## Passage Retrieval and Re-ranking

Ling573 NLP Systems and Applications May 3, 2011

## **Upcoming Talks**

- Edith Law
  - Friday: 3:30; CSE 303
  - Human Computation: Core Research Questions and Opportunities
    - Games with a purpose, MTurk , Captcha verification, etc
- Benjamin Grosof: Vulcan Inc., Seattle, WA, USA
  - Weds 4pm; LIL group, Al lab
  - SILK's Expressive Semantic Web Rules and Challenges in Natural Language Processing

#### Roadmap

- Passage retrieval and re-ranking
  - Quantitative analysis of heuristic methods
    - Tellex et al 2003
    - Approaches, evaluation, issues
  - Shallow processing learning approach
    - Ramakrishnan et al 2004
  - Syntactic structure and answer types
    - Aktolga et al 2011
    - QA dependency alignment, answer type filtering

## Passage Ranking

- Goal: Select passages most likely to contain answer
- Factors in reranking:
  - Document rank
  - Want answers!
    - Answer type matching
      - Restricted Named Entity Recognition
  - Question match:
    - Question term overlap
    - **Span** overlap: N-gram, longest common sub-span
    - Query term **density:** short spans w/more qterms

# Quantitative Evaluation of Passage Retrieval for QA

- Tellex et al.
- Compare alternative passage ranking approaches
  - 8 different strategies + voting ranker
- Assess interaction with document retrieval

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• Oracle: NIST-provided list of relevant documents

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  - Units
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  - Unit: sentence
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- MITRE+stemming:
  - Factor: stemmed term overlap

- Okapi bm25
  - Unit: fixed width sliding window
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  - Factor:  $Score(q,d) = \sum_{i=1}^{N} idf(q_i) \frac{tf_{q_i,d}(k_1+1)}{tf_{q_i,d} + k_1(1-b+(b*\frac{|D|}{avgdl}))}$ • k1=2.0; b=0.75
- MultiText:
  - Unit: Window starting and ending with query term
  - Factor:
    - Sum of IDFs of matching query terms
    - Length based measure \* Number of matching terms

#### • IBM:

- Fixed passage length
- Sum of:
  - Matching words measure: Sum of idfs of overlap terms
  - Thesaurus match measure:
    - Sum of idfs of question wds with synonyms in document
  - Mis-match words measure:
    - Sum of idfs of questions wds NOT in document
  - Dispersion measure: # words b/t matching query terms
  - Cluster word measure: longest common substring

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- Unit: n (=3) sentences
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$$dw(q,d) = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{k-1} \frac{idf(q_j) + idf(q_{j+1})}{\alpha \times dist(j, j+1)^2}}{k-1} \times overlap$$

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- |S|:
  - Unit: sentence
  - Factors: weighted sum of
    - Proper name match, query term match, stemmed match

#### Experiments

- Retrieval:
  - PRISE:
    - Query: Verbatim question
  - Lucene:
    - Query: Conjunctive boolean query (stopped)

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- Retrieval:
  - PRISE:
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    - Query: Conjunctive boolean query (stopped)
- Passage retrieval: 1000 word passages
  - Uses top 200 retrieved docs
  - Find best passage in each doc
  - Return up to 20 passages
    - Ignores original doc rank, retrieval score

## Pattern Matching

- Litkowski pattern files:
  - Derived from NIST relevance judgments on systems
  - Format:
    - Qid answer\_pattern doc\_list
      - Passage where answer\_pattern matches is correct
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- MRR scoring
  - Strict: Matching pattern in official document
  - Lenient: Matching pattern

#### Examples

- Example
  - Patterns
    - 1894 (190|249|416|440)(\s|\-)million(\s|\-)miles? APW19980705.0043 NYT19990923.0315 NYT19990923.0365 NYT20000131.0402 NYT19981212.0029
    - 1894 700-million-kilometer APW19980705.0043
    - 1894 416 million mile NYT19981211.0308
  - Ranked list of answer passages
    - 1894 0 APW19980601.0000 the casta way weas
    - 1894 0 APW19980601.0000 440 million miles
    - 1894 0 APW19980705.0043 440 million miles

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	Strict				
	Lu	cene	PF	ISE	TREC
Algorithm	MRR	% Inc.	MRR	% Inc.	% Inc.
IBM	0.326	49.20%	0.331	39.60%	44.3%
ISI	0.329	48.80%	0.287	41.80%	41.7%
SiteQ	0.323	48.00%	0.358	40.40%	56.1%
MultiText	0.354	46.40%	0.325	41.60%	43.1%
Alicante	0.296	50.00%	0.321	42.60%	60.4%
bm25	0.312	48.80%	0.252	46.00%	n/a
stemmed MITRE	0.250	52.60%	0.242	58.60%	n/a
MITRE	0.271	49.40%	0.189	52.00%	n/a
Averages	0.309	49.15%	0.297	45.33%	n/a
Voting with IBM, ISI, SiteQ	0.350	39.80%	0.352	39.00%	n/a

#### **Evaluation on Oracle Docs**

Algorithm	# Incorrect	% Incorrect	MRR
IBM	31	7.18%	0.851
SiteQ	32	7.41%	0.859
ISI	37	8.56%	0.852
Alicante	39	9.03%	0.816
MultiText	44	10.19%	0.845
bm25	45	10.42%	0.810
MITRE	45	10.42%	0.800
stemmed MITRE	63	14.58%	0.762

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- Lucene:
  - Higher precision, fewer correct, but higher MRR
- Best systems:
  - IBM, ISI, SiteQ
  - Relatively insensitive to retrieval engine

## Analysis

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- Passage retrieval:
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- Techniques: Density-based scoring improves
  - Variants: proper name exact, cluster, density score

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- 'What is an ulcer?'
  - After stopping -> 'ulcer'
  - Match doesn't help
  - Need question type!!
- Missing relations
  - 'What is the highest dam?'
    - Passages match 'highest' and 'dam' but not together
  - Include syntax?

### Learning Passage Ranking

- Alternative to heuristic similarity measures
- Identify candidate features
- Allow learning algorithm to select
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- Learning and ranking:
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    - Use score to rank (e.g., SVM, Logistic Regression)
  - Employ explicit rank learner
    - E.g. RankBoost

### Shallow Features & Ranking

- Is Question Answering an Acquired Skill?
  - Ramakrishnan et al, 2004
- Full QA system described
  - Shallow processing techniques
  - Integration of Off-the-shelf components
  - Focus on rule-learning vs hand-crafting
  - Perspective: questions as noisy SQL queries

#### Architecture



Figure 2: Overall architecture of our trainable QA system.

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- Question-type classification
  - Based on shallow parsing
  - Synsets or surface patterns

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      - Tokyo+++
      - Capital+
      - Country?

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- Train Decision Tree classifier on gold answers: +/-S

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  - Relationship b/t Qtype, A's POS and NE tag (if any)

- Find candidate answer zone A\* as follows for (q.r)
  - Remove all matching q selectors in r
  - For each word (or compound in r) A
    - Compute Hyperpath distance b/t Qtype & A
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- Train logistic regression classifier
  - Positive example:

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- Use regression scores directly to rank



0.8 Pre-reranking Post-reranking 0.7 0.6 0.5 **Н** 0.4 0.3 0.2 0.1 0 when what where how which how how Question type many much

igure 9: Reranking significantly improves the rank f correct passages. The x-axis is the rank at which

Figure 12: Sample MRR improvement via reranking separated into question categories.

# Reranking with Deeper Processing

- Passage Reranking for Question Answering Using Syntactic Structures and Answer Types
  - Atkolga et al, 2011
- Reranking of retrieved passages
  - Integrates
    - Syntactic alignment
    - Answer type
    - Named Entity information

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  - Joint strategy required
    - Checking syntactic parallelism when no answer, useless
- Current approach incorporates all (plus NER)

#### **Baseline Retrieval**

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- Question analysis + Wordnet: QuAn-Wnet
  - Adds 10 synonyms of ngrams in QuAn
- Best performance: QuAn-Wnet (baseline)

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    - Use true Q/A pairs, <path<sub>q</sub>,path<sub>a</sub>>
    - GIZA++, IBM model 1
      - Yields Pr(label<sub>a</sub>,label<sub>q</sub>)



Figure 2. Dependency trees for the sample question and sentence S1 in Figure 1 generated by Minipar. Some nodes are omitted due to lack of space.

Question:			
Path_ID	Node1	Path	Node2
< <b>P</b> <sub>Q1</sub> >	Wisconsin	<subj></subj>	produce
< <b>P</b> <sub>Q2</sub> >	produce <	<head, pcomp-n="" prep,="" whn,=""></head,>	cheese
< <b>P</b> <sub>Q3</sub> >	nation	<gen></gen>	cheese
S1:			
< <b>P</b> <sub>S1</sub> >	Wisconsin	<pcomp-n, i="" mod,=""></pcomp-n,>	produce
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- Approaches have employed
  - Exact match
  - Fuzzy match
  - Both can improve over baseline retrieval, fuzzy more

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scorePair(path<sub>a</sub>, path<sub>a</sub>)  $path_a, path_a \in Paths$ 

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  - Acts a passage answer-type filter
  - Excludes any passage w/o correct answer type

#### Results

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Table 2. Evaluation of Reranking Techniques. All results are averages from the testing datasets TREC 2000 and TREC 2001, evaluated on the top 100 retrieved passages.

Model	MRR@1	MRR@5	MRR@10	MRR@20	MRR@50	MRR@100
Q-BOW	0.168	0.266	0.286	0.293	0.299	0.301
QuAn-Wnet	0.193	0.289	0.308	0.319	0.324	0.325
Cui	0.202	0.307	0.325	0.335	0.339	0.341
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Atype-DP-IP	0.261*	0.363*	0.38*	0.389*	0.393*	0.394*
% Improvement	+29.2	+18.24	+16.9	+16.12	+15.9	+15.54
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