

Finding your Interests from your History of Web Browsing

MURAKAMI Harumi¹ and HIRATA Takashi²

¹Media Center, Osaka City University <harumi@media.osaka-cu.ac.jp>

²Japan Ground Self Defense Force

INTRODUCTION

This research aims to help people discover their interests. We have developed a system that generates a user's interest space from the user's web browsing history, and displays the user's interest terms as keywords and web page icons on the interest space. Figure 1 shows the screen image of the system. Preliminary experiments were performed.

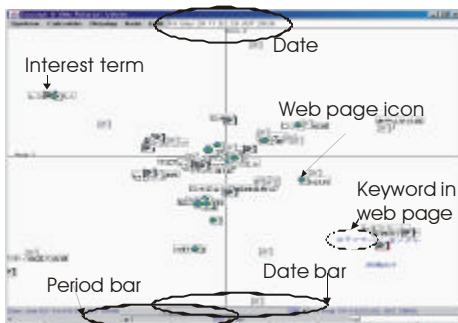


Figure 1. Screen image of the system

METHOD

Four women, aged 23 to 37 years old, were used as subjects. We downloaded newspaper articles (HTML files) for 3 months from a newspaper web site. We asked the subjects to browse any article they wanted to see, at least one page per day. After browsing, we asked the subjects to evaluate the system. Two tests were conducted: displaying only interest terms (Test 1) and displaying interest terms and web page icons (Test 2). Five questions were asked in each test: Q1: Does the interest space display

your interest space?; Q2: Do you want to see the interest space in the future?; Q3: Is the system useful for helping you learn about yourself?; Q4: Is the system useful for reorganizing web pages?; and, Q5: Is the system useful for recalling your past?. The following five values were used for evaluation: 5: I agree a lot, 4: I agree moderately, 3: neutral, 2: I disagree moderately, and 1: I disagree a lot.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results show that the system displays the users' interest space (4.25 in Test 1 and 4.00 in Test 2), and is useful for recalling their past (4.25 and 4.25). The results were better in Test 1 than in Test 2. It is our opinion that this is because it is more difficult to see the screen when terms and icons overlap, and the similarity of terms and icons is sometimes confusing. Therefore, the displaying algorithms and user-interface must be improved. Overall, the results suggest (a) that the algorithm of extracting interest terms is useful, (b) that the system displays the user's interest space, and (c) that the system is useful for recalling the user's past.

REFERENCES

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