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A Study of Equivalence of Expressions from Response Scales Used in Cross-National Survey Research (1)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to review studies on equivalence and non-equivalence of translated instruments in cross-national survey researches, which is based upon a literature survey in Janet A. Harkness ed., “Cross-Cultural Survey Equivalence,” ZUMA NACHRICHTEN SPEZIAL, No. 3, 1998.

The first section of this paper deals with the findings of empirical research on expressions from response scales used in cross-national survey research.

The second section reviews the MINTS project (Research into Methodology of Intercultural Surveys) which was carried out as a comparative and collaborative research of ZUMA (Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen, Mannheim, Germany) and NORC (the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago, USA). The MINTS project investigated expressions used in English and German ISSP (the International Social Survey Programme) response scales. The project is the first step in a research program aimed at exploring the limits and possibilities of translation with respect to response scales.

The third section suggests the meaning and merit for Japanese scholars to join this MINTS project.

Key words: cross-national survey research, response scale, equivalence