FOAR705 - Scoping Exercise II

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22 August 2019

1   Introduction

Reviewing the feedback given back to me from the first Scoping Exercise, I note that the Pains I had identified could have been more specific to my research context. To further clarify, the recurrent themes that I had identified in the Pains in my first Scoping Exercise are as follows:

- Time Management

- Note Taking Management

- Reference Management

As you can see, they all refer to 'Management' of some sort. As my research will mostly be dealing with text sources as primary and secondary sources, much of my research process will involve taking notes of aforementioned sources and finding links between them. Therefore, this Scoping Exercise will focus on developing a Proof of Concept that will assist me in the efficient management of time. Currently, I am recording my notes from articles in multiple places (laptop, tablet and several notebooks). I do believe that I can improve this process.

What I propose, is a Proof of Concept that is able to manage the notes that I write, cataloging them in a way that records information about the source. Then with all the relevant information recorded, I am able to recall notes on sources.

2 Decomposition

2.1 Recording the notes

- Have all notes digitized if they are hand written in notebooks
- Record:
  - Author's name
  - Source type
  - Year
  - Discipline
  - Academic School/Paradigm
  - Keywords (specificed by user)
  - Notes
- Store all information in one directory

2.2 Recalling sources

Using a search function, recall notes that correspond to search requests. This could include a single field, i.e. 'Author's name' or a combination of fields e.g. "Anthropology" in 'Discipline' field and "identity" in 'Keywords'. This should render results for notes that have an anthropological background with the keyword 'identity'.

3 Pattern Recognition

Statistics could be outputted that show trends in:

- The number of sources that come from a particular Discipline or School/Paradigm. This would be helpful in analyzing where potential gaps in research reside.
- The age of the sources.
- The type of sources used (i.e. alot of books, but not enough journals).

A computer would also be able to recognise the frequency of words in the 'Notes' that have been capture, possibly alluding to themes that were not apparent to the note taker at the time.

4 Algorithm

A potential work flow for this Proof of Concept is as follows:

- User types up all notes (including hand written notes from a note book).

- User stores all notes in a single directory.

- User adds additional information to notes (could be metadata) including:

  - Author's name
  - Source type
  - Year
  - Discipline
  - Academic School/Paradigm
  - Keywords (specificed by user)

- When user wishes to recall notes that they want to use they are able to enter search terms in the fields listed above. The computer then can search for related items that satisfy the search criteria.

- The computer can also calculate specific statistics on the notes recorded displaying trends to the user.

- The computer can run textual analysis on the notes suggesting recurring words that appear (excluding definite and indefinite articles, pronouns and conjunctions).