## **Modern Information Retrieval**

## Boolean information retrieval and document preprocessing<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Some slides have been adapted from slides of Manning, Yannakoudakis, and Schütze.



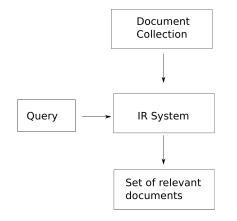
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Introduction

## Introduction





- Document Collection: units we have built an IR system over.
- An information need is the topic about which the user desires to know more about.
- A query is what the user conveys to the computer in an attempt to communicate the information need.

# **Boolean Retrieval Model**



- The Boolean model is arguably the simplest model to base an information retrieval system on.
- ► Queries are Boolean expressions, e.g., CAESAR AND BRUTUS
- The search engine returns all documents that satisfy the Boolean expression.



- ► Which plays of Shakespeare contain the words BRUTUS AND CAESAR, but NOT CALPURNIA?
- One could grep all of Shakespeare's plays for BRUTUS and CAESAR, then strip out lines containing CALPURNIA.
- Why is grep not the solution?
  - Slow (for large collections)
  - ▶ grep is line-oriented, IR is document-oriented
  - ▶ NOT CALPURNIA is non-trivial
  - ► Other operations (e.g., find the word ROMANS near COUNTRYMAN) not feasible



Example						
	Anthony and	Julius	The	Hamlet	Othello	Macbeth
	Cleopatra	Caesar	Tempest			
ANTHONY	1	1	0	0	0	1
Brutus	1	1	0	1	0	0
CAESAR	1	1	0	1	1	1
CALPURNIA	0	1	0	0	0	0
Cleopatra	1	0	0	0	0	0
MERCY	1	0	1	1	1	1
WORSER	1	0	1	1	1	0
	1					

Entry is 1 if term occurs. Example: CALPURNIA occurs in Julius Caesar.

Entry is 0 if term doesn't occur. Example: CALPURNIA doesn't occur in *the tempest*.



- So we have a 0/1 vector for each term.
- ► To answer the query BRUTUS AND CAESAR AND NOT CALPURNIA:
  - ► Take the vectors for BRUTUS, CAESAR, and CALPURNIA
  - Complement the vector of CALPURNIA
  - Do a (bitwise) AND on the three vectors
  - ► 110100 AND 110111 AND 101111 = 100100



Example						
	Anthony and	Julius	The	Hamlet	Othello	Macbeth
	Cleopatra	Caesar	Tempest			
Anthony	1	1	0	0	0	1
Brutus	1	1	0	1	0	0
CAESAR	1	1	0	1	1	1
CALPURNIA	0	1	0	0	0	0
Cleopatra	1	0	0	0	0	0
MERCY	1	0	1	1	1	1
WORSER	1	0	1	1	1	0
result:	1	0	0	1	0	0



#### Antony and Cleopatra, Act III, Scene ii

Agrippa [Aside to Dominitus Enobarbus]:

Why, Enobarbus, When Antony found Julius Caesar dead, He cried almost to roaring, and he wept When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

#### Hamlet, Act III, Scene ii

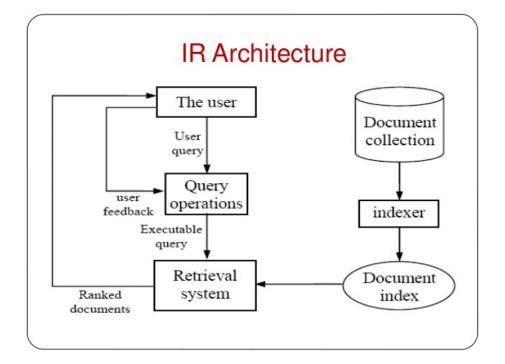
Lord Polonius:

I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.



- ► Consider  $N = 10^6$  documents, each with about 1000 tokens  $\Rightarrow$  total of  $10^9$  tokens
- ▶ On average 6 bytes per token, including spaces and punctuation  $\Rightarrow$  size of document collection is about  $6 \times 10^9 = 6 GB$
- Assume there are M = 500,000 distinct terms in the collection
- $M = 500,000 \times 10^6$  = half a trillion 0s and 1s.
- But the matrix has no more than one billion 1s.
  - Matrix is extremely sparse.
- What is a better representations?
  - ▶ We only record the 1s.

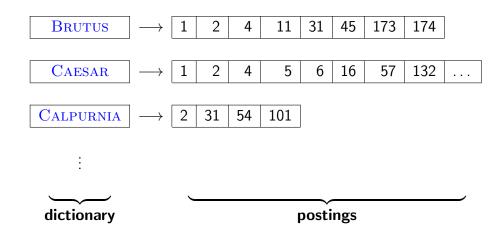




**Inverted index** 



For each term t, we store a list of all documents that contain t.





1. Collect the documents to be indexed:

Friends, Romans, countrymen. So let it be with Caesar ...

2. Tokenize the text, turning each document into a list of tokens:

Friends Romans Countrymen So ...

- 3. Do linguistic preprocessing, producing a list of normalized tokens, which are the indexing terms: friend roman countryman so ...
- 4. Index the documents that each term occurs in by creating an inverted index, consisting of a dictionary and postings.



**Doc 1.** I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

**Doc 2.** So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus hath told you Caesar was ambitious:

**Doc 1.** i did enact julius caesar i was killed i' the capitol brutus killed me

**Doc 2.** so let it be with caesar the noble brutus hath told you caesar was ambitious

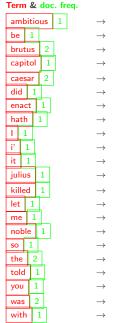
## Example: index creation by sorting

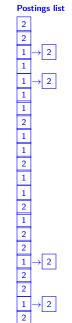


		Term	docID		Term (sorted)	docID
		I	1		ambitious	2
		did	1		be	2
		enact	1		brutus	1
	]	julius	1		brutus	2
Doc 1:		caesar	1		capitol	2
I did enact Julius		I	1		caesar	1
Caesar: I was killed	$\implies$	was	1		caesar	2
i' the Capitol;Brutus	Tokenisation	killed	1		caesar	2
killed me.		i'	1		did	1
		the	1		enact	1
<b></b>		capitol	1		hath	1
		brutus	1		l I	1
		killed	1		I	1
		me	1		i'	1
		SO	2	$\Rightarrow$	it	2
		let	2	Sorting	julius	1
		it	2		killed	1
Doc 2:		be	2		killed	2
So let it be with		with	2		let	2
Caesar. The noble		caesar	2		me	1
Brutus hath told	$\implies$	the	2		noble	2
you Caesar was	Tokenisation	noble	2		SO	2
ambitious.		brutus	2		the	1
		hath	2		the	2
	-	told	2		told	2
		you	2		you	2
		caesar	2		was	1
		was	2		was	1
		ambitious	2		with	2

## Index creation (grouping step)

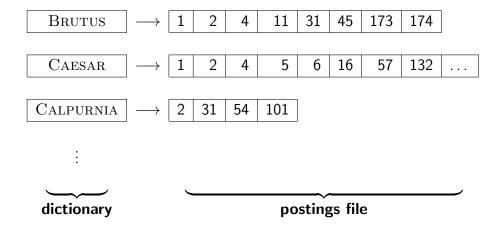






- 1. Primary sort by term (dictionary)
- 2. Secondary sort (within postings list) by document ID
- Document frequency (= length of postings list):
  - for more efficient Boolean searching (we discuss later)
  - for term weighting (we discuss later)
- 4. Keep Dictionary in memory
- 5. Postings List (much larger) traditionally on disk





# **Processing Boolean queries**



- ► Consider the query: BRUTUS AND CALPURNIA
- To find all matching documents using inverted index:
  - $1. \ \mbox{Locate Brutus}$  in the dictionary
  - 2. Retrieve its postings list from the postings file
  - 3. Locate  $\operatorname{CalpurniA}$  in the dictionary
  - 4. Retrieve its postings list from the postings file
  - 5. Intersect the two postings lists
  - 6. Return intersection to user



# BRUTUS $\longrightarrow$ $1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 11 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 45 \rightarrow 173 \rightarrow 174$ CALPURNIA $\longrightarrow$ $2 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 54 \rightarrow 101$

Intersection  $\implies$  2  $\rightarrow$  31

- This is linear in the length of the postings lists.
- Note: This only works if postings lists are sorted.



```
INTERSECT (p1, p2)
1
    answer \leftarrow <>
2
   while p1 \neq NIL and p2 \neq NIL
     do if docID(p1) = docID(p2)
3
4
        then ADD (answer, docID(p1))
5
            p1 \leftarrow next(p1)
            p2 \leftarrow next(p2)
6
        if docID(p1) < docID(p2)</pre>
7
8
            then p1 \leftarrow next(p1)
9
            else p2\leftarrow next(p2)
10
      return answer
```

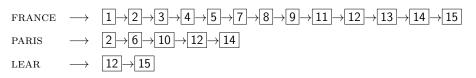
```
Brutus \longrightarrow 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 11 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 45 \rightarrow 173 \rightarrow 174
Calpurnia \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 54 \rightarrow 101
```





- Bounded by worst-case length of postings lists
- ► Thus, formally, querying complexity is O(N), with N the number of documents in the document collection
- But in practice, much better than linear scanning, which is asymptotically also O(N).





Compute hit list for ((PARIS AND NOT FRANCE) OR LEAR)



- The Boolean retrieval model can answer any query that is a Boolean expression.
  - ▶ Boolean queries are queries that use AND, OR and NOT to join query terms.
  - Views each document as a set of terms.
  - Is precise: Document matches condition or not.
- Primary commercial retrieval tool for 3 decades
- Many professional searchers (e.g., lawyers) still like Boolean queries.
  - You know exactly what you are getting.
- ▶ Many search systems you use are also Boolean: spotlight, email, intranet etc.



- Largest commercial legal search service in terms of the number of paying subscribers
- Over half a million subscribers performing millions of searches a day over tens of terabytes of text data
- The service was started in 1975.
- In 2005, Boolean search (called "Terms and Connectors" by Westlaw) was still the default, and used by a large percentage of users ...
- ... although ranked retrieval has been available since 1992.



- ► On Google, the default interpretation of a query [w<sub>1</sub> w<sub>2</sub> ... w<sub>n</sub>] is w<sub>1</sub> AND w<sub>2</sub> AND ... AND w<sub>n</sub>
- ► Cases where you get hits that do not contain one of the *w<sub>i</sub>*:
  - anchor text
  - page contains variant of  $w_i$  (morphology, spelling correction, synonym)
  - long queries (n large)
  - boolean expression generates very few hits
- Simple Boolean vs. Ranking of result set
  - Simple Boolean retrieval returns matching documents in no particular order.
  - Google (and most well designed Boolean engines) rank the result set they rank good hits (according to some estimator of relevance) higher than bad hits.

Optimization



- ► Example query: BRUTUS AND CALPURNIA AND CAESAR
- Simple and effective optimization: Process in order of increasing frequency
- Start with the shortest postings list, then keep cutting further
- ▶ In this example, first CAESAR, then CALPURNIA, then BRUTUS

BRUTUS  $\longrightarrow$   $1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 11 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 45 \rightarrow 173 \rightarrow 174$ CALPURNIA  $\longrightarrow$   $2 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 54 \rightarrow 101$ 

Caesar  $\longrightarrow$  5 $\rightarrow$ 31

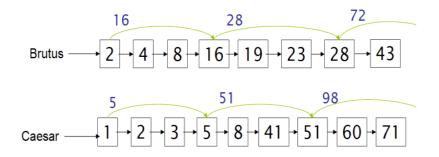


INTERSECT $(\langle t_1, \ldots, t_n \rangle)$ 

- 1 *terms*  $\leftarrow$  SORTBYINCREASINGFREQUENCY( $\langle t_1, \ldots, t_n \rangle$ )
- 2 result  $\leftarrow$  postings(first(terms))
- 3 *terms*  $\leftarrow$  *rest*(*terms*)
- 4 while *terms*  $\neq$  NIL and *result*  $\neq$  NIL
- 5 **do** *result* ← INTERSECT(*result*, *postings*(*first*(*terms*)))
- 6  $terms \leftarrow rest(terms)$
- 7 return result

**Skip lists** 





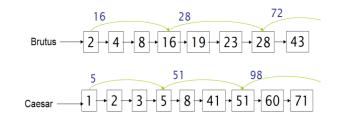
- 1. Augment postings lists with skip pointers (at indexing time)
- 2. If skip-list pointer present, skip multiple entries Example: after we match 8, 16 < 41, skip to item after skip pointer
- 3. How many skip-list pointers do we use? Heuristic: for postings lists of length L, use  $\sqrt{L}$  evenly-spaced skip pointers



```
INTERSECT WITH SKIPS (p_1, p_2)
  1
      answer \leftarrow \langle \rangle
  2
      while p_1 \neq \text{NIL} and p_2 \neq \text{NIL}
      do if doclD(p_1) = doclD(p_2)
  3
  4
             then ADD(answer, doclD(p_1))
  5
                    p_1 \leftarrow next(p_1)
  6
                    p_2 \leftarrow next(p_2)
  7
             else if doclD(p_1) < doclD(p_2)
  8
                      then if hasSkip(p_1) and (doclD(skip(p_1)) \le doclD(p_2))
  9
                                then while hasSkip(p_1) and (docID(skip(p_1)) \leq docID(p_2))
                                       do p_1 \leftarrow skip(p_1)
 10
                                else p_1 \leftarrow next(p_1)
 11
                      else if hasSkip(p_2) and (doclD(skip(p_2)) \le doclD(p_1))
 12
                                then while hasSkip(p_2) and (docID(skip(p_2)) < docID(p_1))
 13
 14
                                       do p_2 \leftarrow skip(p_2)
 15
                                else p_2 \leftarrow next(p_2)
 16
      return answer
```

### Where do we place skips?





- 1. Number of items skipped vs. frequency that skip can be taken
  - More skips: each pointer skips only a few items, but we can frequently use
    - it, but many comparisons.
  - Fewer skips: each skip pointer skips many items, but we can not use it very often, but fewer comparisons.
- 2. This ignores the distribution of query terms.
- 3. Easy for static index; hard in dynamic environments due to updates.
- 4. How much do skip pointers help? They used to help a lot.
- 5. With today's fast CPUs, they don't help that much anymore.



- 1. We want to answer a query such as **STANFORD UNIVERSITY** as a phrase.
- 2. THE INVENTOR STANFORD OVSHINSKY NEVER WENT TO UNIVERSITY should not be a match.
- 3. The concept of phrase query has proven easily understood by users.
- 4. About 10% of web queries are phrase queries (double-quotes syntax).
- 5. Consequence for inverted indexes: no longer sufficient to store docIDs in postings lists.
- 6. Two ways of extending the inverted index:
  - biword index
  - positional index



1. Index every consecutive pair of terms in the text as a phrase

#### Example

For document: FRIENDS, ROMANS, COUNTRYMEN Generate two following biwords FRIENDS ROMANS and ROMANS COUNTRYMEN

- 2. Each of these biwords is now a dictionary term.
- 3. Two-word phrases can now easily be answered.
- 4. A long phrase like STANFORD UNIVERSITY PALO ALTO can be broken into the Boolean query STANFORD UNIVERSITY AND UNIVERSITY PALO AND PALO ALTO
- 5. False positives. we need to do post-filtering of hits to identify subset that actually contains the 4-word phrase.



- 1. Why is biword index rarely used?
- 2. False positives, as noted above
- 3. Index blowup due to very large dictionary / vocabulary
  - Searches for a single term?
  - Infeasible for more than bigrams



- 1. Positional indexes are a more efficient alternative to biword indexes.
- 2. Postings lists in a nonpositional index: each posting is just a docID
- 3. Postings lists in a positional index: each posting is a docID and a list of positions (offsets).



1. Query: TO BE OR NOT TO BE

to. 993427: < 1: < 7, 18, 33, 72, 86, 231>; 2: <1, 17, 74, 222, 255>; 4: <8, 16, 190, 429, 433>; **5**: <363, 367>; 7: <13, 23, 191>; .... ...> **be**, 178239: < 1: < 17, 25>; 4: < 17, 191, 291, 430, 434>; **5**: <14, 19, 101>;

2. Document 4 matches. Why? (Always: term, doc freq, docid, offsets)

.... ....>



- 1. We just saw how to use a positional index for phrase searches.
- 2. We can also use it for proximity search.
- 3. Example: EMPLOYMENT /4 PLACE
- 4. Find all documents that contain EMPLOYMENT and PLACE within 4 words of each other.

EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES THAT PLACE HEALTHCARE WORKERS ARE SEEING GROWTH IS A HIT.

Employment agencies that have learned to adapt now

PLACE HEALTHCARE WORKERS IS NOT A HIT.

- 5. Note that we want to return the actual matching positions, not just a list of documents.
- 6. Use the positional index

## **Proximity intersection**



```
POSITIONALINTERSECT(p_1, p_2, k)
      answer \leftarrow \langle \rangle
  1
  2
     while p_1 \neq \text{NIL} and p_2 \neq \text{NIL}
  3
      do if docID(p_1) = docID(p_2)
              then I \leftarrow \langle \rangle
  4
  5
                     pp_1 \leftarrow positions(p_1)
  6
                     pp_2 \leftarrow positions(p_2)
  7
                     while pp_1 \neq NIL
  8
                     do while pp_2 \neq \text{NIL}
  9
                          do if |pos(pp_1) - pos(pp_2)| \le k
 10
                                 then ADD(l, pos(pp_2))
 11
                                 else if pos(pp_2) > pos(pp_1)
12
                                            then break
13
                              pp_2 \leftarrow next(pp_2)
 14
                          while l \neq \langle \rangle and |l[0] - pos(pp_1)| > k
                          do Delete(/[0])
 15
 16
                          for each ps \in I
17
                          do ADD(answer, \langle doclD(p_1), pos(pp_1), ps \rangle)
 18
                          pp_1 \leftarrow next(pp_1)
 19
                     p_1 \leftarrow next(p_1)
 20
                     p_2 \leftarrow next(p_2)
 21
              else if doclD(p_1) < doclD(p_2)
 22
                        then p_1 \leftarrow next(p_1)
 23
                        else p_2 \leftarrow next(p_2)
 24
      return answer
```



- 1. Biword indexes and positional indexes can be profitably combined.
- 2. Many biwords are extremely frequent.
- 3. For frequent biwords, increased speed compared to positional postings intersection is substantial.
- 4. Combination scheme: Include frequent biwords as vocabulary terms in the index. Do all other phrases by positional intersection.



- ► Example query: (MADDING OR CROWD) AND (IGNOBLE OR STRIFE)
- Get frequencies for all terms
- Estimate the size of each OR by the sum of its frequencies (conservative)
- Process in an increasing order of OR sizes

**Document preprocessing** 



- 1. Up to now, to build an inverted index, we assumed that
  - We know what a document is.
  - We can machine-read each document
  - Each token is a candidate for a postings entry.
- 2. There is more complexity in reality



- 1. What is the document unit for indexing?
  - a file in a folder?
  - a file containing an email thread?
  - ► an email?
  - an email with 5 attachments?
  - individual sentences?
- 2. Answering the question "What is a document?" is not trivial
- 3. Precision/recall trade-off: smaller units raise precision, drop recall. why?



- $1. \ \mbox{Convert}$  byte sequence into a linear sequence of characters, but
  - ▶ We need to deal with format and language of each document.
  - We need to determine the correct character encoding
  - We need to determine format to decode the byte sequence into a character sequence

MS word, zip, pdf, latex, xml (e.g., &amp). . .

- Each of these is a statistical classification problem
- Alternatively we can use heuristics
- Text is not just a linear sequence of characters (e.g., diacritics above and below letters in Arabic)
- 2. Some of these are a classification problem (we will study later).



- 1. Type: We call any unique word a type (the is a word type)
- 2. Token: An instance of a type occurring in a document (e.g., 13721 the tokens in Moby Dick).
- 3. Word: A delimited string of characters as it appears in the text.
- 4. Term : A "normalized" word (case, morphology, spelling etc); an equivalence class of words.



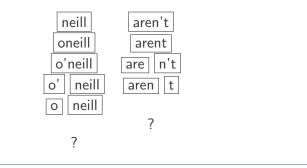
- 1. Text is not just a linear sequence of characters (e.g., diacritics above and below letters in Arabic)
- 2. What language is it in?
- 3. Writing system conventions?
- 4. Documents or their components can contain multiple languages/format; for instance a French email with a Spanish pdf attachment
- 5. A single index usually contains terms of several languages



1. Given a character sequence (and a defined document unit), we now need to determine our tokens, but, what are the correct tokens to use?

### Example

Mr. O'Neill thinks that the boys' stories about Chile's capital aren't amusing.



2. The choices determine which queries will match.



- 1. Hewlett-Packard
- 2. State-of-the-art
- 3. co-education
- 4. the hold-him-back-and-drag-him-away maneuver data base
- 5. San Francisco
- 6. Los Angeles-based company
- 7. cheap San Francisco-Los Angeles fares York University vs. New York University



- 1. 3/20/91
- 2. 20/3/91
- 3. Mar 20, 1991
- **4**. B-52
- 5. 100.2.86.144
- 6. (800) 234-2333
- 7. 800.234.2333
- 8. Older IR systems may not index numbers . . . . . but generally it's a useful feature.



1. No whitespace in Chinese language

莎拉波娃**现**在居住在美国**东**南部的佛**罗**里达。今年4月 9日,莎拉波娃在美国第一大城市**纽约**度过了18岁生 日。生日派对上,莎拉波娃露出了甜美的微笑。

2. Ambiguous segmentation in Chinese

# 和尚

The two characters can be treated as one word meaning monk or as a sequence of two words meaning and and still.

- 3. Compounds in Dutch, German, Swedish
  - ► Computerlinguistik ⇒ Computer + Linguistik
  - ► Lebensversicherungsgesellschaftsangestellter ⇒ leben + versicherung + gesellschaft + angestellter
- 4. Many other languages with segmentation difficulties: Finnish, Urdu, Persian, Arabic



1. Need to normalize words in indexed text as well as query terms into the same form.

Example: We want to match U.S.A. and USA

- 2. We most commonly implicitly define equivalence classes of terms.
- 3. Alternatively: do asymmetric expansion
  - Windows  $\Rightarrow$  Windows,
  - $\blacktriangleright$  windows  $\Rightarrow$  Windows, windows, window
  - window  $\Rightarrow$  window, windows
- 4. Why don't you want to put window, Window, windows, and Windows in the same equivalence class?
- 5. Normalization and language detection interact.
  - ▶ In PETER WILL NICHT MIT, MIT = mit.
  - ▶ In He got his PhD from MIT, MIT  $\neq$  mit.



- 1. Accents: résumé vs. resume (simple omission of accent)
- 2. Umlauts: Universität vs. Universitaet (substitution with special letter sequence "ae")
- 3. Most important criterion: How are users likely to write their queries for these words?
- 4. Even in languages that standardly have accents, users often do not type them. (Polish?)



- $1. \ \mbox{Reduce}$  all letters to lower case
- 2. Even though case can be semantically meaningful
  - capitalized words in mid-sentence MIT vs. mit
  - Fed vs. fed
- 3. It's often best to lowercase everything since users will use lowercase regardless of correct capitalization



- 1. Stop words are extremely common words which would appear to be of little value in helping select documents matching a user need Examples: a, an, and, are, as, at, be, by, for, from, has, he, in, is, it, its, of, on, that, the, to, was, were, will, with
- 2. Stop word elimination used to be standard in older IR systems.
- 3. But you need stop words for phrase queries, e.g. "King of Denmark"
- 4. Most web search engines index stop words



- 1. Reduce inflectional/variant forms to base form
- 2. For example
  - Example: am, are, is  $\Rightarrow$  be
  - car, cars, car's, cars'  $\Rightarrow$  car
  - $\blacktriangleright$  the boy's cars are different colors  $\Rightarrow$  the boy car be different color
- 3. Lemmatization implies doing "proper" reduction to dictionary headword form (the lemma).
- 4. Inflectional morphology (cutting  $\Rightarrow$  cut) vs. derivational morphology (destruction  $\Rightarrow$  destroy)



- 1. Definition of stemming: Crude heuristic process that chops off the ends of words in the hope of achieving what "principled"
- 2. Lemmatization attempts to do with a lot of linguistic knowledge.
- 3. Language dependent
- Often inflectional and derivational Example for derivational: automate, automatic, automation all reduce to automat
- 5. Most common algorithm for stemming English is Porter algorithm.
- 6. In general, stemming increases effectiveness for some queries, and decreases effectiveness for others.



- 1. Stop words
- 2. Normalization
- 3. Tokenization
- 4. Lowercasing
- 5. Stemming
- 6. Non-latin alphabets
- 7. Umlauts
- 8. Compounds
- 9. Numbers



- 1. Stop words
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- 9. Numbers



- 1. Reuters RCV1 collectionis English newswire articles published in a 12-month period (1995/6)
- 2. It contains 800,000 documents, 400,000 terms, and 100,000,000 tokens.
- 3. Please see this dataset.

References



### $1. \ \mbox{Chapters 1} \ \mbox{and 2} \ \mbox{of Information Retrieval Book}^2$

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Christopher D. Manning, Prabhakar Raghavan, and Hinrich Schütze (2008). *Introduction to Information Retrieval*. New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.



Manning, Christopher D., Prabhakar Raghavan, and Hinrich Schütze (2008). Introduction to Information Retrieval. New York, NY, USA: Cambridge University Press.

# **Questions?**

