



Analyzing multilingual knowledge innovation in patents



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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Conceptual modeling
Ontologies
Knowledge management applications
Database semantics

ABSTRACT

In the process of analyzing knowledge innovation, it is necessary to identify the existing boundaries of knowledge so as to determine whether knowledge is new – outside these boundaries. For a patent to be granted, all aspects of the patent request must be studied to determine the patent innovation. Knowledge innovation for patent requests depends on analyzing current state of the art in multiple languages. Currently the process is usually limited to the languages and search terms the patent seeker knows. The paper describes a model for representing the patent request by a set of concepts related to a multilingual knowledge ontology. The search for patent knowledge is based on Fuzzy Logic Decision Support and allows a multilingual search. The model was analyzed using a twofold approach: a total of 104,296 patents from the United States Patent and Trademark Office were used to analyze the patent extraction process, and patents from the Korean, US, and Chinese patent offices were used in the analysis of the multilingual decision process. The results display high recall and precision and suggest that increasing the number of languages used only has minor effects on the model results.

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1. Introduction

In the analysis of the boundary of knowledge, such as in the process of granting patents, there is a difference between the need to locate knowledge and the need to identify whether similar knowledge exists. The search of the boundary of knowledge examines whether given concepts exist, while regular knowledge search looks for instances of existing concepts. Contemporary knowledge-based services depend on using existing knowledge, while Patent Knowledge Extraction is required to assist in identifying similar domains and patterns that will facilitate the decision whether to grant the patent request (Cong & Tong, 2008). Furthermore, another difficulty is that patents in different countries are not classified under one classification system and employ multiple languages.

Conversely, to invalidate a patent, relevant documents must be identified as “prior art”, open to the public before the patent was filed. Analysis of patents involves searching for relevant patents and documents that could invalidate a claim within the patent or for a set of patents that could invalidate a claim when used together.

The main problem encountered when searching for existing patents is verifying that all relevant documents related to the current invention were retrieved. If a relevant document is missed,

low recall, then a patent could be granted to an already existing work. Conversely, retrieving an irrelevant document, low precision, would only lead to minor additional work from the patent inquirer or decision maker. The current decision process for granting patents averages 3–4 years depending on the specific field of technology. The main advantage of the model presented here is that it decreases the time required to review a patent request by supplying a semi-automatic guided search. The model aims at benefitting both the patent office decision maker who needs to decide whether to grant a patent for each request and inventors and companies that would like to inquire about existing patented technology.

In the growing number of open markets, the identification of patent knowledge is a challenging task due to the language barrier. Analyzing knowledge innovation for a patent request usually involves identifying the main concepts of the invention and searching for existing documents relating to the innovation. The process of knowledge analysis is usually limited to the languages of the patent seeker.

The Patent Knowledge Extraction method described in this paper presents a model based on ontology for the domain representation of the patent request combined with Fuzzy Logic for the decision support. The Patent Knowledge Extraction method has two main advantages: the knowledge is represented using the ontology modeling technique and the user is presented with powerful reasoning in knowledge extraction using the Fuzzy Logic methods.

The Patent Knowledge Extraction method is based on free text input in the language of the patent. An example of a sample patent

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