Eliciting Human Judgement of Cooperation in Dialogue

Brian Plüss

This document presents the online survey described used for eliciting human judgement on cooperation in political interviews.

Facsimile of Online Survey

Below is a reproduction of the survey as it was presented to participants on the SurveyMonkey site:

1. Introduction

This is a survey on how people perceive verbal behavior in political interviews.

On each page you will be shown some context and a transcribed interview fragment and then asked to rate the performance of each participant according to your intuitions on how they ought to behave in a political interview.

Although you might recognize the characters in the interviews, please be as objective as possible when rating them, regardless of your personal feelings about their style or political views.

The entire survey should take about 20 minutes to complete, but if you do not have that amount of time to spare, please complete as much of it as you can and then skip through the rest until you get to the final page.

At the end of the survey, you can watch a few rather amusing interactions I have come across during my research.

Thanks for your help!

2. Information

Before you start the survey, please answer these questions about your background.

Which of the following best describes your English proficiency?
- Native English speaker
- Non-native English speaker but fluent in English
- Non-native English speaker but know some English

Which of the following best describes your cultural background?
- British or American
- Neither British nor American, but been lived in the UK/US for many years (more than 5)
- Neither British nor American, but been lived in the UK/US for a few years (between 1 and 5)
- Neither British nor American, but Commonwealth
- Other

Which of the following best describes your experience in dialogue analysis?
- Expert
- Some experience in research
- Some informal experience
- No experience whatsoever

1http://www.surveymonkey.com/
3. Bernard Shaw and Margaret Thatcher

Context: On Sunday 29 June 1987, CNN News anchor Bernard Shaw interviews former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the context of the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from the United Kingdom to China.

Shaw: What is the difference between negotiation, say, with the Russians and the Chinese?
Thatcher: Well, right now, Russia proved what we always said would happen, although it came quicker than we thought. We knew the communist system eventually would collapse. You can't ignore human rights eventually, particularly in the eastern world where they can't keep up information on the Internet about what's happening to other countries. And also, Mr. Gorbachev, he doesn't have enough credit, neither the communist system went flaming inexorably, was not productive, ultimately, was not wanted for the system that produced the greatest prosperity because it was all planned. It doesn't produce prosperity because it offers no incentive to people to build up their own prosperity. So I come faster in Russia. China has no history of liberty at all. She has always been under tyranny. She went both ways. The main advantage, the Chinese always had, is that they could do a lot through Hong Kong that they couldn't do otherwise. And so even under communism in 1997 it will inevitably collapse also.

Shaw: Do you think the system of government here in China?
Thatcher: [Interrupting] Communism will eventually collapse. Indeed, it is starting. Deng [Fengqin] realized it couldn't go on. So he said right, economic liberty. You can kick up your own business. If you produce more than your target or the business you can sell to sell it. They are bare toe the Chinese. Deng is no different from what it was in 1977. If you got the economic liberty. It's not yet full on full sale, even though they are having to supply raw and create a law of contract for that you can sell in order your own contract. Law in coming to China, capitalism is coming to China, enterprise is coming to China. It won't stop.

Shaw: Might things have been better if there had been better communication between you and Deng [Fengqin]? During the 1982 talks, referring to you, Mr. Deng said that women should be combated out of her obsession.
Thatcher: Well, that's what she's always said, wasn't it? If you had argued with her you are overrate. He was overrate, he argued with me. So I didn't complain about that. We survive on argument that's how you come to the right conclusions. Yes, I was obstinate and because of that at any rate we didn't get a good agreement because it depended on deals. Because they knew we were producing prosperity and he didn't and he started to change. Why? Of course, I am obstinate in defending our liberties and our law. That's why I only do big bargaining.

Shaw: Following the Falklands War, did you have any sense that you believe you could persuade the Chinese that Britain should continue administering Hong Kong with an outline of Chinese sovereignty?
Thatcher: No. There was no outline of Falklands. Only a fantastic belief that our people were once again free and we were not going to have an argument over nothing British and British people. And we don't like aggression anywhere in the world. That is why we believe in strong defense.

Shaw: Well, Sir Percy Craddock, Britain's Ambassador to China said that you had to be persuaded, that you had to be told, that there was no way Britain was going to remain an administrative force of Hong Kong with the Chinese being the newcomers.
Thatcher: Well, that Deng [Fengqin] said it. I didn't think you'd get him to. I never wrote I said that we have done so well for Hong Kong. For Hong Kong people, that can we not have another lease say for another 50 years? He lectured very quickly. He said no. And I can't have another lease, no! I said we have done so well as a territory which I know the Chinese would want to keep we didn't want to go. And I think the Chinese would have preferred, wouldn't they, that they might have kept on. And I think the Chinese would have preferred to have kept it. The Chinese said you had to have another lease. No! If you want to have another lease, you - you apply for another 50 years lease. No! If you want to keep on, you have to apply first. I think it would be very difficult for the Chinese to keep it. It would be very difficult for them.

Shaw: They were out-sided, in that Mr. Deng told you that if the Chinese wanted to, they could walk right in here and take Hong Kong.
Thatcher: Oh, it was said as a threat. But I knew that they would not want to be told. That's why I had to ask him. And I said to him, which really shocked that I would rather receive Hong Kong poverty stricken than let the British have another period of administration over Hong Kong. Now, that shows you the communist mind, not concerned about the prosperity, at all the well being of the people.

Shaw: You don't hate him, do you?
Thatcher: I don't think he's a reformer, I don't say so.

Shaw: I can't answer that, I am the reporter asking questions.
Thatcher: It's nothingness, you know that you could, I just made no comment of the person you can negotiate with. You had to do so. Yes. I said that Hong Kong was valuable to him, I knew that they could not afford to lose Hong Kong. They couldn't afford. And so we eventually agreed. And when he said no, I could not agree. I could not agree.

Shaw: At these historic ceremonies, will you be fighting back tears?
Thatcher: I hope the tears won't flow. My mind and heart will just be very full for the people of Hong Kong. And just tremendous hope that all will be well, and a determination that along with other demonstration events in the world, we observe very, very calmly, what is going on in Hong Kong, and we don't hesitate to speak out for the people of Hong Kong and to do what we can to see that the international agreement I made with Deng [Fengqin], registered in the United Nations, is fully observed and upheld.

Based on your intuitions on how participants ought to behave in a political interview, how do you rate their performance in this fragment?

Shaw

Thatcher

Please answer the following questions about your familiarity with the interview.

Have you heard of the interviewer?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Am you familiar with the political/historical context?

Somewhat familiar

Mostly familiar

Not sure

Have you heard of the interviewee?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Have you watched or read this interview before?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Next
Context
In June 2011, ITV News correspondent Damon Green interviewed UK Labour leader Ed Miliband on his position regarding a strike action organised by public sector workers. The action was a protest against planned pension changes. The strike action resulted in the closure of almost half of the state schools across the UK. The interview starts with Miliband stating his position with regards the matter.

Miliband: These strikes are wrong at a time when negotiations are still going on. But parents and the public have been let down by both sides because the government has acted in a reckless and provocative manner. After today's disruption, I urge both sides to put aside the rhetoric, get round the negotiating table and stop it happening again.

Green: I listened to your speech in Wrexham where you talked about the Labour Party being a movement. A lot of people in that movement are the people who are on strike today and they'll be looking at you and thinking 'well, you're describing these strikes as wrong, why aren't you giving us more leadership as the leader of the Labour movement?'

Miliband: At a time when negotiations are still going on I do believe these strikes are wrong. And that's why I say both sides should, after today's disruption, get round the negotiating table, put aside the rhetoric, and sort the problem out. Because the public and parents have been let down by both sides. The government has acted in a reckless and provocative manner.

Green: I spoke to Francis Maude before I came here and the tone he was striking was a very conciliatory one. Do you think there's a difference between the words they are saying in public and the attitudes they strike in private behind the negotiations? Are the negotiations in good faith would you say?

Miliband: What I say is that the strikes are wrong at a time when negotiations are still going on. But the government has acted in a reckless and provocative manner in the way it has gone about these issues. After today's disruption, I urge both sides to get round the negotiating table, put aside the rhetoric, and stop this kind of thing happening again.

Green: It's a statement you've made publicly, and you've made to me and this will be broadcast, obviously, but have you spoken privately to any union leaders and expressed your view to them on a personal level, would you say?

Miliband: What I say in public and in private, to everybody involved in this, is get round the negotiating table, put aside the rhetoric, and stop this kind of action happening again. These strikes are wrong because negotiations are still going on. But parents and the public have been let down by both sides because the government has acted in a reckless and provocative manner.

Green: You're a parent. I'm a parent. People who will be watching this are parents. Umm, has it affected you personally, this action? Has it affected your family, your friends, I mean? What is the net effect of that going to be on parents having to take a day off work today?

Miliband: I think parents up and down the country have been affected by this action, and it's wrong at a time when negotiations are still going on. But parents and the public have been let down by both sides because the government has acted in a reckless and provocative manner, I think that both sides should, after today's disruption, get round the negotiating table, put aside the rhetoric, and stop this kind of thing happening again.

Based on your intuitions on how participants ought to behave in a political interview, how do you rate their performance in this fragment?

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Please answer the following questions about your familiarity with the interview.

Have you watched or read this interview before?  
Are you familiar with the political/historical context?  
Have you heard of the interviewer?  
Have you heard of the interviewee?
Shortly after 11 September 2001, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair is interviewed by Alex Brodie for BBC World Service's Newshour on the role of the UK after the terrorist attacks.

Brodie: Is Osama Bin Laden your prime suspect?
Blair: He is the prime suspect. We are still assembling the evidence and we have said we will do so in a careful and measured way. But we've known for some time of his activities and those of his associates, that have been designed to spread terror around the world that are I believe fundamentally contrary to the basic teachings of Islam. And in respect of this particular incident there's no doubt at all, as both ourselves and President have said, he is the prime suspect.
Brodie: Him alone or anybody else?
Blair: Well, when we assemble the evidence finally, we will present it to people. But as we have said he is in the prime suspect.
Brodie: Have you seen evidence yourself?
Blair: Yes of course, all the time we are going through evidence that comes to us from various sources and what is important, as I said the other day, is that when we proceed, we proceed on the basis of a hard-headed assessment of that evidence. But I think, people are still taking in the enormity of what happened last week. Thousands of people killed in the worst terrorist incident of all time. This was the worst terrorist incident in respect of British citizens. Incidentally 200, 300 killed, since World War II. When you think that Britain went through the Blitz when we were under attack, day in day out, for several years and we lost just over 20,000 of our citizens. Here were 5,000 citizens, incidentally 200, 300 killed, since World War II. When you think that Britain went through the Blitz when we were under attack, day in day out, for several years and we lost just over 20,000 of our citizens. Here were 5,000
Brodie: And do you know where he is?
Blair: There may be various other people but that is a matter that we can deal with when we come to present the evidence fully.
Brodie: And do you know where he is?
Blair: We know that he is in Afghanistan. We know the various places that he has been. But it is important that other people co-operate with us in ensuring that he is brought to justice and this is a situation in which those who have been harbouring him or helping him have a very simple choice. They either cease the protection of Bin Laden or they will be treated as part of the terrorist apparatus themselves. Now they have said he is the prime suspect. We are still assembling the evidence and we have said he is the prime suspect.
Brodie: Is it Osama Bin Laden who you have the evidence against him he was actively involved in planning what happened in the United States or is it just that you have evidence that he has set up a network?
Blair: Well, when we are in a position to put evidence before people, we will put it before them then. What we have said so far, because people have asked us and it's right because this is where the evidence tends, that he is the prime suspect.
Brodie: And do you know where he is?
Blair: There may be various other people but that is a matter that we can deal with when we come to present the evidence fully.
Brodie: Well, for all those people who have been in a position where they have been helping or harbouring terrorism, the way that it operates, camps that are dedicated to training people in it. These are people trained in these camps who go out and basically wreak havoc wherever they can, killing many, many innocent people. And although what happened last week is obviously an atrocity almost beyond our imagination, it is not an isolated incident, in that sense, there has been a history going back over several years. Now you mention the Taliban, the Taliban have a very clear choice. The Taliban either cease to help or harbour those that are fermenting terrorism or they will be treated as part of the terrorist apparatus themselves. Now they have that choice and they should consider very, very carefully the consequences that they face at this moment of choice.
Brodie: If they don't give him up, what are those consequences?
Blair: Those are the consequences again that we will consider and we will announce the appropriate response when we have made up our minds.

Based on your intuitions on how participants ought to behave in a political interview, how do you rate their performance in this fragment?

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Please answer the following questions about your familiarity with the interview.

- Have you watched or read this interview before?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

- Are you familiar with the political/historical context?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

- Have you heard of the interviewer?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

- Have you heard of the interviewee?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure
During the American Presidential campaign in January 2008, Fox News host Bill O'Reilly interviews Hermene Hartman, the editor of an African-American newspaper in Chicago. The interview is about Obama's pastor Jeremiah Wright and his connections with Nation of Islam's leader Louis Farrakhan.

O'Reilly: How would you describe Dr Wright's church?
Hartman: It's a middle-class church. It is a superb church. Reverend Wright started a church with 87 people, today, has 8,000 in that particular congregation. United Church of Christ is basically a white denomination. And I think there's been just a lot of miscasting here. Seventy ministries within the church, to include Girl Scouts, prison outreach, marital counselling, education, children's counselling, a lot of Adopt-A-School. They have done a lot to empower that community and to improve that community.

O'Reilly: OK. But you could make the same argument about Louis Farrakhan, that he's done, you know, some good things, yet you know, his anti-semitic in his rhetoric and sometimes anti-white or whatever. And-
Hartman: But that is, that is not Jeremiah Wright.
O'Reilly: No, but it is association there. And the association, you can draw your own conclusion.
Hartman: But what - what's the emphasis? I mean, you could also, you know, it's the best. It's the sum that's being taken. You could also look at a wonderful sermon that Dr Wright gave and a book developed out of it, The Audacity of Hope.
O'Reilly: But you can't, you can't do that, though.
Hartman: But what - what's the emphasis? I mean, you could also, you know, it's the best. It's the sum that's being taken. You could also look at a wonderful sermon that Dr Wright gave and a book developed out of it, The Audacity of Hope.
O'Reilly: No, you can't do that, though.
Hartman: But, but here's what, you can do that if you wanted to do that.
O'Reilly: No, no, no.
Hartman: But he's not a despot. Come on, Bill.
O'Reilly: That's, that's out of order.
Hartman: That's, that's out of order.
O'Reilly: I made that clear.
Hartman: But what are you saying?
O'Reilly: But the things that he has said are very, very troubling. And I think that Senator Obama, if he's going to continue to associate with the Doctor and he says he will-
Hartman: Obama is running against a political couple. That's what is going on now. And true enough, obviously he's got to be judged just like everybody else, but you've got to bring the truth. If you're going to do Obama's church, let's do everybody's church.
O'Reilly: All right.

Based on your intuitions on how participants ought to behave in a political interview, how do you rate their performance in this fragment?

- **O'Reilly**
  - Incorrect
  - Mostly incorrect
  - Somewhere in the middle
  - Mostly correct
  - Correct

- **Hartman**
  - Incorrect
  - Mostly incorrect
  - Somewhere in the middle
  - Mostly correct
  - Correct

Please answer the following questions about your familiarity with the interview:

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Context

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O'Reilly How would you describe Dr Wright's church?

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O'Reilly OK. But you could make the same argument about Louis Farrakhan, that he's done, you know, some good things, yet you know, his anti-semitic in his rhetoric and sometimes anti-white or whatever. And-

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O'Reilly No, you can't do that, though.

Hartman (Overlapping) But what - what’s the emphasis? I mean, you could also, you know, it's the best. It's the sum that's being taken. You could also look at a wonderful sermon that Dr Wright gave and a book developed out of it, The Audacity of Hope.

O'Reilly No, no, no, no.

Hartman (Overlapping) You could. Here's what, but Bill-

O'Reilly (Overlapping) Because every despot, and I'm not calling the man a despot, but every despot in history has done some good things. Here, look-

Hartman (Interrupting) But he's not a despot. Come on, Bill.

O'Reilly No, I'm not calling him that.

Hartman That's it, that's it.

O'Reilly I made that clear.

Hartman (Overlapping) Well, what are you saying?

O'Reilly (Overlapping) But the things that he has said are very, very troubling. And I think that Senator Obama, if he's going to continue to associate with the Dictator, and he says he will-

Hartman (Interrupting) Obama is a- is running against a political couple. That's what is going on now. And true enough, obviously he's got to be judged just like everybody else, but you've got to bring the truth. If you're going to do Obama's church, let's do everybody’s church.

O'Reilly All right.

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Please answer the following questions about your familiarity with the interview:

- Have you watched or read this interview before? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- Are you familiar with the political/historical context? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- Have you heard of the interviewer? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
- Have you heard of the interviewee? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure
Context
In January 2011, BBC political correspondent Hugh Pym interviews UK Chancellor George Osborne after official figures show the UK economy unexpectedly shrank by half of one per cent between October and December 2010. The Treasury said the contraction could be explained by December's wintry weather. The Office for National Statistics appeared to back that up, saying that without the heavy snow, GDP would have been broadly flat.

Hugh Pym: The ONS has said if you stripped out the effect of bad snow, that left a figure of about zero flat, which is still pretty weak, isn't it?
George Osborne: Well, I've said these are disappointing numbers, but the weather clearly had a huge effect and the office of national statistics, who put these numbers together, flagged that up very carefully and clearly, and said as a result the numbers are somewhat uncertain. I think it's interesting if you look at the areas of the economy that are not so affected by the weather, like manufacturing, that is actually performing pretty strongly at the moment and that is an important part of rebalancing our economy, a process that has to take place. So look, we had bad weather, it's the worst December for a hundred years, people remember that, but you shouldn't be blown off course by bad weather and we are not going to be.

Hugh Pym: Won't this add weight to Ed Balls's argument that by embarking on these cuts you are putting growth at risk?
George Osborne: Well, if you look at the December period, with the very bad weather, the worst weather for a hundred years, of course actually the tax rises and the spending review process had not kicked in then, and so that is not an excuse that people can make. We are very clear that to abandon the budget plans, as the Labour Party would have us do, would put us back into the financial crisis zone, which is where the Labour Party left us. We are not going to do that. We are not going to be blown off course by bad weather. The economy needs to rebalance and you see manufacturing growing at the moment.

Hugh Pym: Can I ask you one question about the talks with the banks, as the final one? I mean, are you close to an agreement with the banks on lending and bonuses and so on?
George Osborne: Well, we are engaged in a conversation with the banks. I've made that very clear. What we want to see is more lending, we want to see small bonuses, and we want to see the banks paying more taxes; and that's what I hope we can achieve. That'd be good for the British economy, good for the British taxpayer and actually also good for British financial services, which employs hundreds of thousands of people.

Hugh Pym: Are you nearly there with those talks?
George Osborne: Well, we are having those conversations and I hope we can reach a settlement, but we've set out the terms of that settlement very clearly.

Based on your intuitions on how participants ought to behave in a political interview, how do you rate their performance in this fragment?

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Please answer the following questions about your familiarity with the interview.

- Have you watched or read this interview before?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

- Are you familiar with the political/historical context?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

- Have you heard of the interviewer?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure

- Have you heard of the interviewee?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not Sure
All done!

Thank you for completing this survey. Please answer the following question.

Have you read the interview fragments you responded to in detail?

- Yes
- No

If you have any comments, please leave them in the box below.

And here you can watch some of the interviews I have analysed as part of my research. Enjoy!
Dissemination

The survey was disseminated via email to the mailing lists of four research special interest groups\(^2\), the Postgraduate Student Forum at the Open University’s Computing Department and via a series of posts on the social networking site Facebook\(^3\). Volunteers were invited to share the post with their contacts on the site.

**Email Message Sent to Research Email Lists**

(Apologies for cross-postings)

Dear SIGDIAL/SIGSEM/CLUK/ELSNET members,

If you can spare a few minutes, please help our research by completing this survey on how people perceive verbal behaviour in political interviews:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2ZTCT6B

The entire survey should take about 20 minutes to complete, *but* if you do not have that amount of time to spare, please complete as much of it as you can and then skip through the rest until you get to the final page.

There is a treat at the end of the survey, where you can watch a few rather amusing interactions we have come across during our research.

Thanks for your help!

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Brian Pluss
Natural Language Generation Group
Computing Department
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
United Kingdom

**Facebook Post**

Dear friends, this is serious business...

If you are fluent in English, please (please!) help my research by completing this survey on how people perceive verbal behaviour in political interviews:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2ZTCT6B

Feel free to share the link above and spread the word... This is one of those the-more-the-merrier kind of things.

Thank you!

PS: there’s small a treat at the end of the survey.

\(^2\)SIGIAL (http://www.sigdial.org/), SIGSEM (http://www.sigsem.org/), CLUK (http://nlp.shef.ac.uk/research/cluk/) and ELSNET (http://www.elsnet.org/).

\(^3\)https://www.facebook.com/