Quantitative Text Analysis: Classwork 1

Kenneth Benoit

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. Download the three sets of documents from your space on the S drive. These are in zipped archives, so you will need to unzip them. The process of extracing 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:

2. In QDAMiner:

   - start QDAMiner
   - select "create new project from list of documents"
   - For each set of texts, create a new project by navigating to the texts and adding them to your project.
   - 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.
   - Once the documents have loaded into Wordstat inspect them
   - From the top menu, select 'Variables, Add'
   - 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.
   - 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.
   - Practice annotating documents with variables by selecting the document (under 'cases' on the left) and selecting the appropriate variable from the drop-down menu