Semantic Relations in Information Science

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Abstract. This chapter examines the nature of semantic relations and their main applications in information science. The nature and types of semantic relations are discussed from the perspectives of linguistics and psychology. An overview of the semantic relations used in knowledge structures such as thesauri and ontologies are provided, as well as the main techniques used in the automatic extraction of semantic relations from text. The chapter then reviews the use of semantic relations in information extraction, information retrieval, question-answering and automatic text summarization applications.

INTRODUCTION

Concepts and relations are the foundation of knowledge and thought. When we look at the world, we perceive not a mass of colors but objects to which we automatically assign category labels. Our perceptual system automatically segments the world into concepts and categories[1]. While concepts are the building blocks of knowledge, relations act as the cement that links up concepts into knowledge structures. We spend much of our lives identifying regular associations and relations between objects, events and processes so that the world has an understandable structure and predictability. Our lives and work depend on the accuracy and richness of this knowledge structure and its web of relations. Relations are needed for reasoning and inferencing.

Chaffin & Herrmann (1988a) noted that "relations between ideas have long been viewed as basic to thought, language, comprehension, and memory" (p. 290). Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (Warrington, 1961; McKeon, 1941/2001) expounded on several types of relations. The majority of the thirty entries in Aristotle's *A philosophical lexicon* (a section in the *Metaphysics*) refer to relations and attributes, including cause, part-whole, same and opposite, quality (i.e. attribute) and kind-of, and defined different types of each relation. David Hume (1955) pointed out that there is a connection between successive ideas in our minds, even in our dreams, and that the introduction of an idea in our mind automatically recalls an associated idea. He argued that all the objects of human reasoning are divided into relations of ideas and matters of fact, and that factual reasoning is founded on the cause-effect relation. His *Treatise of Human Nature* identified seven kinds of relations: resemblance, identity, relations of time and place, proportion in quantity or number, degrees in a quality, contrariety and causation. J.S. Mill (1974) discoursed on several types of relations, and claimed that all things are either feelings, substances or attributes, and that attributes can be a quality (which belongs to one object) or a relation to other objects (pp. 989-1004).

Linguists in the structuralist tradition (e.g. Lyons, 1977; Saussure, 1959) assert that concepts cannot be defined on their own but only in relation to other concepts. Semantic relations appear to reflect a logical structure in the fundamental nature of thought (Caplan & Herrmann, 1993). Green, Bean & Myaeng (2002, p. x) noted that semantic relations play a critical role in how we represent knowledge psychologically, linguistically and computationally, and that many systems of knowledge representation start with a basic distinction between entities and relations. Green (2001) said that "relationships are involved as we combine simple entities to form more complex entities, as we compare entities, as we group entities, as one entity performs a process on another entity, and so forth. Indeed, many things that

[1] *Categories* refer to sets of objects, whereas *concepts* refer to the mental representations of the categories. The terms are often used interchangeably when it is not necessary to distinguish between them.

we might initially regard as basic and elemental are revealed upon further examination to involve internal structure, or in other words, internal relationships." (p. 3)

Concepts and relations are often expressed in language and text. Language is used not just for communicating concepts and relations, but also for representing, storing and reasoning with concepts and relations. We shall examine the nature of semantic relations from a linguistic and psychological perspective, with an emphasis on relations expressed in text. The usefulness of semantic relations in information science, especially in ontology construction, information extraction, information retrieval, question-answering and text summarization is discussed.

Research and development in information science have focused on concepts and terms, but the focus will increasingly shift to the identification, processing and management of relations to achieve greater effectiveness and refinement in information science techniques. Previous chapters in ARIST on natural language processing (Chowdhury, 2003), text mining (Trybula, 1999), information retrieval and the philosophy of language (Blair, 2003), and query expansion (Efthimiadis, 1996) provide a background for this discussion, as semantic relations are an important part of these applications.

WHAT ARE SEMANTIC RELATIONS?

Semantic Relations in Language and Logic

Semantic relations are meaningful associations between two or more concepts, entities or sets of entities. They can be viewed as directional links between the concepts/entities that participate in the relation. The concepts/entities are an integral part of the relation as a relation cannot exist by itself but have to relate two things. Associations between concepts/entities can be categorized into different types, abstracted, conceptualized and distinguished from other associations, and can thus be assigned meaning. The meaning or type of an association can sometimes but not always be derived from the meanings of the participant concepts. Psychologists and philosophers have attempted to identify the main types of relations and their features.

Two concepts connected by a relation are often represented as a concept-relation-concept triple: [concept1] ->(relation)-> [concept2] [2]. The link is labeled to indicate the type or meaning of the relation. A relation can thus be viewed as containing two places or slots that need to be filled. A relation exerts selectional restrictions on the slots which constrain the kind of concepts or entities that can occupy the slots. A valid participant of a relation may need to have certain semantic features or belong to a semantic category. For example, in the relation [John] ->(is-father-of)-> [Mary], the entity represented by "John" has to belong to the category of human beings and have the gender feature of *male*. A relation can also constrain the slot filler to a concept, an entity (i.e. instance of a concept), set of entities or a mass concept (denoting a set of entities).

Though most relations are binary relations having two slots, a relation may have three or more slots. For example, the *buy* relation may relate four participants: the buyer, the seller, the thing that is bought, and the price. The number of slots of a relation is called its arity or valence. *Buy* is a 4-ary relation, and the four participants in the relation are assigned the roles *agent* (buyer), *source* (seller), *patient* (thing bought) and *price* to distinguish between them. It is, however, well-known that relations with arity higher than two can be decomposed into a set of more primitive binary relations. For example, the *buy* relation can be converted to a *buy* concept which can be linked to the four participants with the binary relations agent, source, patient and price. Sowa (1984) proposed the generic *link* relation as the most primitive relation. All other relations can be defined in terms of concepts combined with the *link* relation. For

[2] A word within square brackets is a label for a concept. A word within round brackets is a label for a relation. Arrows indicate the direction of the relation.

example, the *eat* relation in [John] ->(eat)-> [apple], can be decomposed into the concept *eat* and the case relations *agent* and *patient*: [John] <-(agent)<- [eat] ->(patient)-> [apple]. The *agent* relation can be further reduced to the concept *agent* and the *link* relation: [John] <-(link)<- [agent] <-(link)<- [eat].

Sowa (1984) further suggested that tenses and modalities, such as *possibility*, *necessity*, *permission*, and *negation*, be treated as 1-ary or “monadic” relations. For example, the PAST relation can indicate that a proposition was true in the past: (PAST) -> [PROPOSITION].

Semantic relations can refer to relations *between concepts in the mind* (called conceptual relations), or relations *between words* (lexical relations) or text segments. However, concepts and relations are inextricably bound with language and text, and it is difficult to analyze the meaning of concepts and relations apart from the language that expresses them. Wittgenstein (1953) said, “When I think in language, there aren’t ‘meanings’ going through my mind in addition to the verbal expressions: the language is itself the vehicle of thought” (p. 107). Often the distinction between conceptual relations and lexical relations are unimportant, and authors use the term *lexical-semantic relations* (Evens, 1988, p. 2) to refer to relations between lexical concepts—concepts denoted by words. They are also sometimes called *sense relations*, as some linguists maintain that they relate particular senses of words (Lyons, 1977).

Besides words, semantic relations can occur at higher levels of text—between phrases, clauses, sentences and larger text segments, as well as between documents and sets of documents. The analysis of semantic relations can be carried out at the text level (close to the words that express the meaning) or at a logical level, focusing on the meaning expressed by the text or concepts in the mind.

Let us now consider some properties of relations. Murphy (2003) listed the following general properties of lexical-semantic relations that have been identified by linguists:

1. Productivity—new relations can be created easily
2. Binarity—some relations, for example *antonymy*, are binary in the sense that a word can have only one true antonym, whereas other relations, for example *synonymy*, can relate a set of words (i.e. a word can have many synonyms)
3. Variability—relations between words vary with the sense of the word used and the context
4. Prototypicality and canonicity—some word pairs are better exemplars of a relation than others, and some word pairs have special status as canonical examples of a relation (particularly for *antonyms*)
5. Semi-semanticity—non-semantic properties, such as grammatical category, co-occurrence in text, and similarity in morphological form, can affect whether a particular relation is considered to hold between two words
6. Uncountability—semantic relations are an open class and they cannot all be listed or counted
7. Predictability—semantic relations follow certain general patterns and rules
8. Universality—the same types of semantic relations are used in any language and the same concepts are related by the same semantic relations in different languages.

A semantic relation can have one or more of the following logical properties (Sowa, 1984, p. 381; Cruse, 2004):

- Reflexivity: a relation R is reflexive if it can relate an entity to itself, i.e. [x]->(R)->[x] is true for every x (e.g. the part-whole relation)
- Symmetry: a relation R is symmetric if the two participants of the relation can occupy either slot, i.e. [x]->(R)->[y] implies [y]->(R)->[x] (e.g. synonymy)
- Transitivity: a relation R is transitive if [x]->(R)->[y] and [y]->(R)->[z] implies [x]->(R)->[z] (e.g. ISA relation, and ancestor-descendent relation)
- One-to-one relation: a relation R is one-to-one if when one participant of the relation is known, the other participant is fixed, i.e. [x]->(R)->[y] and [z]->(R)->[y] implies x=z.

A relation can be related to another relation by *similarity* (i.e. the two relations are the same) or by an *inverse* relation. A relation R is the inverse of a relation S if both can accept the same pair of participants or slot fillers but the direction of the two relations is reversed, i.e. [x]->(R)->[y] implies [y]->(S)->[x]

(e.g. *broader* versus *narrower* relation, *parent* versus *child* relation). One relation can be a *subrelation* or more specific type of relation than another, and relations can be organized into a relation hierarchy.

The variety of semantic relations and their properties play an important role in human comprehension and reasoning. Spellman, Holyoak & Morrison (2001) said that conceptual relations and the role bindings they impose on the participant objects are central to such cognitive tasks as discourse comprehension, inference, problem solving and analogical reasoning. Chaffin & Herrmann (1984) noted that the variety of relations is important both to general models of comprehension and to semantic models. For general models of comprehension, the relations differ in their logical properties and thus permit different kinds of inferences. The different relations also call into play different sets of decision criteria in decision making (Herrmann, Chaffin, Conti, Peters & Robbins, 1979). Relations have also been found to be important in analogical reasoning and in the use of metaphors, which involve cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system (Lakoff, 1993, p. 203). In analogical reasoning, people map connected systems of relations, in particular cause-effect relations, rather than individual features (Holyoak & Thagard, 1995; Gentner, 1983 & 1989; Lakoff, 1993; Turner, 1993).

Comprehensive treatments of semantic relations in language and text can be found in Cruse (1986 & 2004), Lyons (1977 & 1995), and Murphy (2003).

The Psychological Reality of Semantic Relations

Are semantic relations real, or are they just an abstract theoretical construct of linguists and psychologists? Do people really perceive, recognize and process semantic relations? There is substantial evidence from experimental psychology that semantic relations have psychological reality to human beings.

Chaffin & Herrmann (1984, 1987, 1988a) and Glass, Holyoak & Kiger (1979) carried out a series of studies to demonstrate that people can distinguish between different types of relations, identify instances of similar relations, express relations in words, recognize instances of relation ambiguity, and create new relations. The evidence come from sorting experiments where subjects were asked to sort relations (represented by pairs of terms) into groups of similar relations, analogy tests where subjects were asked to assess the similarity of pairs of terms representing different relations, and tasks of relating term pairs to relation names indicating the type of relation exemplified by each term pair.

Psychologists have determined that some types of semantic relations, for example antonymy, are easier for adults and children to comprehend and process than others (Chaffin & Herrmann, 1987; Herrmann & Chaffin, 1986). Landis, Herrmann & Chaffin (1987) studied children's developmental rates in understanding five types of semantic relations (antonymy, class inclusion, part-whole, syntactic relations, and synonymy) and concluded that the ability to match relations developed faster for antonymy and part-whole relations than for others, and that comprehension of class inclusion developed least rapidly.

Researchers in anthropology and psychology have also found substantial cross-cultural agreement on the meanings and in the use of semantic relations (Chaffin & Herrmann, 1984; Hermann & Raybeck, 1981; Hudon, 2001; Romney, Moore & Rusch, 1997). Raybeck & Herrmann (1990) found that some types of relations (particularly antonymy, part-whole and cause-effect relations) are recognized equally easily and used with equal frequency and accuracy by diverse groups of people from different cultural backgrounds.

Psychologists consider semantic relations to be important in explaining the coherence and structure of concepts and categories. A *category* is not just a random set of entities—the entities in a category must belong together in some way. A category or concept is *coherent*—it must make meaningful sense. Psychologists have investigated several theoretical models for explaining conceptual coherence and structure. Initial studies focused on similarity of features, but this was found to be inadequate in explaining why certain features are more important than other in determining category membership. Researchers now believe that relations between the features of the category members, the functions of the features and the configuration of features are important. For example, Markowitz (1988) learnt that the *modification*, *part-whole*, *function*, *agent* and *object* relations are important in determining category membership ranking. *Modification,* particularly *size,* is used in the definitions of most categories, and many categories have a specific range of acceptable sizes. The *part-whole* relation is important in natural categories, whereas *function* is important in manufactured objects.

Some psychologists espoused an explanation-based or theory-based model of categorization that explains conceptual coherence in terms of theories that people have about the relations between attributes in the concept and about the relations between concepts (Murphy & Medin, 1985; Keil, 1989 & 2003; Ahn & Kim, 2001). Wattenmaker, Nakamura & Medin (1988) said that categories derive their coherence not from overlapping attributes but from the complex web of causal and theoretical relationships in which these attributes participate. Ahn (1999) and Rehder (2003) found that causal relations appear to determine the importance of specific attributes in human evaluation of category membership. Rehder & Hastie (2001) showed that attributes occupying a central position in a network of causal relationships (either as a common cause or a common effect) dominates category membership judgement. Ahn & Kim (2001) found that the deeper an attribute is in a causal chain, the more dominant it is in category membership judgements.

Are semantic relations *concepts*? Chaffin & Herrmann (1988a) and Chaffin (1992) found that relations have the main characteristics of concepts and concluded that they are abstract concepts. They identified four characteristics that relational concepts share with concrete concepts: a) relations can be analyzed into more basic elements or features; b) a new relation may be an elaboration or combination of other relations; c) relations have graded structure (i.e. some instances of relations, represented by word pairs, are more typical of a particular relation than others); and d) relations vary in the ease with which they can be expressed.

Linguists and psychologists have shown that the antonym, synonym, ISA, part-whole and case relations, often taken as primitive relations, can be decomposed into simpler relational elements (Chaffin, 1992; Chaffin & Herrmann, 1987, 1988a & 1988b; Cruse, 1986; Klix, 1986; Lyons, 1977). Murphy (2003) stated that most lexical-semantic relations have some kind of similarity and contrast element. For example, synonyms are similar in meaning but different in lexical form, and antonyms have contrasting positions on the same dimension. Chaffin & Herrmann (1984) found that subjects distinguished relations in terms of three features: contrasting/noncontrasting, logical/pragmatic, and inclusion/non-inclusion. Shared features can also account for perceptions of similarity between relations (Caplan & Herrmann, 1993; Chaffin, 1992; Chaffin & Herrmann, 1984, 1987, 1988a & 1988b).

Categories of relation instances (expressed as word pairs) also differ in the extent to which their memberships are graded (Caplan & Barr, 1991). Some relations can be defined "classically" in terms of necessary and sufficient features, whereas others have "fuzzy" boundaries with many partial members. Semantic relations, like concepts, can be organized into taxonomies with broader and narrower relations (Chaffin & Herrmann, 1987; Green, 2002; Stasio, Herrman & Chaffin, 1985).

Semantic Relations in Semantic Memory

Besides semantic relations expressed in text, semantic relations are also encoded in knowledge structures in our brains. Psychologists working in the area of *semantic memory* have attempted to characterize the nature and structure of these knowledge structures and the semantic relations that support them. *Semantic memory* has been characterized as our mental storehouse of knowledge about language as well as general knowledge about the world (McNamara & Holbrook, 2003; Smith, 1978).

The semantic memory is usually modeled as a network with nodes representing concepts, and labeled directional links representing relations. This semantic network model was first proposed by Quillian (1967) and Collins & Quillian (1969). In Quillian's theory (1967 & 1968), words are stored in memory as configurations of pointers to other words, and each configuration of pointers represents the meaning of a word. The use of semantic memory for memory recall and comprehension is modeled as spreading activation—activation that spreads from one node to neighboring nodes along the links (Collins & Loftus, 1975).

A major debate in semantic memory research is the structure versus process question—are semantic relations pre-stored in semantic memory or computed dynamically from the representation of concepts (Kounios & Holcomb, 1992). There is some experimental evidence that at least some relations, for example the *ownership* relation, are computed as needed (Kounios, Montgomery & Smith, 1994).

Klix (1980, 1986) distinguished between *intra-concept relations* and *inter-concept relations*. Inter-concept relations, also called *event relations*, are based on associations between words, concepts and events that have been observed and experienced (e.g. *knife* is for *cutting*), and are hypothesized as being stored directly in memory. Intra-concept relations or feature-based relations between concepts are based on common features or feature relationships within the concepts. These relations are not stored explicitly in memory but are hypothesized to be computed from concept features using cognitive procedures stored in the brain (Kukla, 1980). These two types of relations have been found to have different effects on memory recall and analogy recognition (Hoffmann & Trettin, 1980). Murphy (2003) argued that paradigmatic relations (discussed later), which are mainly feature-based relations, are generated using cognitive rules because new instances of the relations can be easily produced at any time. She hypothesized that paradigmatic relations are represented as "metalinguistic knowledge" about words rather than hard-coded in the lexicon, and this explains why semantic relations are determined partly by context.

Herrmann (1987) suggested another possibility—a relation between two words may be represented in semantic memory as simpler relations or relation elements between aspects of the meanings of the two words. He further proposed an *alternative-form model* of relation comprehension in which different ways of representing relations in semantic memory are made use of in relation comprehension, each form providing an alternative way of processing relations under different conditions.

General knowledge in human memory has also been modeled as being organized into structures of relations called a *schema* (Alba & Hasher, 1983). One implementation of the schema introduced by Minsky (1975) is a *frame*—basically a set of labeled slots, each indicating the role of a participant in the frame. Frames with a temporal element indicating a sequence of sub-events in an event type are called *scripts* (Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977; Schank & Abelson, 1977; Schank, 1982). Frames, scripts and story schemas play a major role in models of human comprehension (Brewer & Nakamura, 1984; Butcher & Kintsch, 2003; Whitney, Budd, Bramucci & Crane, 1995).

TYPES OF SEMANTIC RELATIONS

Overview

This section surveys the types of semantic relations that have been identified by researchers: lexical-semantic relations, case relations and relations at a higher level of text.

Can a comprehensive list of semantic relations be constructed? What are the main types of relations? There are two broad approaches to constructing a list of semantic relations: the minimalist approach and the elaborate approach. Evens (1988) referred to the two groups of researchers as "lumpers" and "splitters." The lumpers or minimalists define a small number of general relations based on philosophical or logical principles (e.g. Sowa, 1984 & 2000; Werner, 1988). Werner (1988) used only three relations: *modification*, *taxonomy*, and *queuing*. Other researchers have a much more elaborate list of specific relations, often based on lexical-semantic relations and words found in a text (e.g. Calzolari, 1988). Lexical-oriented models often group relations into families of relations with the same core meaning or function.

Most researchers recognize two broad categories of relations: paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. This distinction can be traced to Ferdinand de Saussure (1959)[3]. Paradigmatic relations are relations between pairs of words or phrases that can occur in the same position in the same sentence (Asher, 1994, v.10, p. 5153). The words often have the same part-of-speech and belong to the same semantic class, and are to some extent grammatically substitutable. Examples include ISA (broader-narrower), part-whole and synonym relations. These relations tend to be part of our semantic memory, and are typically used in a thesaurus. Lancaster (1986) characterized paradigmatic relations as *a priori* or permanent relations.

Syntagmatic relations refer to relations between words that co-occur (often in close syntactic positions) in the same sentence or text (Asher, 1994, v. 10, p. 5178). It is a linear or sequence relation that is synthesized and expressed between two words or phrases when we construct a sentence. The relations are governed partly by syntactic and grammatical rules of a language. Lancaster (1986) characterized syntagmatic relations as *a posteriori* or transient relations. Green (2001) suggested that paradigmatic relations are a closed, enumerable class of relations, whereas syntagmatic relations are an open class which cannot be fully enumerated, since a new relation is invented whenever a new verb is coined.

The distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations is fuzzy. Evens, Litowitz, Markowitz, Smith & Werner (1980) pointed out that paradigmatic relations can be expressed syntagmatically. However, they also noted that "we seem to receive paradigmatic information typically in generic (always true) sentences, while syntagmatic relationships come to us in occasional sentences. A generic or standing sentence contains a piece of permanent information about the world, such as "Food is edible". An occasional sentence contains information about a particular context …" (p. 10-11).

Syntagmatic relations between two words can become part of our semantic memory if the words co-occur frequently enough in text or discourse to be associated (Harris, 1987). In fact, Gardin (1965) argued that paradigmatic data should be derived from accumulated syntagmatic data. Indeed, as we shall see later, researchers performing corpus-based linguistic analysis have found that paradigmatically related words, especially antonyms, often co-occur in text.

Many authors have attempted to enumerate semantic relations—either generally, of a particular type, or for a particular purpose. Warren (1921) identified 13 other classification systems proposed before 1911. Evens, Litowitz, Markowitz, Smith & Werner (1980) surveyed the sets of lexical-semantic relations that had been studied by researchers in anthropology, linguistics, psychology and computer science before 1980. Lists of semantic relations can be found in Chaffin & Herrmann (1987 & 1988a), Myaeng & McHale (1992), Neelameghan (1998 & 2001), Neelameghan & Maitra (1978), Smith (1981), and Sowa (1984 & 2000). Vickery (1996) provided a brief summary of the history of associative relationships in information retrieval over the past few decades.

Lexical-Semantic Relations

Lexical-semantic relations are an important group of relations since they provide structure to lexicons, thesauri, taxonomies and ontologies. The *structure* versus *process* debate in semantic memory research is also present in lexical semantics. Are semantic relations stored in semantic memory as part of the meaning of a word, or are words defined in terms of their features, and relations between words inferred dynamically from word meanings?

Lyons (1995) and other structural linguists hold that words cannot be defined independently of other words. A word's relationship with other words is part of the meaning of the word. The vocabulary of a language is thus viewed as a web of nodes, each representing a sense of a word, and labeled links representing relations between the word senses. As Lyons (1977) put it, "We cannot first identify the units [i.e. words] and then, at a subsequent stage of the analysis, enquire what combinatorial or other relations hold between them: we simultaneously identify both the units and their interrelations. Linguistic units are

[3]Saussure used the term *associative relations* for what is now known as *paradigmatic relations*.

but points in a system, or network, of relations; they are the terminals of these relations, and they have no prior and independent existence" (pp. 231-232). Ferdinand de Saussure, generally regarded as the founder of modern structural linguistics, argued that "language is a system of interdependent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the others" (Saussure, 1959, pp. 114-116).

Other linguists maintain that the lexical representation of a word is mainly a set of semantic features based on semantic primitives, and that semantic relations are derivable from the semantic features of the words using some basic relational rules (Clark, 1973; Katz, 1972; Murphy, 2003).

The main lexical-semantic relations are the paradigmatic relations of hyponymy (ISA or broader-narrower term), part-whole relation, synonymy and antonymy, which are discussed later. However, frequently occurring syntagmatic relations between a pair of words can be part of our linguistic knowledge and considered lexical-semantic relations. As Firth (1957, p. 195; 1968, p. 179) put it, "you shall know a word by the company it keeps." Pairs of words that co-occur in a sentence more often than chance is referred to, broadly, as *collocations* (Smadja, 1993), though some writers define collocations more narrowly.

There are different degrees of syntagmatic word association. At extreme are idioms (e.g. "kick the bucket") whose meanings cannot be derived from the meanings of the component words. Other word sequences are less strongly associated—their meaning is related to the meaning of the component words but not completely derivable from them. Hausmann (1985) divided word associations into fixed (i.e. idiom) and non-fixed combinations, the latter being subdivided into counter-affine, affine and free combinations.

Some word pairs are so strongly associated that the presence of one word almost determines the other word, for a particular context. Mel'cuk (1988) introduced the idea of *lexical functions* (LFs) in the framework of his Meaning-Text Theory. Wanner (1996) referred to lexical functions as "institutionalized" lexical relations. A lexical function is a mapping or relation between two terms—term1 and term2—denoted "LF(term1) = term2", for a particular meaning context. So, if a term, *term2*, is to be selected to express a particular meaning or relation, the choice of term2 is predetermined if term1 is given. An example is LF("aircraft") = "crew". The value of a lexical function can also be a set of words, e.g. LF("flock") = {"birds","sheep"}. Institutionalized lexical relations are directed and asymmetrical, as well as language-specific. For example, LF("aircraft") = "crew" does not imply LF("crew") = "aircraft".

There are many LF relations. Mel'cuk (1996) listed 27 paradigmatic and 37 syntagmatic lexical functions. Examples of paradigmatic lexical functions are: *Syn* (synonym), *Anti* (antonym), *Conv* (converse), *Contr* (contrastive), and *Gener* (genus). Syntagmatic lexical functions include (Mel'cuk, 1996):

- Center/culmination: Centr("crisis") = "the peak" [of the crisis]
- Very/intensely: Magn("naked") = "stark"
- More: Plus("prices") = {"soar", "skyrocket"}
- Less: Minus("pressure") = "decreases"

A good introduction to lexical functions and Meaning-Text Theory is given by Wanner (1996).

The most extensive lexical semantic network that has been constructed for the English language is WordNet (http://www.cogsci.princeton.edu/~wn/) (Fellbaum, 1998; Miller, 1995; Miller & Fellbaum, 1991). WordNet is a lexical database comprising about 150,000 English nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, organized into sets of synonymous words called *synsets*, each representing a lexical concept. Its design is based on psycholinguistic theories of human lexical memory. Its construction has given insight into how the lexicon is structured by lexical-semantic relations. For example, nouns are structured mainly by ISA and part-whole relations; nouns are linked to adjectives with the *attribute* link and to verbs with the *function* link; adjectives are linked primarily by *antonymy*; the most frequent relation among verbs is *troponymy*, which expresses a *manner* elaboration. Other relations among verbs encoded in WordNet are lexical entailment (e.g. *snoring* entails *sleeping*), causal relation (e.g show/see, feed/eat, have/own), and antonymy.

Following the success of WordNet, EuroWordNet (http://www.illc.uva.nl/EuroWordNet/)—a multilingual lexical database covering several European languages—was constructed (Alonge, et al., 1998; Vossen, 1998). EuroWordNet is patterned after WordNet but uses a richer set of lexical semantic relations. For example, causal relations are divided into *non-factive causal relations* (i.e. one event is likely to cause another event but not necessarily so, e.g. *search->find*) and *factive causal relations* (the causal relation necessarily holds, e.g. *kill->die*). A causal relation can also be labeled with the property of *intention* to cause the result (e.g. *search->find*), to distinguish it from inadvertent causal relations. Near synonymy, near-antonymy, and five types of part-whole relations are also used in EuroWordNet. Furthermore, sets of relations can be labeled with the properties of *conjunction* and *disjunction* to indicate relationships among sets of concepts, for example, that an airplane has propellers OR jets, and is a conjunction of several parts—wings, nose, tail AND door. WordNets for other languages are being constructed, and these projects are listed on the Global WordNet Association Web site (http://www.globalwordnet.org/).

Case Relations

Case relations, also called case roles, thematic relations and theta roles, are the primary syntagmatic relations between the main verb and the other syntactic constituents of the clause (Fillmore, 1968; Somers, 1987). According to case grammar theory, verbs assign semantic roles to the various clause constituents—subject, direct object, indirect object, prepositional phrase, and so forth—which are sometimes referred to as the arguments of the verbs. For example, in the sentence "Mary bought a watch for John", the case relations between the verb *buy* and the other clause constituents are:

buy –
->(agent)-> [Mary]
->(patient)-> [watch]
->(recipient)-> [John]

Each verb sense is associated with a case frame with slots, each slot having a case role. A case frame specifies the number of entities the verb expects in the clause, the case roles assigned to these entities, whether each role is obligatory (i.e. must be filled) or optional, selectional restrictions specifying the semantic category of the entity filling a role, and the syntactic realization of each role in the clause (whether expressed as subject, direct object, etc.).

Somers (1987, p.111) said that "a recurring problem for Case grammarians has always been the definition of a 'comfortable' set of cases." Rosner & Somers (1980) stressed that a case system should be tailored to the particular application. The rationale for using case roles is to classify and generalize the semantic roles between a verb and its arguments, and so the set of case roles should be at a level of abstraction that is appropriate for the application.

Fillmore (1971b) produced a "case hierarchy" with eight roles: *agent, experiencer, instrument, object, source, goal, location* and *time*. Cook's (1989) case frame matrix had five case roles: *agent, experiencer, benefactive, object* and *locative*. He also listed additional "modal cases": *time, manner, instrument, cause, result* and *purpose*. Somers' (1987) case grid defined 24 case roles using a combination of two dimensions: a spatial/temporal orientation dimension comprising the values *source, path, goal* and *neutral*, and a second, mostly verb-type, dimension with values *active, objective, dative psychological/possessive, locative, temporal* and *ambient*. A case role is thus considered a bundle of more primitive features. The *experiencer* role, for example, is represented as a combination of *dative psychological* + *goal* features. Sets of case roles have been constructed by many authors. Longacre (1996) presented 10 case roles. Myaeng, Khoo & Li (1994) identified 46 case roles in the process of constructing case frames for all the verb senses in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1987). Various case grammar systems were reviewed by Cook (1989) and Somers (1987).

Dowty (1991), however, argued that case roles are not discrete roles but cluster concepts that have fuzzy boundaries. An individual verb-specific semantic role can belong to a case role to a greater or lesser extent. A case role is thus seen as a category or type of semantic role, which includes a cluster of more specific roles with overlapping sets of features. Each semantic role can be decomposed into features that Dowty called verbal entailments. He proposed two large clusters of case roles called *proto-agent* and *proto-patient* roles. Examples of entailments for the proto-agent role include *volitional involvement*, *perception*, *causing an event or change of state*, and *movement relative to the position of another participant*.

Case grammar theory can be extended to other parts of speech, such as nouns and adjectives. Verb case frames are applicable to nominalized verbs and gerunds, formed by adding one of several possible suffixes, such as –ing and –ion, to verbs. Case frames for these nouns can be derived from the case frames of their associated verbs, although the process is not straightforward. Some writers suggest that some adjectives and nouns also have valency in that they expect certain prepositional phrases and certain kinds of complements (Somers, 1987).

Constructing case frames for a comprehensive set of verbs is a difficult task. Automatic construction methods using text mining and corpus statistics are described later in the chapter. A major manual effort to construct a comprehensive set of case frames for English verb senses as well as predicative nouns and adjectives is being undertaken in the Berkeley FrameNet project (http://www.icsi.berkeley.edu/~framenet/) (Baker, Fillmore & Cronin, 2003; Baker, Fillmore & Lowe, 1998). The project does not define a small number of case roles to use in all the case frames. Instead, a set of case roles called "frame elements" is defined for each "frame." A frame in the FrameNet project is a schematic representation of a particular type of situation involving various participants. Example frames are *action*, *awareness* and *transaction* frames. To construct case frames for individual word senses, the words are clustered into groups corresponding to situations or frames, and the case roles for each word sense are selected from the frame elements defined for the situation.

Many natural language processing applications make use of case frames because they correspond quite closely to the surface structure of clauses, and it is thus relatively easy to label clause constituents with case roles using a computer program. This serves as a useful intermediate processing step when converting the text to a semantic representation. Indeed, instantiated case frames with slots filled by terms/concepts extracted from the text are often used as the intermediate representation or interlingua in natural language understanding systems (e.g. Chan & Franklin, 2003; Minker, Bennacef & Gauvain, 1996), question answering and dialogue systems (e.g. Takemura & Ashida, 2002; Xu, Araki & Niimi, 2003), and machine translation systems (e.g. Dorr, Levow & Lin, 2002).

Relations Between Larger Text Segments

We turn now to semantic relations between larger units of text. Relations between sentences can be analyzed from a logical or textual perspective. Logical relations between sentences are dealt with in the fields of formal semantics (e.g. Cann, 1993), logic and philosophy (e.g. Quine, 1982), and knowledge representation (e.g. Ringland & Duce, 1988; Sowa, 1984 & 2000). Often, sentences and clauses are represented as propositions or predicates, and inferencing is performed using propositional, predicate and other kinds of logics. The main semantic relations used are entailment (or implication or consequence), presupposition, equivalence and contradiction (Cann, 1993; Lyons, 1995; Van Dijk, 1972). The most important relation is entailment. When we say that *a sentence S entails a sentence S'*, we mean that if S is true then S' is true. Van Dijk (1972) presented other semantic relations: time, place, cause, purpose, result, condition, concession, topic (theme)-comment (rheme). Crombie's (1985) semantic relations between propositions were grouped under the headings *temporal, matching, cause-effect, truth and validity, alternation, bonding, paraphrase, amplification* and *setting/conduct*. Other lists of propositional relations can be found in Beekman, Callow & Kopesec (1981), Hobbs (1985), and Longacre (1996).

At the textual level, sentences and clauses are linked by relations of cohesion and coherence. Halliday & Hasan (1976) analyzed relations between adjacent sentences and clauses, which they termed *cohesive relations*. They emphasized that cohesion is a semantic relation and that "cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another" (p. 4). Their work focused on the linguistic devices that writers use to effect "cohesive ties" between two nearby items, usually words and phrases, in the text. They divided cohesive devices into grammatical devices (anaphoric reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction), and lexical devices (use of vocabulary and repetition of words).

Cohesion is often contrasted with coherence relations. Dooley & Levinsohn (2001) characterized text coherence as "in essence, a question of whether the hearer can make it 'hang together' conceptually, that is, interpret it within a single mental representation" (p. 27). Eggins (1994, p. 87) said that coherence refers to the way a group of clauses or sentences relate to the context. Cohesion emphasizes local relations between two nearby text units, whereas coherence focuses on networks of related units and larger structures as well as on the argumentative and pragmatic purposes of the text unit.

At an even higher level of text are discourse relations and macro-structure. Van Dijk (1988) argued that syntax and semantics can be applied to sequences of clauses, sentences, or whole texts. An influential discourse structure model in information science comes from the *Rhetorical Structure Theory* of Mann & Thompson (1988 & 1989; see also Mann, Matthiessen & Thompson, 1992). In this model, a set of rhetorical relations is used to model the text structure. Rhetorical relations include *evidence, elaboration, motivation, volitional cause, evaluation* and *background*. Each relation links two text segments, one of which is considered the nucleus or more central segment and the other considered the satellite or peripheral segment. A small number of relations, for example *sequence* and *contrast*, are "multi-nuclear" in that the linked text segments are both considered nuclear. The rhetorical structure is recursive—a text is decomposed into a sequence of segments linked by rhetorical relations, and each segment can be further decomposed into smaller segments linked by the same or other rhetorical relations.

Van Dijk (1980) maintained that a text has an overall macro-level syntactic structure called *superstructure*, governed by a rule-based schema. Van Dijk (1988) suggested the following hierarchical schema for news articles:

Situation
- Episode (subdivided into Main events and Consequences)
- Background
  -- Context (circumstances, previous events)
  -- History

Comments
- Verbal reactions
- Conclusions (subdivided into Expectations and Evaluations)

Though Van Dijk regarded these as syntactic units, the unit labels suggest semantic roles. The segments can perhaps be considered to have a semantic relation to the overall content of the text. In fact, Van Dijk (1988) postulated the existence of summarizing macrorules which relate lower level propositions to higher level macropropositions—topics or themes derived from the meanings of a text. A more recent discussion of the discourse structure of news articles can be found in Bell (1998).

Macro-level structure of stories, called *story schemas* and *story grammars*, have been studied by several authors (e.g. Mandler, 1987; Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Rumelhart, 1975; Schneider & Winship, 2002), and are used in the teaching of comprehension, literary analysis and story writing in schools (see Dimino, Taylor & Gersten, 1995; Olson & Gee, 1988). A recent review of the theory can be found in Lang (2003).

At the document level, relations between documents may be structural (e.g. an article in a journal, a chapter in a book) or associative (e.g. articles by the same author, cited articles, hyperlinked Web pages). The documents can be linked by various kinds of semantic relations—two articles may be on the same topic, one article may be a condensed version of another, an article could report a follow-up study or refute the results of another study, and so forth. Topical semantic relations can be indicated using controlled subject terms taken from a thesaurus or subject headings list, or class numbers taken from a classification scheme. Another type of document-level semantic relations can be derived from the author's citation of other works and the author's reason for citing. Liu (1993) reviewed previous citation studies and compiled a list of possible reasons for citing another work. Green (2001) noted that little is known about the range of semantic relations between citing and cited documents. Relatively little work has been done on identifying semantic relations between documents. The main semantic relations at the document level appear to be those provided by thesauri and classification schemes.

Finally, an important type of semantic relation in information science is the relevance relation—the relevance of a document to a query or to the information need of a user. Researchers have identified many factors, besides topical relevance, that affect a user's judgement of the relevance of a document (Barry, 1994; Park, 1997; Schamber, 1991 & 1994; Tang & Solomon, 2001). Green (2001) suggested that there may be several types of semantic relations underlying these factors, which have not been studied in depth. Green & Bean (1995) and Bean & Green (2001) explored some of the relations underlying topical relevance.

SELECTED SEMANTIC RELATIONS

This section takes a close look at five well-known paradigmatic relations often used in thesauri and ontologies, and the cause-effect relation, which is an important syntagmatic relation in human knowledge structures. These relations are often treated as unitary primitive relations. We shall show that they are complex relations which can be subdivided into subtypes with different properties.

Hyponym-Hyperonym Relation

The hyponymy relation has been referred to in the literature under various names, including ISA (is-a), a-kind-of, taxonymic, superordinate-subordinate, genus-species and class-subclass relations. *Hyponym* refers to the narrower term/concept (e.g. Alsatian), and *hyperonym* is the broader term/concept (dog). The relation implies class inclusion, i.e. all instances of Alsatians are dogs, the set of Alsatian instances is a subset of dogs, and the meaning of Alsatian is included in the meaning of dog (Cruse, 2002). Cruse gave different logical definitions of the hyponymy relation. Related to hyponym is the incompatible *co-hyponym* or *coordinate*—another hyponym of the same hyperonym, like siblings with the same parent.

Lyons (1968, p. 453) called the hyponymy relation the most fundamental paradigmatic relation of sense in terms of which the vocabulary is structured. Together with the *part-whole* relation, it is a hierarchical relation often found in thesauri, taxonomies and ontologies. Cruse (2002) said that of all the sense relations, it occurs across the widest range of grammatical categories and domains.

There is some question whether the hyponymy relation relates word senses, lexemes (root words) or concepts. Most linguists take the hyponymy relation to relate word senses. Cruse (2002) argued that in some cases, even senses can be subdivided into "facets" (e.g. the physical *book* versus the abstract text of a *book*), and that sense relations relate facets. However, the form of a word has been found to affect human judgement of relations. For example, Cruse found that people considered *cat* to be a better hyponym of *animal* than *pussy*, suggesting that people are influenced by word forms.

The hyponymy relation exhibits different linguistic behaviour when expressed using different terms. Cruse (2002) pointed out that the expression "An X is *a kind/type of* Y" is more discriminating than "an X *is a* Y". Cruse (1986) called the first relation *taxonymy* and the second relation *simple hyponymy*. He claimed that taxonymy is not just a logical class inclusion relation—the terms used to represent the classes are important. He gave the following examples of logical hyponymy relations that do not sound correct when expressed as "a kind of":

?A stallion/mare/foal is a kind/type of horse.
A stallion is a horse.
?A blonde/queen/actress is a kind of woman.
An actress is a woman.

The expression “a kind/type of” exerts selectional restrictions on the pair of terms. He suggested that there is a “principle of taxonomic subdivision” that selects only good categories that are internally cohesive, externally distinctive and maximally informative. Good taxonyms tend to be natural kinds which cannot be defined in terms of a few necessary and sufficient features. Cruse (1986) suggested that single-feature category division may be the reason that *stallion*, *kitten*, and *blonde* are not satisfactory taxonyms of *horse*, *cat*, and *woman*. Another possible reason is that a term may “highlight” a particular semantic feature. The word *prostitute* highlights the *sexual activity* feature so that “A prostitute is a kind of sex-worker” is better than “A prostitute is a kind of woman.”

The hyponymy relation is generally taken to be a transitive relation. However, Cruse (2004) cited the following example where transitivity breaks down:

A car seat is a type of seat.
A seat is a type of furniture.
* A car seat is a type of furniture.

Fellbaum (2002) suggested that the hyponymy relation works best between closely related terms, and less well between terms far apart in the hierarchy.

Troponymy Relation

Troponymy refers to broader-narrower relations between verbs. Felbaum (2002) pointed out that the expressions “a kind of” and “is a” sound odd when applied to verbs, for example “(To) yodel is a kind of (to) sing” and “To murmur is to talk.” She said that the main relation between verb senses is the *manner* relation, which Fellbaum & Miller (1991) termed “troponymy”. For example, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1995) defines *run* and *fly* as to move in some manner (*to move quickly on foot* in the case of *run*, and *to move through the air* for *fly*). The manner relation involves several dimensions. Motion verbs differ along the dimension of speed (e.g. walk versus run) or the means of transportation. Verbs of impact (e.g. hit) vary along the dimension of degree of force (e.g. chop and slam). Besides the manner relation, troponyms include the *function* and *result* relations.

Fellbaum & Chaffin (1990) determined in a psychological study that people were able to recognize and process troponymy relation: subjects had no trouble labeling verb pairs with the type of troponymy relation, sort verbs into related pairs, respond with related verbs in an association task and accomplish an analogy task. Finally, Felbaum (2002) found verb hierarchies to be flatter and more “bushy” than noun hierarchies. Most verb hierarchies do not exceed three or four levels.

Meronym-Holonym Relation

The meronymy relation is also referred to as part-whole relation and partonymy, and refers to the relation between a concept/entity and its constituent parts. The distinction between meronymy and hyponymy relations is clear for concrete concepts but fuzzy for abstract concepts. Hyponymy relations can be said to exist within concepts, while meronymy relations are between concepts. Pribbenow (2002) pointed out that both are logically asymmetric and transitive relations. Hyponyms inherit features from the hyperonyms but parts do not inherit features from the whole, though there is an upward inheritance for some attributes like color, material, and function (Tversky, 1990).

Lyons (1977, v. 1, p. 313) demonstrated that the part-whole relation is intransitive at the linguistic expression level:

The door has a handle
The house has a door
? The house has a handle.

Cruse (1979) attempted to resolve the problem by characterizing the functional context of the relation. He claimed that when we say X is a (functional) component of Y, we usually mean that X is a major component of Y.

Iris, Litowitz, & Evens (1988) found that the part-whole relation is really a family of relations, divided into four main types:

1. Functional component of a whole (e.g. wheel of a bicycle)
2. The segmented whole (the whole divided into pieces like a pie)
3. Members of a collection of elements
4. Subsets of sets (set inclusion, e.g. fruits and apples).

Winston, Chaffin & Herrmann (1987) identified six types of part-whole relations, including the following three additional types: stuff-object (steel-car), feature-activity (paying-shopping), and place-area.

Gerstl & Pribbenow (1995) divided part-whole relations broadly into those relating to the natural structure of the whole (e.g. functional components of an object) and partitions of the whole by construction (i.e. artificial partitions based on attributes, e.g. dividing objects by color). These were further divided into subtypes.

Within the Meaning Text Theory, Wanner (1996) listed the following meronymic relations:

- LF Mult (member-collection), e.g. Mult("dog")="pack"
- LF Equip (social whole-staff), e.g. Equip("aircraft")="crew"
- LF Cap (organization and its head), e.g. Cap("ship")="captain"
- LF Sing (a whole and its uniform unit), e.g. Sing("sand")="grain"
- LF Centr (a whole and its center or culmination), e.g. Centr("mountain")="peak" [of the mountain].

Other classifications of the part-whole relation have been developed by Barriere (1997 & 2002), Markowitz, Nutter & Evens (1992), Sattler (1995) specifically for an engineering application, Uschold (1996) for ecological information systems, and Bernauer (1996) for the medical domain.

Synonymy

Lyons (1995) said that absolute synonymy is very rare. Two expressions are absolutely synonymous if all their meanings are identical in all linguistic contexts. Synonymy can be analyzed from a logical point of view or from the linguistic expression point of view. Terms that are logically synonymous have been called *logical synonyms* (Murphy, 2003) and *propositional synonyms* (Cruse, 2004).

Common types of synonyms are *sense-synonyms* (terms which share one or more senses), *near-synonyms* (which have no identical senses but are close in meaning), and *partial synonyms* (which share some senses but differ in some aspect, e.g. in the way they are used or in some dimension of meaning) (Cruse, 1986; Lyons, 1995). Sense-synonyms that share at least one sense and match in every other property for that sense are *complete synonyms* (Lyons, 1981). Church, Gale, Hanks, Hindle & Moon (1994) discussed *gradient synonyms*—sets of synonyms in which one core term is considered prototypical and the other synonyms differ from the prototype in various ways, often giving additional information.

Synonyms are usually treated as reflexive, symmetrical and transitive, though Murphy (2003) has argued that they are not always so.

Antonymy

Antonymy, or opposites, is one of the most well-studied relations, and is the relation that people find easiest to learn and process (Jones, 2002). Cruse (1986) called it the most readily apprehended of sense relations, with magical properties to people: "Indeed, there is a widespread idea that the power of uniting or reconciling opposites is a magical one, an attribute of the Deity, or a property of states of mind brought about by profound meditation, and so on … Philosophers and others from Heraclitus to Jung have noted the tendency of things to slip into their opposite states; and many have remarked on the thin dividing line between love and hate, genius and madness, etc." (p. 197).

Evens, Litowitz, Markowitz, Smith & Werner (1980) said that antonymy is irreflexive, symmetric and intransitive. Of the many different types of antonymy studied, the best studied is *canonical antonymy.* Canonical antonyms are a special class of opposites which are stable and well-known in culture. For example, *hot/cold* is a better example of antonymy than *steamy/frigid*, even though both pairs indicate opposite ends of the temperature scale (Murphy, 2003). Such antonym pairs, for example big/small, good/bad, good/evil, are automatically recalled by subjects in free word association tasks and are taught to children (Murphy, 2003, p. 10).

Justeson & Katz (1991 & 1992) and Jones (2002) found that antonymous adjectives tend to co-occur in the same sentence in text, often linked by conjuctions *and* and *or*, for example "rich or poor" and "large and small". They also often substitute for each other in parallel, essentially identical, phrases, for example "am I right, am I wrong" and "new lamps for old ones". Justeson & Katz (1992) concluded that "the patterns [of phrasal substitution] are so pervasive, that there is simply no chance for a genuine antonym pair to fail to show up in them, at a reasonable rate. So those that do not, cannot be antonymic" (p. 181). They suggested that the frequent co-occurrence of antonyms in text and discourse reinforces people's knowledge of antonymous pairs, which partly explains how antonymous pairs are learnt and why antonym relations are graded. Frequently co-occurring antonymous words are more likely to be judged as good antonyms than less frequently co-occurring antonyms.

Many types of antonymy have been identified (Cruse, 1986; Lehrer & Lehrer, 1982; Lyons, 1977; Murphy, 2003; Ogden, 1967). Jones (2002) examined how antonyms are used in a newspaper corpus and identified several antonym classes based on their linguistic behavior.

Cause-Effect Relation

The concept of causation is complex and surprisingly difficult to define. Philosophers from Aristotle till the present have grappled with the concept (Ehring, 1997; Mellor, 1995; Owens, 1992; Sosa & Tooley, 1993). A review of the concept from a philosophical and psychological perspective can be found in Khoo, Chan & Niu (2002) and Khoo (1995).

One can distinguish between *necessary* and *sufficient* causes. An event A is a *sufficient* though not a *necessary* condition for event B if, when A occurs, B always follows, but when A does not occur, B sometimes occurs and sometimes not. A is a *necessary* though not a *sufficient* condition for B if, when A does not occur, B never occurs, but when A occurs, B sometimes occurs and sometimes not. An often cited definition of causation is Mackie's (1980) INUS condition, which defined a cause as an *Insufficient* but *Necessary* part of an *Unnecessary* but *Sufficient* condition for an event. Psychologists Jaspars, Hewstone & Fincham (1983) and Jaspars (1983) found evidence that whether a cause is a necessary and/or sufficient condition varies with the type of entity being considered for causal status. Cause is likely to be attributed to a person if the person is a sufficient condition, whereas cause is likely to be attributed to the circumstances or situation if the situation is a necessary condition. Cause is ascribed to a stimulus when it is both a necessary and a sufficient condition. So, "a personal cause is seen more as a sufficient condition, whereas situational causes are conceived primarily as necessary conditions" (Jaspars, Hewstone & Fincham, 1983, pp. 16-17).

However, Mackie (1980) pointed out that our concept of causation also includes some presumption of a continuity from the cause to the effect, a causal mechanism by which the cause generates the effect. The concept of probabilistic causation has also gained popularity (Eells, 1991; Salmon, 1984). This view recognizes the possibility of indeterministic causation—instances where the causal mechanism is inherently probablistic, as in the field of quantum mechanics.

Aristotle (trans. 1996) identified four kinds of cause: material cause (the material of an object causes its existence), formal cause (the form or structure of an object causes its existence), efficient cause (mechanical cause that causes an object to change, move or come to rest), and final or teleological cause (the intended future effect is the ultimate cause of the present action undertaken to bring about that future event).

Barriere (1997 & 2002) presented a classification of general cause-effect relations:

- existence dependency
  - creation
  - prevention
  - destruction
  - maintenance
- influence dependency
  - preservation
  - modification
    - increase
    - decrease

Cause and effect can also be categorized according to temporal considerations (Terenziani & Torasso, 1995):

- with *one-shot causation*, the presence of the cause is required only momentarily to allow the action to begin
- with *continuous causation*, the continued presence of the cause is required to sustain the effect
- with *mutually sustaining causation*, each bit of cause causes a slightly later bit of the effect
- *culminated event causation* refers to the case where the effect comes about only by achieving the culmination of the causal event (e.g. "run a mile in less than 4 minutes" causes "receive a prize")
- *causal connection with a threshold* refers to the case where there is a delay between the beginning of the cause and the beginning of the effect, and the effect is triggered only when some kind of threshold is reached.

Warren, Nicholas & Trabasso (1979) identified four types of cause-effect relations in narrative texts: motivation, psychological causation, physical causation, and enablement. Dick (1997), in attempting to model the causal situation in a legal case, distinguished between the following types of cause and effect: distant versus direct cause, animate versus inanimate agent, animate agent versus instrument, volitive versus non-volitive cause, active versus passive cause, central versus peripheral (or abstract) cause, explicit versus implicit cause, and aims versus actual effect.

Khoo (1995) analyzed the verb entries in the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1987) and came up with a total of 2082 causative verbs (verbs with a causal component in their meaning), which he grouped into 47 types of effects. Levin (1993) provided a systematic and extensive classification of verbs based on their syntactic behavior. Many of the verb classes were found to have a causal component in their meaning.

SEMANTIC RELATIONS IN KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES

Semantic Relations in Thesauri

A thesaurus is a set of terms structured using a small set of semantic relations to indicate the controlled (or preferred) term for each concept and relationships between the terms/concepts. It is designed to support consistent subject indexing of documents and effective information retrieval. The relations between terms help both the indexer and the searcher to navigate the thesauri to identify various kinds of related terms.

The ANSI/NISO Z39.15-1993 standard "Guidelines for the Construction, Format, and Management of Monolingual Thesauri" (National Information Standards Organization, 1994) and the ISO 2788 standard "Guidelines for the Establishment and Development of Monolingual Thesauri" (International

Organization for Standardization, 1986) recognize three types of semantic relations: equivalence (*use* and *used for*), hierarchical (*broader term* and *narrower term*) and associative (*related term*) relations
The ANSI/NISO standard lists seven types of synonym relations: terms of different linguistic origins, popular term-scientific name, generic noun-trade name, variant names, current-outdated term, common nouns-slang/jargon, and dialectical variants. It also describes other kinds of equivalence relation: lexical variants and quasi-synonyms. Hierarchical relations include generic (ISA), part-whole and instance relations. Part-whole relations include organs of the body, geographic locations, subject disciplines, and hierarchical organizational, corporate, social or political structures. Nine types of associative relations are also identified.

Associative relations in thesauri have been analyzed by several authors. Aitchison, Gilchrist & Bawden (1997) listed fourteen categories. Lancaster (1986) and Raitt (1980) each listed 10 categories. In an analysis of hierarchical relations in MeSH (Medical Subject Headings), Bean (1998) identified 67 types of relations other than the generic and instantial relations. Most of the relations could be considered associative. Aitchison et al. cited a 1965 study by Perreault who found 120 types of relations. Discussion of thesaural relations in general can be found in Aitchison, Gilchrist & Bawden (1997), Clarke (2001), and Milstead (2001).

Semantic Relations in Indexing Languages

In subject indexing of a document, controlled terms from a thesaurus, subject headings list or classification scheme are assigned to the document to reflect the main subjects and concepts in the content of the document. The index terms are generally not pre-coordinated, i.e. the index terms are assigned as separate terms and there is no indication whether two or more concepts are related in a particular way in the document. For example, if a document is assigned the terms *information retrieval*, *user interface* and *evaluation*, there is no indication whether *evaluation* is related to *information retrieval* or to *user interface*. During retrieval, the user may specify the Boolean query "information retrieval AND evaluation," which requires the system to search for the two terms separately and to combine the two sets of documents retrieved to identify documents containing both terms. There is no assurance that the documents retrieved will discuss *evaluation of information retrieval*—only that these two concepts occur in the same document. Such an indexing approach is called *post-coordinate* indexing.

In some indexing languages, the index terms are *precoordinated*, i.e. the human indexer indicates an association between two or more concepts in the document using syntax of the language and the order of the terms. However, the type of association is not specified explicitly but is implied by the context. This is the case with the Library of Congress Subject Headings and faceted classification schemes like Ranganathan's Colon classification (Kishore, 1986; Ranganathan, 1965). Precoordinate indexing allows the user to search for some kind of association between two or more index terms.

Farradane (1967) advocated the use of explicitly specified relations in the indexing system. He pointed out that implied relations in precoordinate indexing are unambiguous only in a narrow domain. More recently, Green (1995b & 1995c) also called for the inclusion of syntagmatic relations in indexing languages, examined the issues involved and suggested a frame-based representation of syntagmatic relations.

Two indexing systems that make explicit use of relations are Farradane's (1950, 1952 & 1967) relational classification system and the SYNTOL model (Gardin, 1965; Levy, 1967). Farradane's system had nine types of relations: concurrence, self-activity, association, equivalence, dimensional (time, space, state), appurtenance, distinctness, reaction, and functional dependence (causation). The SYNTOL project used four main types of relations: coordinative, consecutive, predicative and associative. The associative relation was subdivided into finer relations. There is no experimental evidence yet that the use of explicitly specified relations in indexing yields better retrieval results compared to post-coordinate indexing or precoordinate indexing with implied relations.

Semantic Relations in Ontologies

A thesaurus lists the main concepts/terms in a particular domain and specifies relations between the concepts/terms using only a small number of relation types. This small set of relations may be adequate for information retrieval applications as the focus of a thesaurus is on indexing and searching, but is not sufficient for more complex or intelligent applications that require knowledge-based inferencing and a detailed representation of domain knowledge.

A more detailed representation of domain knowledge is called an ontology. Many definitions of ontology from different perspectives have been put forward. This definition by Berners-Lee, Hendler & Lassila (2001) alludes to some of the different aspects of ontology:

> "In philosophy, an ontology is a theory about the nature of existence, of what types of things exist; ontology as a discipline studies such theories. Artificial-intelligence and Web researchers have co-opted the term for their own jargon, and for them an ontology is a document or file that formally defines the relations among terms. The most typical kind of ontology for the Web has a taxonomy and a set of inference rules." (p. 40)

Ontology, with an uppercase "O", refers to a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of being or existence—what categories of things exist and what their features are (Guarino & Giaretta, 1995; Sowa, 2000). This is often contrasted with *Epistemology,* which deals with the nature and sources of knowledge. Ontology with a lowercase "o" can refer to the conceptual framework or knowledge of a particular domain shared by a group of people—i.e. something that exists in people's minds. Or it can refer to the symbolic representation of this conceptual frame, perhaps in the form of a "logical theory" that can be used by a computer program (Guarino & Giaretta, 1995).

An often quoted definition is that of Gruber (1993, p. 199): "An ontology is an explicit specification of a conceptualization." In practice, an ontology is expressed as a taxonomy of concepts linked by ISA, part-whole and attribute-value relations, sometimes enriched by other kinds of relations as well as additional rules or constraints called *axioms*. One major difference between an ontology and a thesaurus is the richer set of relations used in an ontology. Guarino & Giaretta (1995), Guarino (1997) and Gómez-Pérez, Fernandez-Lopez & Corcho (2004) analyzed various definitions of ontology. A collection of definitions can be found at http://www.aaai.org/AITopics/html/ontol.html.

Ontologies come in many types and flavors, depending on the domain, application, representation scheme used, philosophical principles adopted by the authors, and the construction method and tools used. Those functioning as online search aids are more lexically-oriented and may not contain non-taxonomic relations or axioms, whereas others supporting inferencing may be formally represented in a logic representation and have many axioms. Gómez-Pérez, Fernandez-Lopez & Corcho (2004) outlined the different typologies of ontologies that have been put forward by various authors, and said that even thesauri can be considered light-weight ontologies.

There is growing interest in ontologies because of their potential for encoding knowledge in a way that allows computer programs and agent software to perform intelligent tasks on the Web. "Ontologies provide support in integrating heterogeneous and distributed information sources. This gives them an important role in areas such as knowledge management and electronic commerce. ... Ontologies enable machine-understandable semantics of data, and building this data infrastructure will enable completely new kinds of automated services." (Fensel, 2001, p. 8). The OWL Web Ontology Language Use Cases and Requirements (World Wide Web Consortium, 2004) lists the following areas where ontologies are expected to be useful: Web portals, multimedia collections, corporate web site management, design documentation, agents and services, and ubiquitous computing.

Ontologies are seen as the backbone of the Semantic Web. The Semantic Web was characterized by Berners-Lee, Hendler & Lassila (2001, p. 37) as "an extension of the current web in which information is given well-defined meaning, better enabling computers and people to work in cooperation." The World Wide Web Consortium (2004b) views the Semantic Web as providing "a common framework that allows data to be shared and reused across application, enterprise, and community boundaries." A fundamental technology for realizing the Semantic Web is the Web service. Web services are self-contained computer programs that can be accessed on the Internet by other computer programs through public interfaces and bindings that are defined using XML (World Wide Web Consortium, 2004d). Since the interface definition of a Web service can be discovered by other computer programs, this allows computer programs to dynamically locate and interact with one another in an automated and unattended way. To help people and software agents locate appropriate information, objects and Web services on the Internet, ontologies are needed.

The World Wide Web Consortium (2004c) has developed the Resource Description Framework (RDF) and the Web Ontology Language (OWL) for encoding an ontology using XML. OWL can be used to specify types of relations between concept instances, called *properties*. The following relations between user-defined *properties* can be specified: *equivalentProperty* (same relation), *inverseOf* and *subPropertyOf*. The user-defined *properties* can also be labeled with the following attributes: *TransitiveProperty*, *SymmetricProperty, FunctionalProperty* (i.e. each instance has no more than one value for this property), and *InverseFunctionalProperty*.

Well-known ontologies include:

- CYC (http://www.cyc.com), with about 40,000 concepts and 300,000 axioms (inter-concept relations and constraints), built for commonsense reasoning.
- Suggested Upper Merged Ontology (SUMO) (http://suo.ieee.org/, http://ontology.teknowledge.com/, http://www.ontologyportal.org/), a standard upper ontology developed by the IEEE Standard Upper Ontology Working Group. SUMO and its several domain ontologies together have about 20,000 terms and 60,000 axioms.
- Unified Medical Language System (UMLS) (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/research/umls/), containing 135 semantic types, 54 semantic relations, and about 250,000 concepts.
- MIKROKOSMOS (http://crl.nmsu.edu/users/sb/papers/thesis/node26.html), with about 4800 concepts, built to support machine translation.
- Descriptive Ontology for Linguistic and Cognitive Engineering (DOLCE) (http://www.loa-cnr.it/DOLCE.html), aimed at capturing ontological categories underlying natural language and human common sense, and developed to serve as a starting point for comparing and analyzing other ontologies.
- WordNet (http://www.cogsci.princeton.edu/~wn/), a lexical database, often considered a lexical or terminological ontology, containing approximately 150,000 English nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, grouped into 115,000 synonym sets (synsets), each representing an underlying lexical concept.
- The Enterprise Ontology (http://www.aiai.ed.ac.uk/project/enterprise/), a collection of terms and definitions relevant to business enterprises to assist in acquisition, representation, and manipulation of enterprise knowledge.
- Toronto Virtual Enterprise (TOVE) (http://www.eil.utoronto.ca/enterprise-modelling/tove/index.html), used to model the structure, activities, processes, information, resources, people, behaviour, goals and constraints of an enterprise.

Ontologies vary widely in the number and types of relations used. They can range from a simple taxonomy structured by ISA and part-whole relations, to a small number of relations as in WordNet, to thousands of relations in CYC (Lenat, Miller & Yokoi, 1995). Relations in ontologies are often structured in a relation hierarchy or grouped into major categories. Many relation hierarchies have been proposed in the literature. For example, Sowa (2000 & 2001) divided his role concepts into two groups: roles pertaining to the *PrehendingEntity* (the subject of the relation, e.g. *whole*) and the *PrehendedEntity* (the object of the relation, e.g. *part*). *PrehendedEntity* is subdivided into *Correlative* and *Component*, the latter further subdivided as follows:

Component
- Part
  -- Piece
  -- Participant
  -- Stage

- Property
    - -- Attribute
    - -- Manner.

A role concept is converted to a relation by combining the concept with the *has* relation. For example, the *part* role concept can be converted to the *has-part* relation.

A more extensive relation hierarchy is presented in the Generalized Upper Model (GUM) ontology (Bateman, Fabris & Magnini, 1995). At the top level, relations are arranged into four categories: *participant*, *circumstance*, *process* and *logical-relation*. The CGKAT system (Martin, 1995 & 1996) has a default hierarchy of about 200 relations. Relations are organized into nine classes at the top-level: *attributive_relation, component_relation, constraint_or_measure_relation, relation_from_a_situation, relation_to_a_situation, relation_from_a_proposition, relation_referring_to_a_process, relation_with_a_special_property*, and *relation_used_by_an_agent*. The Unified Medical Language System (UMLS) relation hierarchy (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2004) contains 54 relations grouped broadly into *ISA* and *associated_with* relation types, the latter being subdivided into *physically_related_to, spatially_related_to, functionally_related_to, temporally_related_to* and *conceptually_related_to*. Markowitz, Nutter, & Evens (1992) presented a hierarchy of lexical relations containing nearly 100 relations as leaf nodes.

Some researchers have developed methods for formally representing relations in a knowledge representation scheme for use in data modeling and knowledge-based inferencing. This usually involves explicitly representing the attributes of semantic relations, modeling the hierarchical relationships between semantic relations, and defining axioms or rules for reasoning with the relations. Priss (1999) developed a mathematical formalism for representing a network of semantic relations in a lattice structure, by analyzing the relations using *formal concept analysis* (Ganter & Wille, 1997) and identifying relational components. Wille (2003) also showed how commonsense logical relations between concepts can be represented using a concept lattice. Methods for representing and reasoning with semantic relations have been developed in the *conceptual graph* formalism (Sowa, 1984 & 2000) as well as in description logics (Baader, Calvanese, McGuinness, Nardi & Patel-Schneider, 2003)—a family of knowledge representation languages focusing on expressing knowledge about concepts, concept hierarchies, roles and instances, and reasoning about them. A collection of papers describing various formalisms for modeling concepts and relations can be found in Lehmann (1992). Several authors have examined the issues involved in formalizing the part-whole relation in data modeling and inferencing systems (e.g. Artale, Franconi, Guarino, & Pazzi, 1996; Lambrix, 2000; Lee, Chan, & Yeung, 1995). Some issues involved in organizing semantic relations in a knowledge base were examined by Stephens & Chen (1996).

To our knowledge, no systematic analysis of the types of semantic relations used in ontologies has been reported in the literature. Such an analysis should be carried out in the context of the domain and application for which the ontology was constructed. Little is known about what constitutes an appropriate set of semantic relations for a domain or application, or the most effective way to structure the relations into a relation hierarchy. Although much has been written about the potential uses of ontologies and methods for their construction, and small case studies of applications have been reported, there has not been any systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of ontologies and various types of semantic relations in real applications.

One possible exception is the part-whole relation. Researchers have analyzed the different types of part-whole relations for data modeling and modeling of objects for various purposes (e.g. Artale, Franconi, Guarino & Pazzi, 1996; Gerstl & Pribbenow, 1995). Many ontologies specify a few types of part-whole relations. Nevertheless, in a review of 10 well-known ontologies, Noy & Hafner (1997) found that the part-whole relation was represented very differently in different ontologies, and that, often, the distinction between the different types of the part-whole relation was not adequately dealt with.

AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION OF SEMANTIC RELATIONS

Overview

Automatic identification and extraction of semantic relations in text is a difficult task. The accuracy rate varies widely and depends on many factors: the type of semantic relation to be identified, the domain or subject area, the type of text/documents being processed, the amount of training text available, whether knowledge-based inferencing is used, and the accuracy of the syntactic pre-processing of the text. Furthermore, since there are different types of semantic relations at different text levels, no system can identify semantic relations accurately at all levels. This is a major barrier to widespread use of semantic relations in information science.

In this section, we shall consider the automatic identification and extraction of semantic relations between words and phrases, and the concepts they represent. Identification of higher-level relations, such as cohesion relations (including anaphor and co-reference resolution), rhetorical relations and text macro-structure, is important, but the literature is too broad to cover in this survey. A general introduction to information extraction technology is given by Appelt & Israel (1999). The three major applications of the automatic identification of relations in text are in information extraction, ontology construction/knowledge acquisition and information retrieval. This section will examine the main techniques used to extract relations in information extraction and ontology construction. Information retrieval applications are discussed later in the chapter.

In information extraction applications, concepts and relations are extracted from text to fill pre-defined templates that represent various kinds of information about an event (e.g. terrorist event or corporate merger), entity (e.g. company), or process. The slots in a template are labeled and can be considered roles related to the event/entity/process. In the 1980s and early 1990s, artificial intelligence researchers used sophisticated natural language processing and knowledge-based inferencing to extract concepts and relations from text and represent them in a semantic representation or knowledge representation scheme (e.g. Berrut, 1990; Mauldin, 1991; Rau, 1987; Rau, Jacobs & Zernik, 1989). Unfortunately, such complex systems could be built only for narrow domains. In the 1990s, it was found that simple methods of relation extraction using shallow text processing and pattern matching using lots of simple patterns were at least equally effective. However, constructing a good set of extraction patterns for an application still involves considerable manual effort. Current research is focused on automatic pattern construction, which requires a large training set of documents and manually filled templates representing the associated answer key. For information extraction technology to become widely used, automatic pattern construction techniques that are effective with small training sets need to be developed, together with good interfaces that help the end-user to construct the training examples and to guide the pattern construction process.

Whereas information extraction applications seek to extract every instance of concepts and relations relevant to the domain or application, automatic ontology construction focuses on well-established knowledge, i.e. concepts and relations that occur with some frequency in the text collection. Hence, corpus statistics including co-occurrence statistics, machine-learning and data mining techniques can be employed together with pattern matching techniques to extract frequently occurring concept-relation-concept triples from a corpus. These triples can then be used to build a knowledge-base of facts or connected together to form a semantic network or an ontology.

Automatic Identification of Semantic Relations Using Pattern Matching

Automatic identification of semantic relations in text involves looking for certain linguistic patterns in the text that indicate the presence of a particular relation. For example, a simple linear pattern for identify some *cause-effect* information is:

[cause] *is a cause of* [effect]

The tokens in square brackets represent slots to be filled by words/phrases in the text. The slots indicate which part of the sentence represents the *cause* and which part represents the *effect* in the *cause-effect* relation. The following sentence contains a match for the above pattern:

Smoking is a cause of lung cancer

An extraction pattern is thus a sequence of tokens, each token representing a literal word to be matched in the text, a wildcard that can match any word or a slot to be filled. The following selectional restrictions can be specified for each token: the syntactic category (e.g. part-of-speech), type of phrase, syntactic role (e.g. subject, direct object, etc.), and whether a verb is in active or passive voice. Semantic restrictions can also be specified using concept categories from an ontology or type of entity, for example organization name, person name, date and amount of money. Pattern-matching is performed to identify the segments of the text that match each pattern.

A major component of any information extraction system is its set of extraction patterns. Construction of patterns can be done manually or automatically by analyzing sample relevant texts and the associated answer keys indicating the information to be extracted. The answer keys are typically constructed by human analysts who had been trained for the task. Pattern construction thus entails constructing patterns that will extract the same information from the text as the human analysts did. The patterns should not be too general, to avoid extracting information from non-relevant text fragments or incorrect information from relevant text fragments.

Two approaches can be used in the pattern construction: a) a top-down approach where general patterns are first constructed and then gradually specialized to reduce errors; b) a bottom-up approach where specific patterns are first constructed and then gradually combined to reduce the number of patterns or generalized to cover more situations. Before pattern construction and pattern matching, the text is usually subjected to some amount of preprocessing, which can include tokenizing, stemming or conversion of words to their base forms, syntactic tagging (e.g. to identify the part-of-speech), chunking (to identify particular types of phrases), and semantic tagging (to identify the semantic class, e.g. *inanimate object* and *organization name*, to which the word/phrase belongs). Some information extraction systems make use of a thesaurus or ontology to infer the semantic classes of text tokens and to generalize two or more concepts to a single broader concept.

Automatic Construction of Extraction Patterns

Because manual construction of good extraction patterns is a difficult and time-consuming task, there is a need for automatic or machine-aided pattern construction. Researchers have developed effective techniques for automatic pattern construction. To perform automatic pattern construction, the system needs well-defined heuristics for constructing the initial patterns, for generalizing and specializing the patterns based on positive and negative examples, for selecting which generalization/specialization methods to use in which situation, and for deciding on the order in which the methods are tried. Typically, a variation of the inductive learning algorithm described by Mitchell (1997) is used for pattern learning.

Our survey will focus on information extraction from free text, rather than from structured or semi-structured documents, since our interest is in semantic relations expressed in free text. Learning of patterns for extracting information from structured documents, such as Web pages, is called wrapper induction, and it relies on structure identification using HTML tags (Muslea, 1999). An example is IEPAD (Information Extraction based on Pattern Discovery) (Chang & Lui, 2001), a wrapper induction system which generates extraction patterns for Web documents without the need for user-labeled examples.

Some well-known systems that learn extraction patterns from free text are AutoSlog (Riloff, 1993), PALKA (Kim, 1996; Kim & Moldovan, 1995), CRYSTAL (Soderland, 1997), WHISK (Soderland, 1999), and RAPIER (Califf and Mooney, 2003). The patterns constructed by these systems generally perform sentence-level extraction, leaving co-reference resolution and merging of extracted information across sentences to later modules, such as discourse parsing modules (Soderland, 1999). A survey of the various types of extraction patterns generated by machine learning algorithms was carried out by Muslea (1999).

AutoSlog (Riloff, 1993) is the first system to learn text extraction patterns from training examples. It uses partial case frames as linear patterns. Each pattern has only one slot, and usually includes a verb and a noun phrase (a subject or direct object). A set of pattern templates define the linear patterns that the system will construct. Each pattern is thus an instantiation of a pattern template. Table 1 lists the pattern templates used in AutoSlog and an example pattern for each template. The pattern template "<passive-verb> <direct-obj:slot>" was included because a sentence analyzer called CIRCUS (Lehnert, 1991) occasionally confused active and passive constructions.

Table 1. Pattern templates and examples of instantiated patterns in AutoSlog

Pattern Template	Example of Pattern Constructed
<subj:slot> <passive-verb>	[victim] was murdered
<subj:slot > <active-verb>	[perpetrator] bombed
<subj:slot > <verb> <infinitive-phrase>	[perpetrator] attempted to kill
<subj:slot > <auxiliary-verb> <noun>	[victim] was victim
<passive-verb> <direct-obj:slot>	killed [victim]
<active-verb> <direct-obj:slot>	bombed [target]

Before pattern construction, the training corpus is preprocessed by CIRCUS to identify clause boundaries and the major syntactic constituents: subject, verb, direct object, noun phrases and prepositional phrases. Relevant text segments that contain the semantic relations of interest are identified, and answer keys are constructed to indicate which noun phrase should be extracted and the semantic role it has. If the domain of interest is terrorist activities, the semantic roles would include *perpetrators*, *targets*, *victims*, and so forth.

During pattern construction, pattern matching is used to match the pattern templates with the training text segments. If a pattern template matches a relevant text segment, then a pattern is constructed by replacing the tokens in the template with the words in the text. If a token in the template indicates a slot, this token is allowed to match a noun phrase in the text only if the noun phrase appears in the answer key (i.e. a human analyst has indicated that this is the information to be extracted). A slot token is placed in the pattern being constructed, and the semantic role for the slot is taken from the answer key. The constructed pattern is thus an instantiation of the pattern template. Finally, a human analyst inspects each pattern and decides which ones should be accepted or rejected. AutoSlog-TS (Riloff, 1996), an extension of AutoSlog, creates dictionaries of extraction patterns using only untagged text. A user needs to provide training texts (relevant and irrelevant texts), and do filtering and labeling of the resulting extraction patterns. Generally, extraction patterns occurring in irrelevant texts are filtered out. The accuracy rates come close to those of AutoSlog in which tagged text is used. However, AutoSlog cannot learn rules which extract values for multiple slots (such as *[victim] was killed by [attacker]*), and does not adjust the patterns by generalizing or specializing them once they are constructed.

In the PALKA system (Kim, 1996; Kim & Moldovan, 1995), the patterns involve the whole clause. Sentences in the training text are first converted to simple clauses. The clauses containing a semantic relation of interest are processed one at a time. If the set of patterns already constructed do not match a clause, then a new pattern is constructed for the clause. This initial pattern covers the main verb, the subject, the object and the words to be extracted (i.e. the slot). Each of these constituents in the clause is represented by a token in the pattern. Each token is assigned a semantic category from a conceptual hierarchy. Generalizations and specializations are applied only to the semantic constraints. When two similar patterns sharing the same target slots and literal strings are generated, their semantic constraints are generalized by locating a broader concept or ancestor in the conceptual hierarchy that is common to both semantic categories.

The CRYSTAL system (Soderland, Fisher, Aseltine & Lehnert, 1996) uses a similar approach, but is more complex. CRYSTAL learns rules which can extract values for multiple slots. Initially, CRYSTAL constructs a very specific pattern for every sentence in the training text. The sentences are not simplified into simple clauses. The constraints in the initial patterns are gradually relaxed to increase their coverage and to merge similar patterns. CRYSTAL identifies possible generalizations by locating pairs of highly similar patterns. This similarity is measured by counting the number of relaxations required to unify the two patterns. A new pattern is created with constraints relaxed just enough to merge the two patterns—dropping constraints that the two do not share and finding a common ancestor of their semantic constraints. The new pattern is tested against the training corpus to make sure it does not extract information not specified in the answer keys. If the new pattern is valid, all the patterns subsumed by the new pattern are deleted. This generalization continues until a pattern that exceeds a specified error threshold is generated.

WHISK (Soderland, 1999) induces rules top-down, first finding the most general rule that covers the seed (i.e., hand-tagged training examples), then constraining the rule by adding terms one at a time. The learned rules are in the form of regular expressions that can extract either single sots or multiple slots.

RAPIER (Califf & Mooney, 2003) is a bottom-up learning algorithm that incorporates techniques from several inductive logic programming systems (Lavrac & Dzeroski, 1994). Its algorithm starts with initial specific rules created from input corpus, and then incrementally replaces the rules with more general rules using automatic rule evaluation. The rule learning is done separately for each slot, thus RAPIER cannot learn rules which extract values for multiple slots.

SRV (Freitag, 2000) employs a top-down rule learner that uses a covering algorithm. As each rule is learnt, all positive examples covered by the new rule are removed from consideration for the creation of future rules. Rule learning ends when all positive examples have been covered. SRV utilizes the length of a fragment, the location of a particular token, the relative locations of two tokens, and various user-defined token features, such as capitalization, digits, and word length. SNoW-IE (Roth & Yih, 2001) learns extraction patterns using propositional learning mechanisms. Ciravegna (2001) developed a pattern learner that employs rule induction and generalization.

Text Mining for Semantic Relations

Text mining for semantic relations is concerned with the extraction of new and implicit relationships between different concept entities from large collections of text data. While some semantic relations are clearly expressed through the use of well-defined syntactic structures, other semantic relations are not, and only a multi-step sequence of reasoning based on semantic analysis of the text collection can extract them. Most semantic extraction systems take advantage of an existing domain knowledge source (i.e. semantic information), and make use of cue words and syntactic tags provided by a syntactic parser.

Various approaches for automatic semantic extraction from corpus documents have been developed. Girju, Badulescu & Moldovan (2003) worked on the discovery of semantic relations, especially part-whole relations, from text. They used rich syntactic and semantic features to discover useful and implicit relations from text. The C4.5 decision tree learning algorithm (Quinlan, 1993) was used to learn semantic constraints to detect part-whole relations, while WordNet was used as the domain knowledge base to identify and disambiguate target concepts (i.e. part and whole components). Girju (2002) also investigated extraction of causal relations in her dissertation work. The Artequakt system (Alani et al., 2003) automatically extracts knowledge about artists from the Web, populates a knowledge base, and uses it to generate personalized biographies. Arteguakt links a knowledge extraction tool with an ontology to identify entity relationships using ontology relation declarations, such as "[Person] - *place of birth* – [Place]", where [Person] and [Place] are concepts and *"place of birth"* is a semantic relation between them. Dyvik (2004) investigated a method for deriving semantic relations in WordNet from data extracted from the English-Norwegian Parallel Corpus (Johansson, 1997), which comprises around 2.6 million words. The method was based on the hypotheses that semantically closely related words have strongly overlapping sets of translations, and words with a wide range of meanings have a higher number of translations than words with few meanings. The implementation took words with their sets of translations from the corpus as input and returned thesaurus-like entries which contain senses, synonyms, hyperonyms, and hyponyms. Calzolari & Picchi (1989; see also Calzolari, 1992) looked into the acquisition of semantic information from machine-readable dictionaries, in which semantic information is implicitly contained. They aimed at reorganizing free-text definitions in natural language form into informationally equivalent structured forms in a lexical knowledge base.

In the medical area, semantic tagging using domain knowledge is important for effective text mining. Many studies make use of the Unified Medical Language System (UMLS) (Humphreys, Lindberg, Schoolman & Barnett, 1998; U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2004) as the domain knowledge base. Blake & Pratt (2001) mined for semantic relationships between medical concepts from medical texts. The terms in the text are mapped to concepts in UMLS to reduce the number of features for data mining. They focused on *Breast Cancer Treatment* using association rule mining (Borgelt & Kruse, 2002) to find associated concept pairs like *magnesium-migraines*. They were mainly interested in mining the *existence* of relationships between medical concepts (i.e. finding associated concept pairs in breast cancer treatment), not in identifying the specific semantic relations for the associated concept pairs. Lee, Na & Khoo (2003) carried out a small experiment using a sample of medical abstracts from MEDLINE, a biomedical bibliographic database maintained by the U.S. National Library of Medicine, to identify concept pairs related to *Colon Cancer Treatment*. The semantic relations between the concepts in each pair were then inferred using the UMLS semantic network. They were able to infer semantic relations between concepts automatically from the UMLS semantic network 68% of the time, although the method could not distinguish between a few possible relation types.

The Semantic Knowledge Representation (SKR) project at the National Library of Medicine developed programs that extract usable semantic information from biomedical text (Rindflesch & Aronson, 2002). Two programs, MetaMap (Aronson, 2001) and SemRep (Rindflesch, Jayant & Lawrence, 2000), are major components for semantic information extraction. MetaMap maps noun phrases in free text to concepts in the UMLS Metathesaurus, while SemRep uses the Semantic Network in UMLS to infer possible relationships between those concepts. Consider the input phrase "ablation of pituitary gland." SemRep looks up a semantic rule (i.e., extraction pattern) which declares that the preposition *of* matches the Semantic Network relation *location_of*, and also notes that one of the relationships in the Semantic Network with this predicate is "[Body Part, Organ, or Organ Component] - LOCATION_OF - [Therapeutic or Preventive Procedure]". The Metathesaurus concept for *ablation* is *Excision, NOS,* found by MetaMap. The semantic type for this concept is *Therapeutic or Preventive Procedure*, while the type for *Pituitary Gland* is *Body Part, Organ, or Organ Component.* Since these semantic types match those found in the relationship indicated by the preposition *of* (*location_of*), "Pituitary Gland – *location_of* - Excision, NOS" is extracted as a new semantic relation.

Srinivasan & Rindflesch (2002) have used SemRep in combination with MeSH (MEdical Subject Headings) index terms to find potentially interesting semantic relationships in large sets of MEDLINE abstracts. Rindflesch, Jayant & Lawrence (2000) built ARBITER (Assess and Retrieve BInding TErminology), which uses UMLS as domain knowledge and relies on syntactic cues (such as the single verb *bind*) provided by a syntactic parser, to identify and extract molecular binding semantic relations from MEDLINE records. Rindflesch, Libbus, Hristovski, Aronson & Kilicoglu (2003) also built a natural language processing program, called SemGen, to identify and extract causal relations between genetic phenomena and diseases from MEDLINE records. They were able to achieve 76% precision with sample sentences.

Automatic Construction of Case Frames

Text mining using co-occurrence statistics are used in the automatic construction of case frames. The process has three main stages:

1. Constructing "subcategorization frames" (Chomsky, 1965), i.e. identifying the combination of syntactic constituents or arguments that the verb expects
2. Identifying the selectional restriction for each syntactic constituent or slot, e.g. which semantic class of nouns can be the direct object of the verb
3. Assigning a case role to each syntactic constituent or slot in the case frame.

Typically, statistical collocations are mined from the text collection as a first step to finding the words/phrases and types of words/phrases that tend to co-occur with each verb. Some syntactic pre-processing—part-of-speech tagging, chunking to identify types of phrases, or syntactic parsing—is first performed. Associations between verbs and types of co-occurring syntactic constituents can be used to build subcategorization frames (Basili, Pazienza & Vindigni, 1997; Brent, 1993; Manning, 1993; Nedellec, 2000). The head nouns of the constituent phrases can be generalized to a semantic class, to identify the selectional restriction for a slot. This semantic generalization is performed with the aid of a thesaurus or ontology, to determine the semantic class to which many head nouns belong (Li & Abe, 1998; Framis, 1994). If a thesaurus is not available, nouns in the text collection can be clustered according to the context in which they tend to appear. For example, clusters of nouns that tend to co-occur as direct object of the same verbs can be identified. The noun clusters can be accepted as semantic classes, or a similarity measure between the nouns can be used to generalize the selectional restrictions (Grishman & Sterling, 1994).

Automatic assignment of case role labels to case frame slots is more difficult. To some extent it can be determined by examining the semantic classes of nouns filling the roles. Verbs in the text collection can also be clustered to identify sets of verbs that tend to co-occur with the same nouns. This can help to identify clusters of verbs with similar semantics as an aid to identifying the semantic roles assigned by the verbs (Pereira, Tishby & Lee, 1993). A more promising approach is to use a machine-learning technique to learn the characteristics of verb-noun combinations for each case role. New verb-noun combinations can be assigned a case role label based on their similarity to prototypical verb-noun combinations for each case role. Wanner (2004) used this approach to extract verb-noun collocations from text and categorize them into one or more of 20 lexical functions. A centroid was computed for each lexical function using training verb-noun examples for each lexical function, and using concept classes in EuroWordNet as features.

Finally, dictionary definitions have also been mined to construct case frames (e.g. Calzolari, 1992).

SEMANTIC RELATIONS IN INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Overview

To date, research and development in information retrieval has focused on term and concept matching. Some researchers have, however, explored the possibility of using semantic relations to enhance retrieval recall and precision. Recall enhancement—increasing the number of relevant documents retrieved—is usually accomplished through query expansion, i.e. adding alternative terms to the query. Typically, paradigmatic relations, especially synonyms and partial synonyms, are used for query expansion, though syntagmatic relations can be used as well. Terms that are semantically related to each query term are added to the search query using the Boolean disjunction operator *OR*.

Precision enhancement—reducing the proportion of non-relevant documents retrieved—is accomplished through relation matching. This involves specifying additional relational criteria for retrieval, i.e. the documents retrieved must contain not only the terms/concepts specified in the query but must also express the same relations between the concepts as expressed in the query. The relations are in a sense added to the search by means of the Boolean conjunction operator *AND*. Typically, syntagmatic relations are used in relation matching.

A more precise form of information retrieval is question-answering—answering a user's question with facts or text passages extracted from documents. This requires identifying specific semantic relations between document concepts and concepts in the user's question. The appropriate semantic relation to be used for identifying potential answers in documents is determined by the question type, e.g. definition question, list question, and so forth.

Automatic text summarization extracts the most important information from a document or set of documents, then generates an abridged version for a particular user or task (Mani & Maybury, 1999). This helps users to skim through a set of retrieved documents to determine their relevance and potential usefulness. Semantic relations are useful for identifying related concepts and statements in a document that can be compressed, as well as for analyzing the document discourse structure, which can then be used to identify the central concepts in the document. Multi-document summarization can provide an overview of a set of documents, pointing out information that is common to the document set, information unique to each document, and contradictory statements found in the set. Semantic relations between concepts and statements across the documents (cross-document discourse structure) are useful for multi-document summarization.

In this section, we shall survey research applying semantic relations to query expansion, precision enhancement, question-answering and automatic text summarization.

Semantic Relations in Query Expansion

Query expansion with related terms is important for improving information retrieval recall, though it can improve information retrieval precision as well (Wang, Vandendorpe & Evens, 1985). The related terms can be taken from a knowledge structure such as a thesaurus, a taxonomy, a semantic network or an ontology, or from a more informal term association list. As explained earlier, knowledge structures such as a thesauri and ontologies distinguish between a few types of semantic relations: minimally, the synonymy relation, the hierarchical relations (ISA and part-whole) and the associative relation (related term). Such knowledge structures are usually manually constructed, though some are constructed semi-automatically. On the other hand, informal term association lists are often constructed using corpus analysis and co-occurrence statistics. (Two terms are associated if they co-occur in the same document or in close proximity in text more often than chance.) A commonly used term association measure is the mutual information measure (Church & Hanks, 1989).

Query expansion can be performed automatically without user intervention, or manually by a user selecting appropriate related terms from a thesaurus. The usefulness of query expansion depends on many factors: the size and type of the document collection, whether the searching is performed "free text" or on an indexing field using controlled vocabulary, whether the thesaurus is domain-specific or generic, whether the system is a Boolean or best-match search system, and so forth. Most of the large-scale studies have been conducted on the TREC corpora (http://trec.nist.gov/), using free-text best-match systems and automatic query expansion. However, manual query expansion on a Boolean search system, with controlled vocabulary searching using a domain-specific thesaurus, has been performed by generations of librarians, and there is perhaps less doubt as to its usefulness!

Query expansion using term association

Automatic query expansion using term associations derived from a corpus using co-occurrence statistics has not produced promising results. Sparck Jones (1971) even obtained a decrease in retrieval performance. Peat & Willett (1991) demonstrated that the effectiveness of term association is limited because the similar terms identified by co-occurrence data tend to occur very frequently in the database, and frequently occurring terms are poor at discriminating between relevant and non-relevant documents.

Some researchers managed to obtain positive results with variations of the standard term association method. Qiu & Frei (1993) obtained positive results with their concept-based query expansion method, in which the query is expanded with terms that are strongly related to *all* the query terms. They suggested that the usual term association methods fail because these tend to add terms that are strongly related only to *individual* query terms.

Chen & Lynch (1992) developed a different association measure and "cluster algorithm" for constructing term association lists. Their work was not strictly on automatic query expansion because their term association file was used to display related terms for the user to select. However, they showed that a word co-occurrence algorithm can produce terms that are semantically related. Ruge (1992) introduced a term association method that made use of head/modifier relations (a kind of syntactic relation). She combined linguistic knowledge and co-occurrence in her experiments to produce linguistically-based thesaurus relations.

Grefenstette (1992) and Strzalkowski (1995) made use of second-order term association, i.e. they regarded two terms as related if they each tend to co-occur with a third term with the same syntactic relation. Grefenstette obtained a small improvement in retrieval effectiveness on a collection of medical abstracts.

Information retrieval researchers who participated in the TREC series of conferences have carried out large-scale experiments investigating the usefulness of query expansion for full-text searching in large heterogeneous document collections using state-of-the-art best-match information retrieval systems. TREC (Text Retrieval Conference) is a workshop series sponsored by the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology and the U.S. Department of Defense (http://trec.nist.gov/). From the TREC experiments, researchers have learnt that the most effective method of query expansion using associated terms is pseudo-relevance feedback (also called blind feedback or local feedback). This involves using the original query to retrieve an initial ranked list of documents. The terms in the top-ranked documents are weighted in some way and added to the original query, and the retrieval process is repeated with this expanded query (Belkin et al., 1999; Buckley, Singhal, Mitra & Salton, 1996; Hawking, Thistlewaite & Craswell, 1998; Kwok & Chan, 1998; Xu & Croft, 1996). In this way, the terms added to the query are related to the query as a whole and not to just the individual query words.

More recent work has focused on selecting which documents to use and what words to use. Usually, only the most frequently occurring words are used (Buckley, Singhal, Mitra & Salton, 1996). From the top-ranked documents, Buckley, Mitra, Walz & Cardie (1998) identified clusters of documents corresponding to different query concepts, selected high frequency words from each cluster, and weighted them appropriately. Xu & Croft (1996) retrieved a ranked list of passages instead of whole documents to make pseudo-relevance feedback more precise. Xu & Croft (2000) used an additional criterion: the terms selected from the top-ranked passages should co-occur with query terms in those passages. Terms that co-occur with more query terms are preferred. We venture to hypothesize that even better results can be obtained by considering the semantic relations between the associated terms in these top-ranked documents/passages and the query terms found in the documents.

Query expansion using lexical-semantic relations

Lexical-semantic relations can be used to distinguish between different kinds of term associations to use for query expansion. Some researchers have investigated what types of semantic relations are useful for query expansion.

Fox (1980) used 73 classes of lexical relations for query expansion. The lexically related words for each query term were manually identified. Some of the relations (e.g. between *dog* and *bark,* and *lion* and *Africa*) were syntagmatic and associative relations. Using the SMART best-match retrieval system, he found that the best results were obtained by using all categories of relations except the antonym relation. Wang, Vandendorpe & Evens (1985), in a follow-up study, made use of 44 relations, a different weighting scheme, a different document collection, and also constructed a relational thesaurus—not explicitly done by Fox. The results were comparable to Fox's (1980), indicating that the synonym relation and the broader-narrower term relation are not the only relations that can be employed for query expansion. However, these studies involved only very small document collections using single-domain thesauri.

Using the MEDLINE database and MEdical Subject Headings (MeSH), Rada & Bicknell (1989) found that automatic query expansion using broader-narrower term relations as well as non-hierarchical relations can improve retrieval effectiveness if the semantic relations are selected carefully. In another study using the Excerpta Medica database and an enriched EMTREE thesaurus, Rada, Barlow, Potharst, Zanstra & Bijstra (1991) found that only when the query explicitly mentioned a particular non-hierarchical relation could the retrieval system make use of the specific relation in the thesaurus to improve document ranking.

Wan, Evens, Wan & Pao (1997) used a relational thesaurus for automatic indexing in a Chinese information retrieval system. They reported that their relational thesaurus with 11 types of semantic relations did improve retrieval effectiveness in terms of average precision with both manual and automatic indexing. However, the experiment was based on a small database of only 555 Chinese abstracts in computer and information science, and the retrieval was performed in the index field. However, the thesaurus could be used interactively—users could select terms for query expansion. Abu-Salem (1992) also used an interactive relational thesaurus to improve recall in an Arabic retrieval system.

Greenberg (2001) investigated the effect of different thesaural relationships for query expansion using the ProQuest Controlled Vocabulary on the ABI/Inform database, searched using a Boolean retrieval system (the Dialog system). She found that synonyms and narrower terms increased relative recall with a non-significant decrease in precision, whereas related terms and broader terms increased relative recall with a statistically significant decrease in precision.

Using the TREC-2 test collection and a best-match retrieval system, Voorhees (1994) performed query expansion with various types of semantic relations encoded in WordNet**.** Even in a best-case scenario with the expanded terms selected by hand, query expansion did not improve retrieval results for long queries that were relatively complete. On the other hand, short queries, consisting of a single sentence describing the topic of interest, obtained significantly better results with the expansion.

Mandala, Tokunaga & Tanoka (1999), carried out query expansion with a combination of three different types of thesauri—WordNet, a co-occurrence-based thesaurus, and one based on head-modifier relations. Head-modifier relations include four syntactic relations—subject-verb, verb-object, adjective-noun, and noun-noun relations. The expanded terms were also weighted based on their similarity to all the terms in the original query and the similarity in all three thesauri. Using the TREC-7 test collection, they found that query expansion with a combination of the three thesauri gave better average precision than when no expansion was used or when it involved only one thesaurus.

Working with a Finnish full-text newspaper database and a Boolean information retrieval system, Kristensen & Jarvelin (1990) found that expanding a query with synonyms and partial-synonyms improved recall substantially with a small loss of precision. Kristensen (1993) experimented with broader-term, narrower-term, related-term and synonym relations, and concluded that automatic query expansion using all these relations together improved recall by twice the amount with a small reduction in precision. Using a best-match full-text retrieval system (INQUERY) and the Finnish newspaper database, Kekalainen & Jarvelin (1998) showed that the effect of query expansion depended on how the query was structured. Query expansion worked well with strongly structured queries, but was detrimental to weakly structured queries where, for example, the query terms and the expanded terms were treated as one list of weighted terms. The best results were obtained by expanding with all the relations.

It is clear that query expansion with related terms is crucial for improving information retrieval effectiveness, and that in addition to the ISA or broader-narrower term relations, associative relations are useful for query expansion. However, available experimental results do not suggest that it is beneficial to distinguish between specific types of associative relations. It is possible that different types of semantic relations will prove useful for expanding different queries. Rada, Barlow, Potharst, Zanstra & Bijstra (1991) suggested that if a particular associative relation is mentioned in the query, then that relation may be useful for expanding the query. More research is needed to investigate whether specific types of semantic relations are useful for expanding specific types of queries.

A literature survey of the use of thesaural relations in information retrieval was carried out by Evens (2002).

Relation Matching for Precision Enhancement

Relation matching in information retrieval can be performed using either syntactic or semantic relations. A *syntactic relation* is the relation between two words derived from the syntactic structure of the sentence, while a *semantic relation* is partly dependent on the syntactic structure of the sentence. As a semantic relation can be expressed in many syntactic forms, semantic relation matching involves matching across different syntactic relations and can yield more matches than syntactic relation matching.

Most studies on relation matching are on syntactic relations. Croft (1986), Croft, Turtle & Lewis (1991), Dillon & Gray (1983), Hyoudo, Niimi & Ikeda (1998), Smeaton & van Rijsbergen (1988) recorded a small improvement in retrieval effectiveness when syntactic relations in documents and queries were taken into account in the retrieval process. Strzalkowski, Carballo & Marinescu (1995) obtained an improvement of 20%, but their system included other enhancements as well. Smeaton, O'Donnell & Kelledy (1995) obtained worse results from relation matching (using a tree-matching procedure) than from keyword matching. The retrieval results from syntactic relation matching appears to be no better than the results obtainable using index phrases generated using statistical methods, such as those described by Fagan (1989).

Metzler & Haas (1989), Metzler, Haas, Cosic & Weise (1990), Schwarz (1990), and Ruge, Schwarz, & Warner (1991) performed syntactic processing to produce dependency trees that indicate which terms modify which other terms. Smeaton & van Rijsbergen (1988) found that the premodifier-headnoun relation (e.g., adjective-noun) has a bigger impact on retrieval than other relations.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, some researchers developed *conceptual information retrieval systems* that made use of complex linguistic processing and knowledge-based inferencing to extract information from text to store in a semantic representation or knowledge representation system. Examples of such systems are the RIME system (Berrut, 1990), the patent-claim retrieval system described by Nishida & Takamatsu (1982), the SCISOR system (Rau, 1987; Rau, Jacobs & Zernik, 1989), and the FERRET system (Mauldin, 1991). Information retrieval was performed by comparing the information in the store with the semantic representation of the user's query. These systems required extensive domain knowledge much of which was stored in case frames that specified the participant roles in an event, what types of entities could fill those roles and what syntactic function each participant would have in the sentence (Fillmore, 1968; Somers, 1987). Since the domain knowledge had to be constructed manually, such systems were necessarily restricted to narrow domains.

The DR-LINK project (Liddy & Myaeng, 1993; Myaeng, Khoo & Li, 1994) investigated general methods for extracting semantic relations for information retrieval using machine-readable versions of the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2nd ed.) and *Roget's International Thesaurus* (3rd ed.). Case frames were constructed semi-manually for all verb entries and senses in the *Longman Dictionary*. However, researchers found few relation matches between queries and documents.

Lu (1990) also did not obtain good retrieval results with case relation matching. Case relations exist between words that occur close together within the same clause. Semantic relations between terms occurring in such close proximity can probably be inferred from their co-occurrence, and explicit semantic relation identification probably confers no advantage to retrieval effectiveness.

Gay & Croft (1990) focused on the identification of semantic relations between the members of compound nouns. The knowledge base they used included case frames and associations between entities and events. Although their system correctly interpreted compound nouns about 76% of the time, it was not deemed likely to yield a substantial improvement in retrieval effectiveness.

Liu (1997) investigated partial relation matching. Instead of trying to match the whole concept-relation-concept triple, he sought to match each individual concept together with the semantic role that the concept has in the sentence. Instead of trying to find matches for “word1 ->(relation)-> word2”, his system sought to find matches for “word1 ->(relation)” and “(relation)-> word2” separately. Liu used case roles and was able to obtain positive results only for long queries (i.e. abstracts used as queries).

Khoo, Myaeng & Oddy (2001) developed an automatic method to identify causal relations in text, and attempted to match causal relations in documents with those in queries. Causal relation matching did not perform better than word proximity matching within the same sentence. Causal relation matching worked best when one member of the causal relation (either the cause or the effect) was represented as a wildcard that could match any word.

In reviewing six years of TREC experiments (1992-1997), Sparck Jones (2000) and Perez-Carballo & Strzalkowski (2000) concluded that sophisticated natural language processing was not helpful for full-text retrieval. They noted that extracting normalized syntactic phrases (e.g. head-modifier pairs) did not give better results than statistical phrases defined by adjacency and proximity. Sparck Jones (2000) commented that there was a lack of clear evidence that a thesaurus helped in manual query construction because many other factors were involved. “It is therefore impossible to determine whether, for example, a good result is attributable to the use of vocabulary aids or just to spending a lot of time on query formation” (p. 65). She further noted that the use of elaborately structured thesauri had not been proven to be better than using a term association database.

Overall, the use of specific semantic relations either for query expansion or relation matching does not appear to be useful for document retrieval. Perhaps document retrieval is too coarse grained to require the subtlety of semantic relations, which may be more useful for more refined kinds of information retrieval, such as question-answering.

Question-Answering with Full-Text Documents

The technology for question-answering based on full-text documents is still immature. Current approaches in TREC are focused on term matching and passage extraction. Voorhees (2003) outlined the general approach to question-answering as comprising three steps: a) determining the expected answer type of the question, b) employing information retrieval methods to retrieve documents or passages likely to contain the answers, and c) performing more refined matching to extract the answer or trim away non-relevant text.

Some researchers applied information extraction techniques such as pattern matching to extract the final answer from the shortlisted document passages. Paranjpe, Ramakrishnan & Srinivasan (2004) used WordNet to score document passages using Bayesian inferencing, and then used different regular expression patterns to select text segments for different kinds of questions. Harabagiu, Moldovan, Clark, Bowden, Williams & Bensley (2004) also employed WordNet and information extraction using pattern matching. Gaizauskas, Greenwood, Hepple, Roberts, Saggion & Sargaison (2004) passed the top-ranked passages retrieved by an information retrieval system to an information extraction system which converted sentences to a predicate-argument logical form. Different patterns were used to extract answers for different kinds of questions. Litkowski (2001 & 2002) extracted concept-relation-concept triples from both documents and questions, and used relational matches as one of the criteria for ranking sentences.

Semantic Relations in Automatic Text Summarization

Mani & Maybury (1999) provided a good overview of the use of various kinds of relations in text summarization. They said that summarization includes three kinds of condensation operations: selection of salient or non-redundant information, aggregation of information, and generalization or abstraction. Each of these operations makes use of relations between terms/concepts and between text passages. They further identified three main approaches to text summarization:

- *the surface-level features approach*, including use of term frequency statistics, location of a sentence, presence of terms from title or user query, cue words indicating summarizing sentences or important concepts
- *the entity-level approach*, modeling the terms/concepts in the text and their relationships as a semantic network, with.relations between concepts based on similarity, proximity in the text, co-occurrence, thesaural relations, co-reference, syntactic relations, and logical relations
- *the discourse-level approach*, modeling the structure of the text.

Some researchers have adapted information extraction systems for text summarization. Others have used sophisticated natural language processing to convert the text to a semantic representation and then performed summarization using knowledge-based inferencing—similar to the approach used in conceptual information retrieval systems. Text summarization can be performed on individual documents, called *single document summarization*, or to a set of documents, called *multi-document summarization*.

As Radev, Hovy & McKeown (2002) noted, most summarization systems perform sentence extraction or passage extraction—identifying sentences/passages in the document containing important information based on surface-level features. Paice (1990) provided an overview of this approach, and argued that processing of anaphoric and rhetorical relations in the document as well as analysis of the text structure are necessary for generating high quality abstracts. Both Kupiec, Pedersen & Chen (1999) and Myaeng & Jang (1999) developed statistical models for assigning a probabilistic score to each document sentence based on the presence of surface features. The models were developed based on a collection of training documents, in which sentences had been manually tagged to indicate good summary sentences. Passage extraction methods have also been applied to multidocument summarizaton (e.g. Goldstein, Mittal, Carbonell & Callan, 2000).

Entity-level approaches were adopted by Hovy & Lin (1999), who used WordNet as a thesaurus to generalize the terms, and Boguraev & Kennedy (1999), who made use of cohesion relations (including anaphoric references) between terms. Barzilay & Elhadad (1999) linked up the terms in the text into lexical chains, based on cohesion relations of synonymy, repetition, hypernymy, antonymy, and holonymy. Some of the term relations were derived from WordNet. Sentences were then extracted on the basis of "strong" chains using a number of heuristics.

Entity-level approaches have also been applied to multi-document summarization. Salton, Singhal, Mitra & Buckley (1999) constructed a network of related paragraphs based on information retrieval similarity measures. Text units that were strongly connected to other units were considered salient and good candidates for extraction. Mani & Bloedorn (1999) constructed a network of terms and text units based on cohesion relations. Spreading activation was used to identify salient nodes, based on connectivity and the strengths of the links. Commonalities and differences between documents were then computed based on the salient nodes for each document.

Marcu (1999 & 2000) developed a rhetorical parser to identify rhetorical relations in text to form a rhetorical structure tree, which was then used to identify important clauses. Each rhetorical relation links two text segments—one text segment is considered the nucleus node representing the central information, and the other the satellite node representing secondary information. Nucleus nodes are considered more salient than the satellites nodes, and nucleus nodes linked to higher-level nucleus nodes at the top of the tree are considered the most salient. Salience scores were computed for the nodes of the rhetorical tree, and used to extract corresponding sentences or clauses to form summaries.

Teufel & Moens (1999) made use of macro-level text structure, focusing on sections of the document which they called the *argumentative structure* of the text. The document sections were also identified with "global rhetorical relations"—relations of the text segment with respect to the content of the whole document. They used the following roles: background, topic, related work, purpose/problem, solution/method, result, and conclusion/claim. The abstract they created also used this argumentative template, and sentences were extracted from the corresponding document section to fill the abstract template.

Strzalkowski, Stein, Wang & Wise (1999) also used a discourse structure of news summaries to combine query-relevant information with related but "out-of-context information". They made use of *background-main news* relations to identify such out-of-context information.

Radev (2000) introduced a theory of cross-document structure, which can be used to describe the rhetorical structure of a set of related documents. Cross-document structure theory makes use of a multi-document graph to represent text simultaneously at different levels of granularity (words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and documents). It contains links representing cross-document semantic relationships among text units, such as equivalence, cross-reference, contradiction and historical background. Different summaries can be generated from the graph according to user needs, by preserving some links in the graph while removing others.

Information extraction techniques have also been applied to text summarization. The SUMMONS system (McKeown & Radev, 1999) used information extraction for multi-document summarization. Information was first extracted from each document to fill a template. When the templates for different documents were merged, operations were performed to identify the following logical relations between templates—change of perspective, contradiction, addition, refinement, agreement, superset, trend, and no information.

The RIPTIDES system (White, Korelsky, Cardie, Ng, Pierce & Wagstaff, 2001) also used an information extraction system to fill templates for summarization in the natural disasters domain. However, additional potentially relevant information not found in the templates were also extracted from selected sentences and added to the summary to round it off.

Knowledge-based approaches to summarization using a semantic representation of the text were adopted in the SUSY system (Fum, Guida & Tasso, 1985), the SCISOR system (Rau, Jacobs & Zernik, 1989), and the TOPIC system (Hahn & Reimer, 1999; Reimer & Hahn, 1988). The TOPIC system converted the text into a terminological logic representation scheme. From this representation, "salience operators" extracted concepts, relations and properties, which were then synthesized into a hierarchical text graph incorporating discourse and concept relations.

Lehnert (1999) proposed an inference-based technique for summarizing narratives based on structural relations around plot units. Primitive plot units, including *problem, success, failure, hidden blessing*, and *mixed blessing,* are building blocks for more complex plot units. The method focuses on affect or emotional states, and the relations between events and affect states. Lehnert listed three affect states: *positive event*, *negative event* and *mental state* (neutral affect). The relations between events and affect states include *motivation*, *actualization*, *termination,* and *equivalence.* These can be used to build primitive plot units, from which more complex plot units can be derived.

CONCLUSION

Information science in the 20th century has focused on terms, especially nouns, and concepts. We seem to be approaching the limit of what term-based and concept-based approaches can accomplish. For example, in the TREC series of conferences, the ad-hoc information retrieval track, once considered the main retrieval task, has been discontinued because of little improvement in the participating systems.

We believe that natural language processing and semantic relations, in particular, point the way forward for information science in the 21st century. But as we have seen, semantic relations are subtle things. They are difficult for computer programs to identify and process. Yet human minds process semantic relations effortlessly. Our facility with symbolic processing and semantic relations certainly distinguishes us from machines!

Two factors have retarded progress in the effective use of semantic relations in information processing applications. One is the difficulty of automatically identifying semantic relations in text accurately. The other is the difficulty of identifying suitable application areas that require the subtlety of semantic relations. Ad-hoc full-text document retrieval does not appear to require the use of semantic relations. Coarse-grained methods of term matching, appropriate term weighting and document length normalization, and query expansion with term associations based on term co-occurrence statistics, seem to yield as good a retrieval result as we are likely to get. More promising applications for the use of semantic relations are question-answering, document summarization and information extraction. Effective text processing and text mining tools for identifying semantic relations in text will help to promote more research in its use.

Further studies of relevance relationships between documents and user information needs can also yield deeper insights into how information retrieval effectiveness can be improved. Though several studies have identified different types of relevance relations and factors that affect relevance judgements, we know little about the thought processes, inferencing mechanisms and domain knowledge used by humans to judge relevance. We need more in-depth studies of the types of relationships between the user's information need, task, situation and the document content that determine the relevance and usefulness of the document.

It is also not known whether making fine distinctions between the different types of semantic relations and their properties is useful in information processing applications. Since such fine distinctions are found in language and in human information processing, we hypothesize that they are important in information processing but it is not clear in what way and for what applications such distinctions are useful.

Two exciting new areas for research are the manual and automatic construction of ontologies for various applications, and methods for exploiting ontologies effectively in different real-life applications. With the availability of vast quantities of textual documents on the World Wide Web, mining the Web for concepts and relations to build relational knowledge bases and ontologies will become increasingly important.

Other promising research areas not covered in this survey are user profiling and personalization (e.g. Jung, Rim & Lee, 2004), and special types of text categorization and automated content analysis. For example, in the area of automatic sentiment categorization (categorizing documents into those expressing positive or favorable sentiment versus negative or unfavorable sentiment), Nasukawa & Yi (2003) and Na, Sui, Khoo, Chan & Zhou (2004) found that it was not sufficient to consider just the sentiment-bearing terms in the text. It was important to determine the subject and object that the sentiments were linked to.

Lack of understanding of semantic relations among information science researchers and practitioners has also held up progress in its use in information science. One purpose of this ARIST chapter is to pull together information about semantic relations from several disciplines to provide a deeper understanding of the nature and types of semantic relations, and their possible uses. Better understanding of semantic relations among information science researchers and practitioners will also lead to more progress in the field.

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