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The bot that lived: SurveyBot's role in automated web survey pretesting

In the last decade, web surveys have replaced traditional survey data collection methods, such as in-person interviews, offering substantial cost reduction and paradata collection but presenting complexities due to various question formats and dynamic features. To test the proper implementation of web surveys, researchers and practitioners still rely on costly and time-consuming pretests that are conducted manually by humans. We present SurveyBot, an open-source tool, for automating web survey pretesting through rule-based bots as well as AI-based bots that use Large Language Models (LLMs) and Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR). Tested on two web surveys, SurveyBot effectively handles diverse question types and dynamic features, substantially reducing pretesting costs and human effort.