide information about a number of the question's characteristics. Then, a quality prediction for the question can be made based on these characteristics using MTMM data and analysis previously done by The Research and Expertise Centre for Survey Methodology ([RECSM](#)) for the European Social Survey ([ESS](#)) and for other surveys in many different countries.

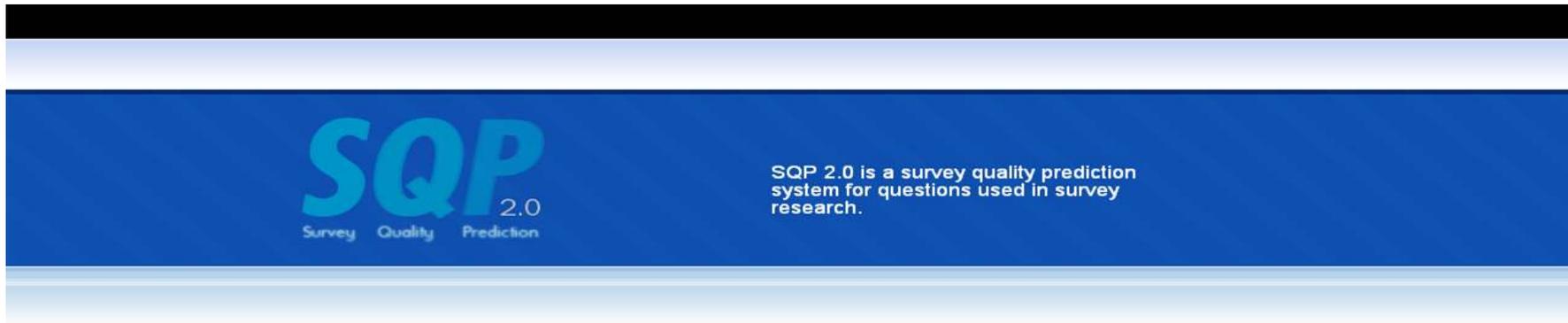
This program works best in one of the following browsers, shown in order of amount of testing and results:

- [Mozilla Firefox 3.0 or higher](#) (recommended)
- [Google Chrom/Chromium, Apple Safari](#), or other WebKit-based browsers.
- [Opera 9 or higher](#)
- [Microsoft Internet Explorer 7 or higher](#)

Note: the program **does not work well in Internet Explorer 6**. If you are using this older version of internet explorer, please update to the newest version or just use the latest version of Firefox.



This is the welcome screen. Click start to log in SQP



Login

Please login to access the SQP coding system.

* Username
* Password

[Lost your password?](#)

Register for a new account

Registration is simple and lets you use the online SQP tool for your own research.

- Enter your own studies and questions
- Predict the quality of your questions
- Share your results
- Browse and learn from others research

[Register Now >>](#)

Enter your username
and password

You are logged in as: diana Logout

SQP^{2.0}
Survey Quality Prediction

[Home](#) [Questions](#) [Studies](#)

Questions Assigned to You

You have been assigned questions to code.

You have been assigned questions to code. Each question has a list of about 50 characteristics that need to be coded. For each characteristic there is either a list of choices or an entry field for a numeric value. In addition there is a text that explains the details about each characteristic that may be used to clarify what the characteristic is asking about. You will need to complete each characteristic and decide the correct values. You will be informed when the coding for each question is complete and then you may move on to the next question in the assignment.

Questions Completed

0 / 3

[Work on my assigned questions >>](#)

My Questions and Studies Overview

Create your own Questions and get a Quality Prediction

SQP - The Survey Quality Prediction program gives you the possibility to create your own questions and get quality, reliability, and validity predictions for your questions. The SQP program is also able to recommend potential improvements to your questions after they are fully coded.

[+ Create a new question](#)

European Social Survey

ESS Questions with MTMM Data

All MTMM data collected so far for ESS is available by using this program.

[View all questions with MTMM data >>](#)

Available Questions

For questions that don't have MTMM data or a prediction, you may code the question to obtain a quality prediction. If the question is not available, you may also add the question to our database using the create new question link.

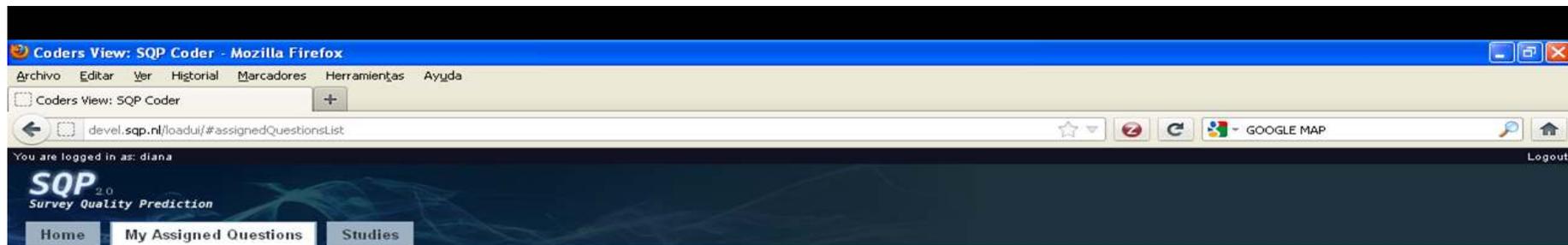
[View all questions that are currently available >>](#)



The program tells you the number of questions you have been assigned for coding. Click "work on my assigned questions".

2. Summary of questions

The program then displays a summary of your questions. It shows the variable name and the number in the questionnaire. It also provides information on the language, the country and the coding progress. Coders do not need to finish coding in one session; they can enter the system as many times as needed.



Home > My Assigned Questions

Questions Completed	Question	Study	Language	Country	Complete
0 / 3	B32 / IMBGECD / IMMIGRATION BAD OR GOOD FOR COUNTRY'S ECONOMY	ESS Round 6	English	United Kingdom	
	B33 / IMUECLT / COUNTRY'S CULTURAL LIFE UNDERMINED OR ENRICHED BY IMMIGRANTS	ESS Round 6	English	United Kingdom	
	B34 / IMWBCIT / IMMIGRANTS MAKE COUNTRY WORSE OR BETTER PLACE TO LIVE	ESS Round 6	English	United Kingdom	



This shows a summary of the questions assigned, the number in the questionnaire, Round, Language, Country and coding status, click on the first question to start.

3. Reference text for coding

The screen shots of the program show the item to be coded, including the introduction (if present), the request for answer and the categories. However this text is just a reminder and it is not the object of coding. Coders should base their codes on the country questionnaires and showcards.

For example, the interviewer instructions and the Don't Know option never appear in the screens, but the coder should base the information in the questionnaires to see if there are instructions or not.

You are logged in as: diana Logout

SQP
Survey Quality Prediction

Home | My Assigned Questions | Studies

Home > My Assigned Questions > Question ESS Round 6 / B33 / IMUECLT / United Kingdom > My Coding

Question

B33 / IMUECLT / COUNTRY'S CULTURAL LIFE UNDERMINED OR ENRICHED BY IMMIGRANTS
ESS Round 6 United Kingdom - English

Request for Answer Text:
And, using this card, would you say that [country]'s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?

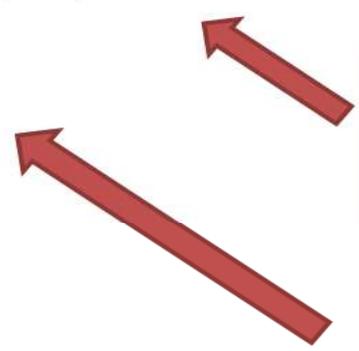
Answer options:

- 00 Cultural life undermined
- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05
- 06
- 07
- 08
- 09
- 10 Cultural life enriched

Question Coding

There are no codings yet for this question.

[Begin Coding](#)



SQP will show the question text, answer options and introduction as reminders, but you need the final questionnaire and showcards to code. Please take into account that other parts of the item are not shown (i.e. DK option, instructions for the interviewer, showcards, etcetera) but the program will ask information about them.

Click on 'begin coding' to proceed

You are logged in as: diana Logout

SQP
2.0
Survey Quality Prediction

Home My Assigned Questions Studies

Home > My Assigned Questions > Question ESS Round 6 / B32 / IMBGECO / United Kingdom > My Coding

Selected Characteristic

Concept

Please select one:

- Evaluative belief
- Feeling
- Importance of something
- Expectation of future events
- Facts, background, or behaviour
- All other simple concepts
- Complex concepts

Characteristic	Choice	Code
Domain	National politics	1
Domain: national politics	National government	1
Concept	Feeling	2
Social Desirability	Not present	0
Centrality	A bit central	1
Reference period	Present	2
Formulation of the request for an answer: basic choice	Direct request	2
WH word used in the request		

Question Coding

This question is not yet completely coded.

Question

B32 / IMBGECO / IMMIGRATION BAD OR GOOD FOR COUNTRY'S ECONOMY
ESS Round 6 United Kingdom - English

Request for Answer Text:
Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries? Please use this card.

Answer options:

- Bad for the economy 00
- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05
- 06
- 07
- 08
- 09
- 10 Good for the economy

SQP shows the characteristics you should code and a progress summary.

SUP
Survey Quality Prediction

Home
My Assigned Questions
Studies

Home > My Assigned Questions > Question ESS Round 6 / B32 / IMBGECO / United Kingdom > My Coding

Selected Characteristic

Concept

Please select one:

Evaluative belief

Feeling

Importance of something

Expectation of future events

Facts, background, or behaviour

All other simple concepts

Complex concepts

< Previous
Next >

Question

B32 | IMBGECO | IMMIGRATION BAD OR GOOD

ESS Round 6 United Kingdom - English

Request for Answer Text:
Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s that people come to live here from other countries? Please card.

Answer options:

- Bad for the economy 00
- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05
- 06
- 07
- 08
- 09
- 10 Good for the economy

Characteristic	Choice	Code
Domain	National politics	1
Domain: national politics	National government	1
	Feeling	2
	Not present	0
	A bit central	1
	Present	2
	Direct request	2

Concept

A request aims to obtain information about a subject. For example "Was John F. Kennedy a good president?" Here John F. Kennedy is the subject and one asks for an *evaluation* of him. Evaluation is the concept one wants to measure about the subject.

A distinction is made between **simple** and **complex** concepts. The above request contains a simple concept. A complex concept would be used if the question "Do most other people think that John F. Kennedy was a good president?" had been asked. This request asks what the respondent *believes* about the *evaluation* of others. Thus it is a belief about an evaluation. Such a combination of two or more concepts is called a complex concept.

Concept choices

Evaluative beliefs can be represented by many different types of assertions. Typically they have a positive or negative connotation. Assertions presenting causal relationships such as "Illegal stone mining has caused irreparable damage to a ninth century temple" are often evaluative beliefs: the phrase expresses not only a relationship, but also a negative evaluation. *Not all evaluative beliefs are causal relationships:* "Immigrants steal jobs" is another example of an evaluative belief with a negative connotation.

Feelings or affective evaluations have in the past been considered as beliefs. However, more recently a distinction has been made between *cognitive* evaluations or feelings. Assertions expressing feelings can have three basic forms which are:

"My job is **enjoyable**"
 "I **like** my job"
 "My job makes me **angry**"

The word expressing the feeling has been emphasized in each assertion. Expressions expressing feelings are fear, disgust, anger, surprise, shame, hope, desire, etc.

Importance: This assertion has the same form as the assertions indicating importance. The difference is that the subject complement is in this case an expression of importance: "My work is important".

Expectations of future events are beliefs about what *will* happen in the future. For example: "Do you think your son will ever clean his room?"; "In which year do you think N. Bush will be elected president of Afghanistan?"

Facts, background variables, and behaviour are **objective variables**: variables for which information could *in principle* also be obtained from a source other than the respondent. For instance, age can be obtained from birth records, vote choice could be obtained from voting ballots (except that this is forbidden by law), medical history from hospitals (*idem*), etc.

Behaviour concerns present and past actions or activities of the respondent.

Demographic or 'background' variables are almost ubiquitous in surveys and often concern education level, age, gender, income, household composition, or marital status.

Facts are sometimes asked to test the knowledge of the respondent. For example, "Solve the following equation for a: $2a + 3 = 4$ " or "Who was the 35th president of the United States?"

Other simple concepts are judgements, relationships, evaluations, preferences, norms, policies, rights, and action tendencies (see the description of "Concept: other simple concepts" for more details).

The program displays a yellow help box for each characteristic. It gives a definition and some examples to select the code. This help box has the same information as the codebook downloadable from the ESS6 intranet.

4. Task finished

The program will also display a message when the task is done and the request for an answer is properly coded. By selecting “View quality prediction”, you can see a tentative prediction of the reliability and the validity of the question. This prediction is not final, because the codes have to be reviewed by the UPF-RECSM team in order to avoid unintended mistakes that may affect the quality predictors.

By selecting “Code the next question”, coders can continue coding until the task is finished. By selecting “Back to question list” coders can go back to the screen that displays the summary of the items

Survey Quality Prediction

Home | My Assigned Questions | Studies

Home > My Assigned Questions > Question ESS Round 6 / B32 / IMBGECO / United Kingdom > My Coding

Question Coding Complete

Coding Complete!
 This question has been completely coded.

Question Quality Prediction

Get a prediction of the quality of this question based on the choices made for each characteristic.

[Get Quality Prediction >](#)

Code the next question.

B33 / IMUECLT / COUNTRY'S CULTURAL LIFE UNDERMINED OR ENRICHED BY IMMIGRANT

[Code Next Question >](#)

Return to the question list.

[Back to Question List](#)

Question

B32 / IMBGECO / IMMIGRATION BAD OR GOOD FOR COUNTRY'S ECONOMY
 ESS Round 6 United Kingdom - English

Request for Answer Text:
 Would you say it is generally bad or good for [country]'s economy that people come to live here from other countries? Please use this card.

Answer options:

- Bad for the economy 00
- 01
- 02
- 03
- 04
- 05
- 06
- 07
- 08
- 09
- 10 Good for the economy

Your Quality Prediction for this Question

View a prediction of the quality of this question based on the choices made for each characteristic.

[View Quality Prediction >](#)

Characteristic	Choice	Code
Domain	National politics	1
Domain: national politics	National government	1
	Feeling	2
	Not present	0
	A bit central	1
	Present	2
Formulation of the request for an answer: basic choice	Direct request	2
WH word used in the request	Request without WH word	0
Request for an answer type	Interrogative	1
		0
		1
	gement present	0
	on present	0
	pinions of others	0
	ent	0
Absolute or comparative judgment	An absolute judgement	0
Response scale: basic choice	Yes/no answer scale	1
Don't know option	DK option not present	3
Interviewer instruction	Absent	0
Respondent instruction	Absent	0
Extra motivation, info or definition available?	Absent	0
Introduction available?	Available	1
Number of sentences in introduction	0	0
Number of words in introduction	0	0
Number of subordinated clauses in introduction	0	0
Request present in the introduction	Request not present	0
Number of sentences in the request	2	2
Number of words in request	25	25
Total number of nouns in request for an answer	4	4
Total number of abstract nouns in request for an answer	0	0
Total number of syllables in request	31	31
Number of subordinate clauses in request	0	0
Number of syllables in answer scale	21	21
Total number of nouns in answer scale	2	2
Total number of abstract nouns in answer scale	0	0
Show card used	Showcard not used	0

The program will display a message when you finish coding a question

You can then code your next question, get a prediction of the quality or go back to the Question list.