Abstract:
Blaise includes a feature called a journal to record events and user actions that occur during a web interview. At the University of Michigan, we began to explore BlaiseIS earlier this year; as part of that exploration, we needed to make sure we could capture the paradata we need. This paper will discuss how the web journal can be implemented for paradata capture. We will discuss how to define a useful paradata data structure. For some paradata capture, modifications can be made to the default style sheet and the page handler ASP. For some other data, large text fields in the survey data model are used, so information from the survey session data can be extracted. We will also talk about how different types of fields are being processed and how to utilize the BOI database type and the type of partition used. Finally, we will discuss the data, procedures and process required to output the journal data.

The above discussion focuses mostly on page-level paradata which is captured when a button is clicked to leave a page. While that can provide useful information about time spent on an entire page or backtracking across pages during an interview, it does not approach the level of granularity of a CATI audit trail which captures keystrokes and mouse clicks. These sorts of details (“client-side paradata”) can be captured with javascript while the respondent is inside the page and then saved by the same mechanism as the page-level paradata when the interview advances. This paper will discuss a scheme for modifying the default Blaise IS javascript and xsl files to capture client-side paradata such as changing answers within a page, keystrokes within an input box and scrolling.