

Improving subject retrieval in online catalogues

2. Relevance feedback and query expansion

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Preface

This report is about improving subject access in computerized bibliographic information retrieval systems which are intended for end users rather than for information specialists. It contains a description of some retrieval systems which were used to provide subject access to a library catalogue database, and of some experiments which were done using these systems. It reports the most recent of a series of projects the Okapi projects - which began in 1982 and have been funded by the British Library Research and Development Department and hosted by the Polytechnic of Central London.

Gill Venner

Gill Venner, one of the team of three which designed, developed and reported the original Okapi system during 1983-1985, died while this report was being written. The report is dedicated to her memory.

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Credits

It would not have been possible to design and program the experimental retrieval systems used in this project without the foundation provided by previous Okapi systems. Major contributors include Nicky Johns, Richard Jones, Nathalie Mitev, Julie Porteous, Gill Venner and Stephen Walker. The evaluation experiments for this project were designed and carried out by Rachel De Vere as part of the work for her MSc in Information Technology at Loughborough University. Parts of Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of this report are adapted from De Vere's MSc dissertation.

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	The Okapi projects	1
1.2	Notes on terminology	1
1.3	Subject access in online catalogues	2
1.4	Subject access in Okapi '86	5
1.5	Query expansion	5
1.6	Feasibility studies	6
1.7	Development of the experimental system Okapi '88	7
2	QUERY MODIFICATION THROUGH RELEVANCE FEEDBACK	9
2.1	Retrieval techniques	9
2.2	Term weighting and relevance feedback	11
2.3	Query modification	13
2.3.1	Sources of terms for query modification	13
2.3.2	Weighting and term selection	14
2.4	Query modification in end user retrieval systems	14
2.4.1	Term selection by the user	14
2.4.2	The CITE catalogue at the NLM	15
2.4.3	The online catalogue at the Scott Polar Research Institute	16
2.4.4	The INSTRUCT system at the University of Sheffield	17
3	SYSTEM DESIGN & DESCRIPTION	19
3.1	Introduction	19
3.2	The bibliographic database	19
3.3	Hardware and software	20
3.4	Dialogue style	20
3.5	Obtaining and processing user input	20
3.5.1	Obtaining input	20
3.5.2	Input preprocessing	21
3.5.3	Parsing and lookup	21
3.6	Search processing	22
3.6.1	Term weighting and the merge	22
3.6.2	Initial search results and options	23
3.7	Record displays	24
3.7.1	Brief record display	24
3.7.2	Full record display	25
3.8	Obtaining relevance judgments	26
3.9	Query expansion	27
3.9.1	Term extraction and weighting	27
3.9.2	Selection of terms for query expansion	28
3.9.3	Query expansion search - screen display and options	29
3.10	Shelf-order browsing	29
3.11	Other options	30
	Screen illustrations	32

4	EVALUATION	41
4.1	Introduction	41
4.2	Formal experiments	41
4.2.1	An example	41
4.2.2	Formal experiments with interactive systems	42
4.3	Experiments with real users	43
4.3.1	The NLM online catalogue comparison	43
4.4	Evaluation techniques for highly interactive systems	45
4.5	Aims of the evaluation	45
4.6	Planning the evaluation	46
4.7	Performance measures	47
4.7.1	Recall, precision and efficiency	47
4.7.2	Relevance, recall and precision in the present experiment	48
4.7.3	Transaction log analysis	48
4.7.4	Users' opinions	49
4.8	Method	49
4.8.1	Subjects	49
4.8.2	Tasks	50
4.8.3	Experimental procedure	50
4.9	Objective relevance assessments	52
5	ANALYSIS & RESULTS	55
5.1	Introduction	55
5.1.1	Terminology	55
5.1.2	Source and processing of data	55
5.2	General comparison of the systems	56
5.2.1	Statistics on efficiency and effectiveness	56
5.2.2	User opinions on system ease and helpfulness	57
5.2.3	User opinions on system usefulness	59
5.3	Use and performance of the query expansion and classification browsing facilities	60
5.4	Query expansion in detail	62
5.4.1	Statistics	62
5.4.2	Quality of lists of records from query expansion	62
5.4.3	Users' comments on query expansion	64
5.5	Classification browsing in detail	65
5.5.1	Statistics	65
5.5.2	Quality of lists of records from classification browsing	66
5.5.3	Users' comments on classification browsing	67
5.6	"Objective" precision of chosen records	68
5.7	User comments about the systems	69
5.7.1	Choice of search terms and retrieval of non-relevant records	69
5.7.2	Record content and display; the recognition of relevance	70
5.7.3	Problems connected with the list of chosen records	71
5.7.4	General interaction and presentation	71
5.8	How people searched the systems	72

6	CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	73
6.1	Performance of the experimental search systems	73
6.2	Query expansion	73
6.2.1	Towards heuristics for offering query expansion	74
6.2.2	The collection of relevance information	75
6.2.3	Computational implications of query expansion	76
6.3	Classification browsing	77
6.3.1	Why classification browsing was relatively unsuccessful	77
6.3.2	Classification browsing in a live system	78
6.3.3	A note on synthetic Dewey numbers	79
6.4	Further work	80
6.4.1	When and why does automatic query expansion work?	80
6.4.2	Automatic query expansion with non-catalogue databases	80
6.4.3	Catalogue systems with enhanced records	81
6.4.4	Towards highly interactive systems: user monitoring as a tool for guiding interaction	81
6.5	Concluding remarks	82

APPENDIXES

1	File structures	83
2	Input processing	85
3	Questionnaires	86
4	Task sheets	91
5	Annotated extracts from a log file	95
6	Assessors' instructions	99
7	Class browsing results	101
8	Example searches	104
1	Extracts from a live search on the query expansion system	104
2	Notes on a search of the "full" system	107

REFERENCES	110
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