Subject: Language of interview and mother tongue
Posted by Daniel Pérez on Sat, 16 Nov 2024 12:05:47 GMT

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Dear DHS team,

I'm Daniel, PhD student in development economics doing research on education in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

I want to know how correlated is the language of interview to the mother tongue, or whether it's approximately the same. I understand that interviewers are sent to areas where their language is spoken and that this could not be the respondent's mother tongue but rather a language that both the interviewer and respondent can comfortably communicate in. However, in practical terms, do you know to what extent are both correlated?

Thanks in advance,

Daniel.

Subject: Re: Language of interview and mother tongue
Posted by Janet-DHS on Thu, 21 Nov 2024 14:35:56 GMT

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Following is a response from DHS staff member, Tom Pullum:

Interesting question. Looking at the 2013-14 DRC survey, the only relevant variables I see are the language of the questionnaire (sqlang), the language of the interview (slangint), and ethnicity (s114). Below I will paste two tables showing how sqlang and slangint are elated, and how s114 and slangint are related. In both tables you see that about half of the cells are virtually empty, which means that there are indeed correspondences.

The vast majority of the questionnaire were the French version, probably indicating that it was the version that the interviewers (not necessarily the respondents) were most comfortable with, but the French was the LEAST common interview language. The second table may be helpful. Ethnicity is not the same as mother tongue but is close.

. tab sqlang slangint

questionna |

    ire | interview language

 language | french   kikongo   lingala   swahili   tshiluba   others | Total

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french	1,069	1,519	6,023	4,524	2,165	2,071	17,371
kikongo	6	171	40	1	0	26	244
lingala	15	3	375	1	0	8	402
swahili	14	0	32	585	1	12	644
tshiluba	6	1	13	0	138	8	166
Total	1,110	1,694	6,483	5,111	2,304	2,125	18,827

. tab s114 slangint

ethnicity	interview language						Total
	french	kikongo	lingala	swahili	tshiluba	others	
bakongo nord & sud	167	598	617	13	0	203	1,598
bas-kasai et kwilu-kw	166	1,063	1,064	25	173	499	2,990
cuvette central	37	3	1,375	10	22	352	1,799
ubangi et itimbiri	65	6	1,977	23	1	127	2,199
uele lac albert	242	1	1,003	337	0	48	1,631
basele-k , man. et ki	88	3	97	2,869	3	121	3,181
kasai, katanga, tanga	325	10	264	1,685	2,078	711	5,073
lunda	10	0	8	100	23	53	194
other	0	0	0	0	1	0	1

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             Total |   1,100    1,684     6,437    5,084    2,301    2,115 |  18,721
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