

Abstract

Most Information Retrieval models offer only limited support to searchers who possess only a vague and inexpressible understanding of their actual information need. A search process that begins with this inexplicit understanding is referred to as exploratory searching. This research aims to improve the current state of research surrounding exploratory searching, by providing the searcher with additional support throughout the search process.

Prior to presenting our vision to address this dilemma, some fundamental concepts within Information Retrieval are revisited and expanded upon, based on insights derived from established research within this field.

The presented model for Information Retrieval aims to facilitate exploratory searching by supporting the searcher through adaptive interaction, precipitating the searcher's increasingly accurate understanding of his information need.

To illustrate the defined concepts and models in this thesis, they are finally discussed in the light of an example domain.

Keywords: Awareness Development Paths, Consolidated Intermediation Model, Exploratory Search, Human Computation, Information Behaviour, Information Need Awareness, Information Need Levels, Information Retrieval Intermediation, Intermediation Strategies, Search Behaviour, System Awareness, System Awareness Levels