Cross-Language Speech Retrieval and its Evaluation in the Malach Project

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Cross-Language Speech Retrieval and its Evaluation

Information Retrieval

- searching a body of information for objects that match a search query
- e.g. searching for pages on the Web

Speech Retrieval

▶ a special case of IR in which the information is in spoken form

Cross-Language

retrieving information in a language different from the language of the user's query

Evaluation

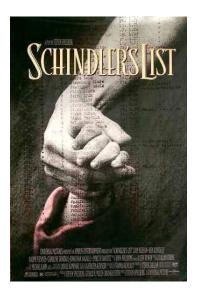
- deals with effectiveness of IR systems: how well they perform
- measures how well users are able to acquire information
- usually comparative: ranks a better system ahead of a worse system

Talk Outline

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Project Overview
- 3. Speech Recognition
- 4. Speech Retrieval
- 5. Evaluation
- 6. Conclusion

Project Overview

The story begins in 1993 with a movie and a vision



Steven Spielberg's vision of:

- collecting and preserving survivor and witness testimony of the Holocaust
- cataloging those testimonies to make them available
- disseminating the testimonies for educational purposes to fight intolerance
- enabling others to collect testimonies of other atrocities and historical events or perhaps do so itself

A brief history of the project

1993 Stephen Spielberg releases Schindler's List.

He is approached by survivors who want him to listen their stories of Holocaust.

- 1994 Spielberg starts Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation to videotape and preserve testimonies of Holocaust survivors and witnesses.
- 1999 VHF assembled the world's largest archive of videotaped oral histories with interviews from 52,000 survivors, liberators, and rescuers from 57 countries.
- 2000 10% interviews manually catalogized by VHF at a cost of \$8 million.
- 2001 NSF project proposal with the goal to dramatically improve access to large multilingual spoken word collections
- 2001 The grant awarded (\$7.5 million for 5 years), the project launches
- 2006 The project ends, results implemented in a number of archive access points
- 2010 CVH Malach: the first European access point opened at Charles University
- 2012 AMalach: 3-year project successor funded by Czech Ministry of Culture

The archive

maintained by USC Visual History Institute



- ▶ assembled in 1994–1999 by 2,300 interviewers and 1,000 photographers
- contains testimonies of 52,000 survivors from 57 countries in 32 languages
- ▶ total of 116,000 hours of VHS tapes, 180 TB of MPEG-1 digitalized video
- ▶ average duration of a testimony 2:15 hours, total cost per interview \$2,000
- ▶ full manual cataloging of 10% data
- brief manual indexing of the rest of the interviews
- ▶ 573 interviews recorded in the Czech Republic by 38 interviewers



▶ 4500 testimonies provided by people born in the Czech Republic

Manual cataloging and annotation

Done for 4,000 interviews (10,000 hrs, 72 mil words); one testimony \sim 35 hrs

Interview-level annotation

- pre-interview questionaire (including names of people and places)
- free text summary

Segment-level annotation

- topic boundaries (average 3 min/segment)
- descriptions: summary, cataloguer's scratchpad
- ▶ labels from a 30,000-keyword thesaurus: names, topic, locations, time periods

	Location-Time	Concept	People
F	Berlin 1939	Employment	Josef Stein
	Berlin 1939	Family life	Gretchen Stein Anna Stein
_	Dresden 1939	Relocation Transportation-rail	
	Dresden 1939	Schooling	Gunter Wendt Maria

Manual indexing

Done for all the remainig interviews, real-time (i.e. $\sim 15 \times$ faster)

Interview-level annotation

pre-interview questionaire, no free text summary

Time-aligned annotation

thesaurus labels: names, concepts, locations, time periods

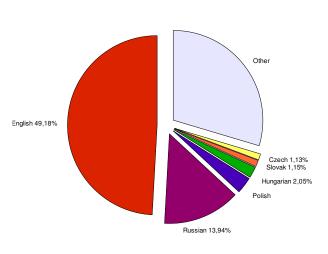
	Location-Time	Concept	People
I	Berlin 1939		
\perp		Employment	
\perp			Josef Stein
T		Family life	
Ι			Gretchen Stein
T			Anna Stein
T			
Т		Relocation	
T	Dresden 1939	Transportation-rail	
T			
T			Gunter Wendt
T		Schooling	
Ι			Maria

Cataloging interface



Interview languages (top 20)

interview	counts
English	24,872
Russian	7,052
Hebrew	6,126
French	1,875
Polish	1,549
Spanish	1,352
Dutch	1,077
Hungarian	1,038
German	686
Bulgarian	645
Slovak	583
Czech	573
Portuguese	562
Yiddish	527
Italian	433
Serbian	382
Croatian	353
Ukrainian	320
Greek	301
Swedish	266



Project tasks and participants

- 1. automatic speech recognition (multi-lingual)
- 2. automatic speech recognition (multi-lingual)
- 3. machine supported translation of domain specific thesaurus
- 4. automatic topic boundary tagging and time-aligned metadata assignment
- 5. environment for cross-language speech retrieval and browsing
- 6. environment for cross-language speech retrieval and browsing



IBM T.J. Watson Center. New York

- speech recognition in English



Center for Speech and Language Processing, JHU, Baltimore

- speech recognition in other languages
- Czech and other Slavic languages realized by CUNI and UWB



University of Maryland, College Park

- archive browsing, information retrieval and its evaluation
- Czech test collection developed by Charles University

Speech Recognition

Project challenges

- complete speaker independent recognition of spontaneous speech
- relatively high technical quality of recordings
- low "language quality": difficult even for a human listener:
 - > spontaneous, emotional, disfluent, and whispered speech from elders
 - speech with background noise and frequent interruptions
 - heavily accented speech that switches between languages
 - speech with words such as names, obscure locations, unknown events
- specific issue in Czech: colloquial expressions and pronunciation

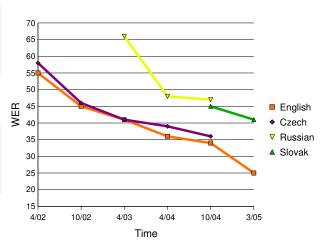
Speech recognition results

Word error rate (WER) estimated on a sample of manually trascribed data as a ratio of misrecognized words.

language	WER (%)
English	25.0
Czech	27.1
Russian	45.7
Slovak	34.5

Manual transcriptions

language	TrData (h)
English	200
Czech	84
Russian	100
Slovak	100



Automatic transcription example

name: Hugo Pavel day of birth: Dec 26, 1924

country: Czechoslovakia

religion: judaism

keywords: hiding/death marches

underground/resistance



Pane Pavle, začal jste historku o srncích a tatínkovi bez hvězdy. Jak to pokračovalo? Bylo, pokračovalo to tím způsobem, že tatínek si sundal hvězdu, pan doktor Jeřáb mu napsali skupinku na Kladně. To bylo báječný doktor, ten a fandila. Náš tatínek se vydal na cestu na Křivoklátsko, aby upekla že sem se Pochopitelně, že strejda Prošek s tím nechtěl nic mít. Za to byly krutý tresty, za to se tenkrát popravovalo. Takže strejda Prošek nepytlačil a bál se. Tady všude v lesích byli Němci. Střílelo se ... a náš táta se vydal na tuhle cestu a ubytoval se mnou slůvko toho v roce sem opravdu podařilo u pytlačit – za pomoci legendární a volal na. To byl pes – vlčák, s kterém dříve Prošek nepytlačil, a ten prostě každého sem se nepytlačil ...

Speech Retrieval

Some key insights

Speech Retrieval (recap)

A special case of IR in which the information is in spoken form

Recognition and retrieval can be decomposed

Build IR system on ASR output.

Retrieval is robust with recognition results

▶ Up to 40% word error rate is tolerable

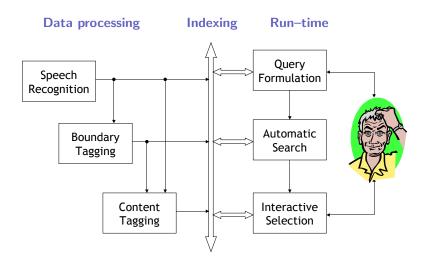
Recognition errors may not bother the system, but they do bother the user

▶ Retrieval based on ASR output should return playback points.

Segment-level indexing/summary is usefull

Vocabulary shift/pauses provide strong cues for boundary tagging

System overview



credit to Doug Oard

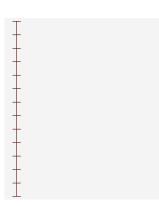
Document processing



Boundary Tagging
Boundary
Tagging
Content Tagging

Document Representation





Spoken document example

Passage from English interview with full annotation

```
doc no 00009-056150.002
interview data Sidonia L., 1930
name Issac L., Cyla L.
```

manual keyword family businesses, family life, food, Przemysl (Poland)

summary SL describes her parents and their roles in the family business. She remembers her home and she recalls her responsibilities. . . .

asr text were to tell us about that my mother's name was sell us c y l a new and her maiden name was leap shark l i e b b a c h a r d my mother was a dress . . .

auto keyword family businesses, family homes, means of adaptation and survival, extended family members . . .

Spoken document example

Passage from Czech interview with brief annotation

```
doc no 01539-025217.003
```

interview data Alois P., 1927

name -na-

manual keyword -na-

summary -na-

asr text a když nějaká ta dívenka na na a pláži svolávali Stalin že jo a nu náš fotograf přišel úplně sem byl strašně hrdý že se mě rozuměla a pak sem věděl takže se říká dva zešílení to je že na jedné kde už pak už bylo vše říkalo že venku koho jste si vzal jak jste se seznámili dobře zůstala v Polsku . . .

auto keyword -na-

Evaluation

Evaluation

Question:

How well do we perform?

Criteria

- Effectiveness, efficiency, usability?
- <u>Effectiveness</u>, efficiency, usability

User-centered strategy

- Given several users and at least two retrieval systems
- Have each user try the same task on both systems
- ► Measure which system works the "best"

System-centered strategy

- ► Given documents, queries, and relevance judgements = test collection
- ▶ Try several variations on the retrieval systems
- Measure which ranks more good docs near the top

Malach document collections)

English

- 297 interviews
- known-boundary condition (segments)
- 8,104 topically—coherent segments
- average 503 words/segment
- ► ASR: 25% mean Word Error Rate

Czech

- ▶ 350 interviews
- unknown segment boundaries
- ▶ 3-minute automatically generated passages, with 67% overlap
- start time used as document ID
- ► ASR: 35% mean Word Error Rate

Malach topic construction

- ▶ 115 representative topics developed from actual user requests:
- Scholars, educators, documentary film makers, and others produced 250 topic—oriented written requests for materials from the collection.
- ightharpoonup from English translated to *Czech, French, German, Spanish*, and *Dutch* ightharpoonup allows cross-language retrieval
- ▶ topic descriptions: title + short description + narrative description:

num 1173

title Children's art in Terezin

- desc We are looking for the description of art-related activities of children in Terezin such as music, plays, paintings, writings and poetry.
- narr The relevant material should include discussions of such activities and how they influenced the survival and following life of the children. Any episodes where the interviewee demonstrates examples of such an art are highly relevant.

Relevance assessment

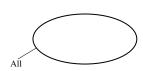
A manual process to acquire relevance judgements for document–topic pairs. Ideally for all document-topic pairs – infeasible.

Search guided relevance assessment

- for each topic a set of documents to be judged is restricted to those potentially relevant by full—text search
- lacktriangledown topic research o query formulation o search o judging

Highly ranked (pooled) relevance assessment

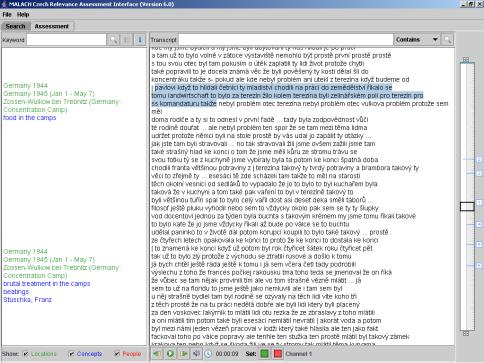
- Restriction based on results of actual evaluation runs
- ▶ *n*-deep pools from *m*-systems

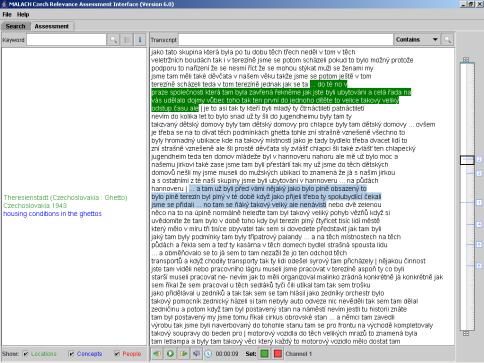


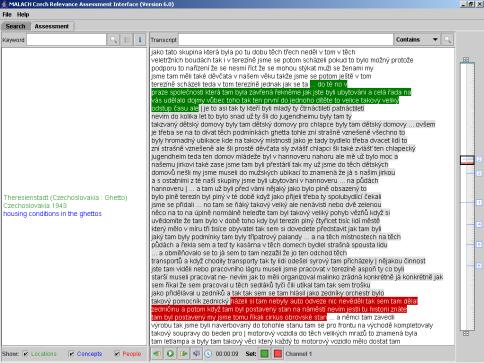


🌉 MALA	H Czech Relevance Assessment	Interface (Version 6.0	D)			_ B ×
File He	р					
Search	Assessment					
PIQ		Keyword		Transcript Terezin	Exact match ▼ Q	<u>/</u> 🖫 🕝
			196 interviews found. Di	splaying results 1-10		ψ6
Efic	n Markelis-Domnin (ID: 31115, 1 s	egment, 0 point(s) alr	ready marked for this topic)		_
Location						
Concepts						
Ku	huta Buresova (ID: 14932, 3 segr	nents, O point(s) alrea	ady marked for this topic)			
Location	Theresienstadt (Czechoslovak	ia : Ghetto), Czechoslo	ovakia 1943, Czechoslovaki	1944		
Concepts	forced labor in the ghettos, me	ans of adaptation and	survival in the ghettos, force	d labor: agriculture, stealing in the	ghettos	
Alz	oeta Bernatova (ID: 30796, 2 segn	nents, O point(s) alrea	ndy marked for this topic)			
Location	Czechoslovakia 1939 (Mar 15)	- 1945 (May 9), Theres	sienstadt (Czechoslovakia :	Ghetto)		
Concepts	sharing food and drink in the gl	nettos, interaction with	family members in the refu	gee camps		
Hu:	o Pavel (ID: 13135, 6 segments, 0	point(s) already mar	ked for this topic)			
Location	Theresienstadt (Czechoslovak	ia : Ghetto), Czechoslo	ovakia 1943, Germany 1944	Germany 1945 (Jan 1 - May 7),		
Concepts	housing conditions in the ghett	os, food in the camps				
Hai	a Tvrzská (ID: 23005, 3 segment:	s, O point(s) already m	narked for this topic)			
Location	Czechoslovakia 1941, Czecho:	slovakia 1942, Protivin	(Czechoslovakia)			
Concepts	awareness of deportations and	l/or transfers				
Fel	ce Kvapilova (ID: 23179, 2 segme	nts, O point(s) already	/ marked for this topic) - H	iding		
Location						
Concept						
Eva	Liskova (ID: 28592, 5 segments,	0 point(s) already ma	rked for this topic) - Death	Marches		
Location						
Concepts	cultural and social activities in t	he ghettos, clandestin	ne activities in the ghettos, A	ppell in the ghettos, deportations, r	neans of transport,	
Ma	git Herrmannova (ID: 31114, 1 se	gment, 0 point(s) alre	ady marked for this topic)			
Location						
Concept						
Ani	a Brynberg (ID: 13682, 1 segmen	t, O point(s) already m	narked for this topic)			
Location						
Concepts						222
Jiri	Bures (ID: 20065, 3 segments, 0	ooint(s) already mark	ed for this topic)			

Thorogiopotodt (Czochoploupkie - Chotte), Czochoploupkie 1942



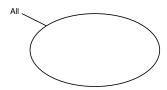




Evaluation measures: Precison and Recall

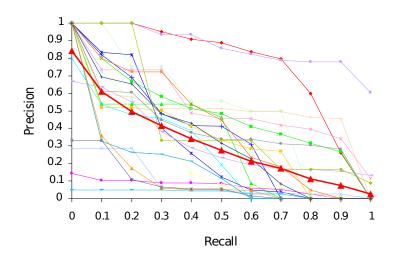
- ▶ A system ranks documents from the collection according to their relevance
- ightharpoonup Precision/Recall calculated for a set of top n retrieved documents

document	retrieved	not retrieved	
relevant	relevant retrieved	relevant missed	
not relevant	false alarm	irrelevant rejected	



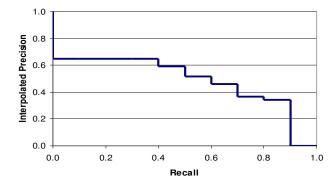
Precision-Recall curves

- ▶ Plot of Precision vs. Recall by varying the number of retrieved documents
- One curve per query

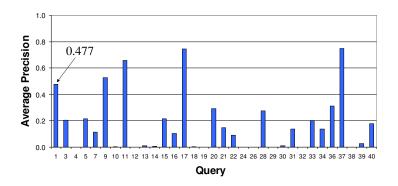


Average Precision

- the expected value of Precision for all possible values of Recall
- equal to the area under the precision–recall curve (AUC)



Mean Average Precision



1.0

36 / 40

CLEF 2007 evaluation results: English collection

Site-Run	MAP	Lang	Query	Document Fields
Dublin-1	0.2847	EN	TDN	MK,SUM
Ottawa-1	0.2761	EN	TD	MK,SUM
Brown-1	0.2577	EN	TDN	MK,SUM
Dublin-2	0.2459	EN	TD	MK,SUM,ASR06B
Brown-2	0.2366	EN	TD	MK,SUM
Brown-3	0.2348	EN	Т	MK,SUM
Amsterdam-1	0.2088	EN	TD	MK,SUM,ASR06B
Dublin-3	0.1980	FR	TD	MK,SUM,ASR06B
Amsterdam-2	0.1408	NL	TD	MK,SUM,AK2,ASR06B
Ottawa-2	0.0855	EN	TD	AK1,AK2,ASR04
Ottawa-3	0.0841	EN	TD	AK1,AK2,ASR04
Brown-4	0.0831	EN	TDN	AK1,AK2,ASR06B
Dublin-4	0.0787	EN	TD	AK1,AK2,ASR06B
Brown-5	0.0785	EN	TD	AK1,AK2,ASR06B
Sinai-1	0.0737	ES	TD	ALL
Dublin-5	0.0636	FR	TD	AK1,AK2,ASR06B
Ottawa-4	0.0619	ES	TD	AK1,AK2,ASR04

CLEF 2007 evaluation results: Czech collection

Site/Run	mGAP	Query	Topic fields	Term normalization
Pilsen-1	0.0274	Auto	TDN	lemma
Pilsen-3	0.0241	Auto	TDN	lemma
Pilsen-2	0.0229	Auto	TD	stem
Chicago-2	0.0213	Auto	TD	aggressive stem
Chicago-1	0.0196	Auto	TD	light stem
Prague-4	0.0195	Auto	TD	lemma
Prague-1	0.0192	Auto	TD	lemma
Prague-2	0.0183	Manual	TD	lemma
Pilsen-4	0.0134	Auto	TD	lemma
Pilsen-5	0.0132	Auto	TD	none
Chicago-3	0.0126	Auto	TD	none
Brown-1	0.0113	Auto	TD	light stem
Brown-2	0.0106	Auto	TD	aggressive stem
Prague-3	0.0098	Manual	TD	none
Brown-3	0.0049	Auto	TD	none

That's all folks!

What people said ...

Doug Greenberg:

- "We don't edit any of these interviews. It's completely raw footage taken directly from interviews with survivors. It will be broadly accessible, but it won't be edited."
- "Our mission now is to use the archive in educational settings to overcome prejudice and bigotry."

Doug Oard:

- "There's a lot more oral history than anybody even knows about".
- "It isn't as good as a human cataloging, but it's \$100 million cheaper."
- "When you develop this type of technology, you open a lot of doors,"