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Title:

Integrating Blaise 5 and DDI Lifecycle 3.3

Abstract:

This paper is pleased to introduce a new Blaise 5 to DDI Lifecycle conversion tool. DDI Lifecycle is an open metadata standard that is used for describing survey specifications and the resulting datasets, along with study, process, and lineage information. Colectica Designer has supported a Blaise 4 and Blaise 5 to DDI Lifecycle converter for many years, utilizing a custom-build grammar for the Blaise language. While this has worked well for converting the major structures of a Blaise survey into DDI Lifecycle, not all aspects of the Blaise language were supported. External language definitions within Blaise .bitt files were not processed, as only the Blaise source code was processed and the translations are added later in the .bmix build process. Another issue was keeping the grammar updated with the new language features that are being added into each new Blaise 5 release.

To improve the story for Blaise and DDI Lifecycle integration, Statistics Netherlands and Colectica partnered to jointly develop several DDI tools for the Blaise ecosystem. The first tool developed was the Blaise Colectica Questionnaires tool, which is used to specify a survey specification in DDI Lifecycle and generate corresponding Blaise code. This paper introduces a second tool, a Blaise 5 to DDI Lifecycle.

3.3 converter. The Blaise Colectica DDI Connector takes the approach of using the Blaise API directly to process compiled Blaise .bmix survey specifications and .bdix data definitions to create DDI Lifecycle 3.3.

The DDI items are uniquely identified and versioned, and the converter additionally computes hashes that can be used to help locate identical question or answer choices previously documented within question banks.

The resultant DDI can then be exchanged or imported into any other tools that support the DDI standard.