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Software Ticket Quality

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Masters project proposal

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1 Introduction

briefly explain the context of the project problem

1.1 A subsection

Please note your proposal need not follow the included section headings; this is only a suggested structure. Also add subsections etc as required

2 Statement of Problem

Clearly state the problem to be addressed in your forthcoming project. Explain why it would be worthwhile to solve this problem.

3 Background Survey

3.1 Introduction

3.2 What was covered and why

3.3 How papers were found; what terms were searched for + snowballing

3.4 Data Quality Metrics

Data Quality in Context[23]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the authors was to analyze data quality in different organizations, observe data quality problem patterns as well as see its implications.
- **What was the method?** They performed a qualitative analysis, examining 42 data quality projects from 3 organizations. They collected data via interviews of data procedures, custodians, customers and managers. The authors analysed each project using the data quality dimensions as content analysis codes.

- **What did they learn?** One thing that the authors learned is that representational data quality dimensions are underlying causes of accessibility data quality problem patterns. Also, they observed three underlying causes for users' complaints regarding data not supporting their tasks:
 - incomplete data;
 - inadequately defined or measured data;
 - data that could not be appropriately aggregated.
- **Relevance to our work:** this paper brings valuable insight into major data quality issues and patterns, information which we can apply in our own research.

Data Quality Assessment[18]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the authors is to present ways of developing usable data quality metrics that organizations can implement in their own internal processes.
- **What was the method?** They have researched previous methods of assessing data quality in information systems and they formulated general advice that can be directly implemented by organizations in their processes.
- **What did they learn?** They learned that there is no universal approach to assessing data quality as it heavily depends on the context where it is analysed.
- **Relevance to our work:** it shows how one can effectively measure data quality in information systems, thus we can apply it on the quality of the tickets we are analysing.

Product perspective on total Data Quality Assessment[25]:

- **What were the goals?**
- **What was the method?** They created the TDQM methodology which is based on accumulated research and extended
- **What did they learn?**
- **Relevance to our work:**

Knowing-Why about Data Processes and Data Quality[14]:

- **What were the goals?** They tried to investigate whether knowing-why affects work performance and whether knowledge held by people in different roles affect the overall work performance.

- **What was the method?** They had 6 companies that served as data collection points. In all of them, the research focused on the quality of their customer activity data, tuned for the specific domain the company was activating in. They held 2 sessions at each company: in the first session, the participants were presented with an overview of the research and a questionnaire, while during the second session provided summary feedback on the questionnaire results and gave the participants the chance to provide comments and explanations.
- **What did they learn?** The major finding of the study was that there is vast complexity of knowledge at work in data production process.
- **Relevance to our work:** an important research on how knowledge in different roles in a company can lead to decreased data quality overall. It will help us to analyse the software tickets we will mine better.

Antecedents of Information and System Quality [17]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors had 2 main research objectives they wanted to aim for in this paper:
 - identify a set of antecedents that both drive information and system quality, as well as define the nature of the IT artifact;
 - explore data warehousing in general, especially analytical tools, predefined reports and ad hoc queries.
- **What was the method?** They conducted a cross-functional survey to test the model the authors proposed. They focused on user experience with a data warehouse. They sent email invites to the Data Warehouse Institute which distributed it further to organizations, among which 7 agreed to participate, yielding a total of 465 completed surveys.
- **What did they learn?** They learned that their selected features were indeed a good indicator of overall information and system quality. They also found out that accuracy is the dominant determinant across all three data warehouse technologies, followed by completeness and format. Also, the results showed that more attention needs to be given to differences across varying technologies.
- **Relevance to our work:** this paper presents important findings regarding information and system quality in an IT environment. We can use it when analysing the quality of the tickets we will mine.

AIMQ[15]:

- **What were the goals?** The main challenge set by the authors was to develop an overall model with an accompanying assessment instrument for quantifying information quality.

- **What was the method?** They developed a methodology called AIM quality (hence the name AIMQ) which they applied at 5 different organizations. It has 3 main components:
 - 2×2 model of what information quality means to managers;
 - questionnaire for measuring information quality along the dimensions found in first step;
 - two analysis techniques for interpreting the assessments captured by the questionnaire.
- **What did they learn?** They conclude that the AIMQ methodology proved to be a practical information quality tool to organizations.
- **Relevance to our work:** the paper gave us valuable insight into how to assess information quality.

Evaluating IT Quality in E-Government Environment[19]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper is to identify if leadership and IT quality can lead to positive outcomes in an e-government environment.
- **What was the method?** They conducted a web survey to gather data and test their hypotheses. They assessed the City of Denton's e-government initiatives, including current plans and implementations.
- **What did they learn?** They learned that the MBNQA leadership triad (leadership, strategic planning and customer/market focus) had a positive impact on the IT quality triad (information, system and service quality). Moreover, they found out that both leadership and IT quality improved the benefits.
- **Relevance to our work:** even though the environment presented in the paper was an e-government, it is useful to see how the organization around a project as well as IT quality can lead to a better functioning of the system. Thus, in our research, it can prove helpful in choosing the right open source project to gather and analyse the data from.

Organizational Impact of Information Quality[6]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors had two main research questions they wanted to address:
 - what individual/combined influences system quality, service quality, information quality have on organizational impact?
 - what effect does system quality have on information quality?

- **What was the method?** They conducted a construct measurement for the IS quality dimensions and collected data through empirical testing.
- **What did they learn?** Firstly, they learned that service quality has the greatest impact of all three quality constructs. Moreover, they found out that there is a linkage between system and information quality, fact that previous research did not reveal. Lastly, their results indicate that the above-mentioned quality dimensions have a significant positive influence on organizational impact either directly or indirectly.
- **Relevance to our work:** the paper can provide us insights into how valuable information quality is and what an impact it can have.

Impact of Poor Data Quality[20]:

- **What were the goals?** The main purpose of the article is to provide some insights into how data quality can have a major economical impact on a company, as well as to raise awareness about this issue.
- **What was the method?** The author has analysed various large enterprises and their available data to infer conclusions about the impact data quality has.
- **What did they learn?** There are three main issues across most enterprises:
 - inaccurate data;
 - inconsistencies across databases;
 - unavailable data necessary for certain operations.

Moreover, the paper also presents a list of impacts poor data quality brings, among which we can find:

- lowered customer satisfaction;
- increased cost;
- lowered employee satisfaction;
- it becomes more difficult to set strategy;
- poorer decision making.
- **Relevance to our work:** this is a key paper on data quality in an enterprise setting and what impact it can have. It is valuable to our research because we can relate the findings with what negative impacts poor tickets can bring to software projects.

Metrics for Measuring Data Quality[9]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors of the paper aimed to answer the two main research questions:

- how can data quality be measured as metrics?
 - what can be done in regards to data quality and what economic consequences would it bring?
- **What was the method?** They applied the metric for timeliness at a major German mobile services provider. Due to some Data Quality issues the company was having, they had lower mailing campaign success rates, but after applying the metrics, the company was able to establish a direct connection between the results of measuring data quality and the success rates of campaigns.
 - **What did they learn?** For some practical problems, the metrics that they applied in regards to data quality proved to be quite appropriate. As they designed the metrics to revolve around interpretability and cardinality, they could quantify data quality, thus they could analyse the economical impact.
 - **Relevance to our work:** this paper could possibly help us in measuring data quality. This is an important step in our research as we specifically need to measure quality in software tickets.

3.5 Issue Quality

Automatic Bug Report Assignment[1]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors main goal was to determine a way through which bug triaging can be made easier using automatization approaches.
- **What was the method?** The researchs output was an algorithm that can automatically assign bugs to developers based on various types of information fed. The author looked exclusively at ML approaches, examining 8 main types of information (textual description of bug, bug component, OS, hardware, software version, developer who owns the code, current workload of developers, list of devs actively contributing). Moreover, the author considers launching a Firefox extension to test the app even further through human evaluation as well.
- **What did they learn?** The research brings 3 main contributions: methodology for creating semi-automated bug triaging algorithms, a characterization of performance of different approaches, as well as an actual implementation for such a semi-automated bug triager. The author discovered that with further improvements and tweaking, we can reach an even further bug triager.
- **Relevance to our work:** Another project that we can use to learn about bug triaging; also we can contact maybe the author and receive either an executable or the source code for the application.

Reducing the effort of bug report triage[3]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors had one main goal, and that was to find out if costs related to bug triaging can be reduced if ML algorithms were to be introduced. This hypothesis was backed by 2 research questions, which were if the approach would create recommenders that make accurate recommendations and if the humans can make use of the information provided by the approach.
- **What was the method?** They created a bug triager which can present a list of developers from which someone can choose who is the most suitable to fix that specific issue. Also, they improved a previous research the same authors worked on, thus increasing the precision and recall of the algorithm. They employed machine learning techniques to create the algorithm. Then, in order to test it, they implemented a proxy to the actual web service that's providing the issue repository, thus visualizing results helped conduct the evaluation process.
- **What did they learn?** The authors learned that their approach could actually be used in software projects as its accuracy is reasonable. They also learned that the impact of poor software project management, including bug triaging, on software projects can be quite high.
- **Relevance to our work:** The research presented can help us in understanding better if statistical experiments are helpful in analyzing tickets, as well as give an insight into how important ticket quality and proper triaging are for any software project.

Effects of process maturity on quality, cycle time and effort in software product development[8]:

- **What were the goals?** The research tries to investigate the relationship between process maturity, quality, cycle time and effort in software projects. The authors are mainly trying to prove/reject a couple of hypotheses: higher levels of process maturity lead to higher product quality in software projects, higher levels of process maturity are associated with increased cycle time in software products, higher product quality is associated with lower cycle time, higher levels of process maturity lead to increased development efforts in the project and higher product quality is associated with lower development effort.
- **What was the method?** In order to test their hypotheses, the authors examined data coming from 30 projects belonging to the systems integration division from a large IT company. The process improvement data was collected via external divisions and by government agencies to provide independent assessments of the firms software development processes. Then, they analyzed a couple of key variables and see how they interact: process maturity, product quality, cycle time, development effort, product size, domain/data/decision complexity and requirements ambiguity.
- **What did they learn?** They learned that the main features they inspected are additively separable and linear. Moreover, they found out that higher levels of process maturity are associated with significantly higher quality, but also with increased cycle

times and development efforts. On the other hand, the reductions in cycle time and effort resulting from improved quality outweigh the marginal increases from achieving more process maturity.

- **Relevance to our work:** It can aid our research through better understanding of how various factors can influence the software development processes, thus giving more value to our own research (i.e. being able to automatically determine issue quality could improve better issue writing guidelines/better rules to be enforced, thus reduced triaging and development costs).

Where should the bugs be fixed?-more accurate information retrieval-based bug localization based on bug reports[27]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper was to implement a tool that, based on a bug report, could accurately select a number of files where the developer needs to make the necessary changes to fix the issue. They tried to answer 4 main research questions: how many bugs can be successfully located by BugLocator, does the revised VSM improve bug localization accuracy, does considering similar bugs improve localization accuracy, can bugLocator outperform other similar methods.
- **What was the method?** The tool firstly performed a textual analysis, looking for similarities between the bug report description and the source code files. Then, it analyzed previous bugs in the repository to find the most similar ones, thus being able to find which files ought to be changed. Lastly, it assigned scores to similar files, the ones with bigger sizes obtaining higher scores as they are more likely to contain bugs. They collected the necessary data from Bugzilla projects and then performed the evaluation.
- **What did they learn?** The buglocator can locate a large percentage of bugs analysing just a small set of source code files. Secondly, the revised VSM outperforms the standard VSM. Moreover, similar bugs can improve the localization accuracy only to a certain extent, while the locator outperformed every other competitor on a multitude of projects.
- **Relevance to our work:** We can try to use BugLocator and even include it in our research as it gives a direct correlation between bug reports and development effort (thus reduced costs). Thus, we can infer even more possible hypotheses regarding our issues quality.

□:

- **What were the goals?**
- **What was the method?**
- **What did they learn?**

- Relevance to our work:

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- What were the goals?
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- What were the goals?

- **What was the method?**
- **What did they learn?**
- **Relevance to our work:**

Bug Report Assignee Recommendation using Activity Profiles[16]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper is to automatically detect who should be the developers who are most suitable to solve a specific issue.
- **What was the method?** They employed an algorithm using activity profiles (i.e. assign, review, resolve activity of the developer) such that, after detecting the prior experience, developer's role, and involvement in the project, it could recommend who should fix a specific bug. The average accuracy was around 88%, much higher than the LDA-SVM technique.
- **What did they learn?** They found out that their approach was more accurate than previous work done on assignee recommendation, but they think that it might even be improved further by combining their technique with the classic LDA-SVM one.
- **Relevance to our work:** this work complements the research presented in Anvik et al. [2] and it will provide us with valuable insight into how automatic triaging should be performed.

Modeling Bug Report Quality[10]

- **What were the goals?** The authors' goal is to present a model that would determine if a bug report will be triaged in a given amount of time. Moreover, they are trying to propose features that could help composing a good quality bug report.
- **What was the method?** They run an analysis on over 27000 bug reports from the Mozilla Firefox project, selecting a couple of surface features that could be applied:
 - self-reported severity;
 - readability;
 - daily load (i.e. total number of bug reports that need to be dealt with at that point in time);
 - submitter reputation;
 - changes over time.

Afterwards, they ran 4 experiments (i.e. validate the assumptions, find how much post-submission data is necessary, find the optimal resolved by cutoff, evaluate the hypothetical benefit) and analyzed the results to see if their model would be beneficial.

- **What did they learn?** They found out that linear model, even a simple one, can have better-than-chance predictive power. Also, they came to the conclusion that attachment and comment counts are really valuable for triaging the bug faster, compared to, for example, patch count. Moreover, the readability of a bug is important as it proved to influence the duration of the triaging process.
- **Relevance to our work:** the authors' goal was quite similar to ours as they are trying to find out which features make for a good quality bug report. Moreover, they are also using programmatic analysis instead of interviews with developers to produce the results, which is the same approach we are aiming for in our research.

Secret Life of Bugs[4]:

- What were the goals? The paper tries to understand and analyze common bug fixing coordination activities. Another goal of the paper was to analyze the reliability of repositories in terms of software projects coordination and propose different directions on how to implement proper tools.
- What was the method? They executed a field study which was split into two parts:
 - firstly, they did an exploratory case study of bug repos histories;
 - secondly, they conducted a survey with professionals (i.e. testers, developers).

All data and interviews were conducted using Microsoft bug repositories and employees.

- What did they learn? They learned that there are multiple factors which influence the coordination activities that revolve around bug fixing, such as organizational, social and technical knowledge, thus one cannot infer any conclusions only by automatic analysis of the bug repositories. Also, through surveying the professionals, they reached the conclusion that there are 8 main goals which can be used for better tools and practices:
 - probing for ownership;
 - summit;
 - probing for expertise;
 - code review;
 - triaging;
 - rapid-fire emailing;
 - infrequent, direct email;
 - shotgun emails.
- Relevance to our work: this paper is one of the key papers for our research paper.

What makes a good bug report[5]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper was to investigate the **quality of bug reports** from a developer's point of view, based on the typical information found in such a report (e.g. stack traces, screenshots).
- **What was the method?** The authors conducted a massive survey with over 450 respondents. The survey was online and it targeted developers from Mozilla, Apache and Eclipse.
- **What did they learn?** The main conclusion of this research paper was that well written bug reports will more likely get the attention of the developers. Thus, including steps to reproduce the bugs or stack traces proved to increase the quality of the bug report. Also, an important achievement reached by the authors was the development of a prototype tool called Cuezilla that could estimate, with an accuracy rate of 3148%, the quality of a bug report.
- **Relevance to our work:** it is relevant to our research in that it provides valuable insight into what makes for a good bug report based on actual professionals' opinions.

Who should fix this bug?[2]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors aimed to create a tool that could automatically assign the bug report to a specific developer based on his/her suitability for that specific task.
- **What was the method?** They applied a supervised machine learning algorithm on the repositories to learn which developers were best suited for specific tasks, thus when a new bug report would come in, a small set of people would be selected. In order to train the algorithm, they looked at Bugzilla repositories and selected the free text form of tickets, trying to label similar ones based on textual similarities. Once the tickets were labeled and grouped for specific developers, the algorithm would then be able to present the triager the set of developers suitable to fix the bug.
- **What did they learn?** The most important lesson learned was that collecting data from bug reports and CVS logs was quite challenging. One of the major reasons why they found this aspect hard was that not all CVS comments referenced the specific bug report id.
- **Relevance to our work** The paper taught us that bug triaging is hard and that there is almost no automated tool that can choose the perfect developers to work on the task. Moreover, the method applied by the authors could prove useful as a learning aid when working with the open source repositories chosen as data sets.

Software Quality The Elusive Target[12]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper is to determine what makes for a good quality software project, as well as who are the people in charge of this aspect and how should they approach achieving it.

- **What was the method?** They tried to define quality in software projects and analyze techniques that measure such quality by looking at other models proposed in different other papers (e.g. McCall’s quality model, ISO 9126).
- **What did they learn?** They learned that quality is very hard to define and there are various factors which need to be taken into consideration, such as the business model of the company, the type of the software project (e.g. safety critical, financial) or the actors which are involved and how they coordinate the software activities.
- **Relevance to our work:** this paper is a key paper on software quality and it can prove beneficial in our research by giving valuable insights into how software quality can be modeled, thus helping us in selecting good quality open source repositories to work with (i.e. ticket selection and analysis).

Code Quality Analysis in OSS[22]:

- **What were the goals?** The article tries to discuss and examine the quality of the source code delivered by open source projects.
- **What was the method?** They used a set of tools that could automatically inspect various aspects of source code. The authors analyzed the 6th release of the OpenSUSE project and examined only the components, which are defined by C functions in the programs.
- **What did they learn?** The research’s results show that Linux applications have high quality code standards that one might expect in an open source repository, but the quality is lower than the one implied by the standard. More than half of the components were in a high state of quality, but on the other hand, most lower quality components cannot be improved only by applying some corrective actions. Thus, even though not all the source code was in an industrial standards shape, there is definitely room for further improvement and open source repositories proved to be of good quality.
- **Relevance to our work:** this work completes the previous paper on software quality in general by looking specifically at quality in open source projects, which will be our main points for data collection.

Analysis of Software Cost Estimation[7]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors are trying to show that poor estimation analysis techniques in software projects will lead to wrong conclusions regarding cost estimation accuracy. Moreover, they also propose a framework for better analysis of software cost estimation error.
- **What was the method?** They approached a real-world company where they conducted analysis on their cost estimation techniques.

- **What did they learn?** They learned that regular, straight-forward types of cost estimation analysis techniques error lead them to wrong conclusions.
- **Relevance to our work:** it showed us that we need to be careful when selecting techniques for cost estimation in our own research.

3.6 Measuring Cost and Waste in Software Projects

Waste Identification[13]:

- **What were the goals?** The paper had two main goals:
 - a means to identify communication waste in agile software projects environments;
 - types of communication waste in agile projects.
- **What was the method?** The authors collaborated with a medium-sized American software company and conducted a series of observations, informal discussions, documents provided by the organization, as well as semi-structured interviews. Moreover, the data collection for waste identification was split into 2 parts:
 - **pre-development:** occurred before the actual implementation begun (e.g. backlog creation);
 - **development:** happened throughout the implementation process (e.g. throughout sprints, retrospectives, sprint reviews, communication media).
- **What did they learn?** They realized the communication waste can be divided into 5 main categories:
 - lack of involvement;
 - lack of shared understanding;
 - outdated information;
 - restricted access to information;
 - scattered information.

Also, they learned that their way of identifying these types of waste was quite efficient and they even recommend it to companies if they'd like to conduct such processes internally.

- **Relevance to our work:** the waste identification process can be applied to our work so that we can identify possible causes to poor quality tickets.

Software Development Waste[21]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper was to identify main types of waste in software development projects.
- **What was the method?** They conducted a participant-observation study over a long period of time at Pivotal, a consultancy software development company. They also interviewed multiple engineers and balanced theoretical sampling with analysis to achieve the conclusions.
- **What did they learn?** They found out there are nine main types of waste in software projects:
 - building the wrong feature or product;
 - mismanaging backlog;
 - extraneous cognitive load;
 - rework;
 - ineffective communication;
 - waiting/multitasking;
 - solutions too complex;
 - psychological distress.
 - **Relevance to our work:** this paper complements the previous one on waste identification[13].

Waste in Kanban Projects[11]:

- **What were the goals?** The authors are trying to find the main sources of waste in Kanban software development projects and categorize/rank them based on severity.
- **What was the method?** A controlled case study research was employed in a company called Software Factory. They conducted semi-structured interviews with 5 of the team members both in the beginning in order to collect data as well as at the end of the whole process to categorize the seven types of waste found. Moreover, they also measured the overall success of the project based on Shenar's techniques (first-second-third-fourth; project efficiency-impact on the customer-business success-preparing for the future).
- **What did they learn?** They reached two main findings:
 - they found 7 types of waste throughout the project at various development stages:
 - * partially done work;
 - * extra processes;
 - * extra features;
 - * task switching;

- * waiting;
- * motion;
- * defects.
- they reached the conclusion that they couldn't explain the success of the project even though waste was found.
- **Relevance to our work:** this work completes the findings from the previous work presented as most of the projects we will work with will be Agile, thus Kanban-based in terms of issue management.

3.7 Sentiment Analysis

Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down[24]:

- **What were the goals?** The main goal of the paper is to detect the overall sentiment transmitted through reviews of various types.
- **What was the method?** The author created an unsupervised machine learning algorithm that was evaluated on more than 400 reviews on Epinions on various kinds of markets (e.g. automobiles, movie). The algorithm implementation was divided into three steps:
 - extract phrases containing adjectives or adverbs;
 - estimate the semantic orientation of the phrases;
 - classify the review as recommended or not recommended based on the semantic orientation calculated at previous step.
- **What did they learn?** One thing the author learned that different categories will yield different results. For example, the automobile section on Epinions ranked much higher, 84%, compared to movie reviews, which had an accuracy of 65.83%. Moreover, most pitfalls of the algorithm could be attributed to multiple factors, such as not using a supervised learning system or limitations of PMI-IR.
- **Relevance to our work:** the method can be applied for extracting sentiments from the tickets (description and comments) we will use in our own research.

Recognizing Contextual Polarity[26]:

- **What were the goals?** The paper's main goal is to find efficient ways to distinguish between contextual and prior polarity.
- **What was the method?** They used a two step method that used machine learning and a variety of features. The first step classified each phrase which had a clue as either neutral or polar, followed by taking all phrases marked in the previous step and giving them a contextual polarity (e.g. positive, negative, both, neutral).

- **What did they learn?** Through the method the authors employed, they managed to automatically identify the contextual polarity. As most papers were only looking at the sentiment extracted from the overall document, they managed to get valuable results from looking at specific words and phrases.
- **Relevance to our work:** when analyzing the description and comments of the ticket, we can use their method for inferring the sentiment transmitted probably more accurately than the technique used in Turney’s paper[24].

3.8 Conclusion

4 Proposed Approach

state how you propose to solve the software development problem. Show that your proposed approach is feasible, but identify any risks.

5 Work Plan

show how you plan to organize your work, identifying intermediate deliverables and dates.

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