

Quantitative Text Analysis

Exercise 1

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In this exercise we will work through the process of importing a text corpus into QDA Miner for analysis.

The objective is to familiarize yourselves with a workflow for working with texts, and to learn some useful tips for organizing files, renaming files, developing a sequence for working with texts, and so on. We will create projects for the texts that we intend to experiment with further during the rest of the course. We will work with three sets of texts today: Irish budget speeches from 2010, UK political party manifestos since 1945, and legal briefs petitioning the US Supreme court.

We will use the projects we create to help you become familiar with using QDA Miner to annotate texts with variables of interest.

Instructions:

1. For this exercise you will need to install QDAMiner/WordStat from Provalis Software. This is a Window program available from <http://provalisresearch.com/downloads/trial-versions/>. The downloadable version is fully working for 30 days, which should cover your needs in this course. Note that if you are a Mac or Linux user, you will need to install Windows a virtual machine such as the free [VirtualBox](#) or [Parallels Desktop](#) (which I use). Both methods will also require you to install a version of Microsoft Windows, which you can obtain on a DVD from IS Services (Trinity has a campus-wide license).
2. Download the three sets of documents used for this exercise:
 - [Irish budget speeches from 2010](#) (from Lowe and Benoit 2013);
 - [UK political party manifestos since 1945](#); and
 - [legal briefs petitioning the US Supreme court](#) (from Evans et al 2007).

These are in zipped archives, so you will need to unzip them. The process of extracting the text will depend on your operating system, for Windows machines you can right-click on the zip file and select 'Extract All' from the menu.

For each set of texts, create a new project in QDA Miner as follows:

3. Exploring the texts in QDAMiner
 - (a) start QDAMiner
 - (b) select "create new project from list of documents"
 - (c) For each set of texts, create a new project by navigating to the texts and adding them to your project.
 - (d) If you select a large number of documents, the 'Add' button might be greyed out. If this happens, select 20 or so documents at a time and add them to the project in batches.
 - (e) Once the documents have loaded into Wordstat and inspect them. Explore the texts by clicking on each text and then browsing them in the Edit window.
4. Assigning text attributes in QDAMiner

- (a) From the top menu, select 'Variables, Add'
- (b) Think about what variable type you will need. Choose the appropriate variable type. For example, to annotate a manifesto according to party, create a nominal/ordinal variable named PARTY. To annotate according to year, choose the date data type.
- (c) Add possible values for the variable by selecting 'edit'. For example, for the PARTY variable add CON, LAB, LIBDEM, on different lines. If you encounter a new value for a variable as you are annotating you can add a new value as you annotate.
- (d) Practice annotating documents with variables by selecting the document (under 'cases' on the left) and selecting the appropriate variable from the drop-down menu.