

Evaluation of a corpus building tool for annotated multimodal instructions

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We present an evaluation study of the PAT workbench, an online corpus tool developed to store, annotate and retrieve multimodal instructions (MIs) that include text and pictures. To find out whether the PAT workbench meets its goals and to assess the usability of the system, a two-step formative evaluation was conducted that included an expert review and a user evaluation.

The expert described the system and conducted a heuristic inspection and a cognitive walkthrough w.r.t. PAT's top tasks (addition, search and annotation of MIs). Results showed that, given the three top tasks, the two most severe usability problems were 'visibility of system status' (e.g. lack of feedback to the user, available information and functions were not clear) and 'consistency and web standards' (e.g. clickable links styled as text, site behaved not as expected). Accordingly, the PAT workbench was improved.

The user evaluation consisted of two tests with ten students enrolled in the master course on multimodal instructions in Communication and Information Science at Groningen. The first test was conducted at the beginning of the course when students were unfamiliar with the system. The second test was conducted after the students had worked with the system for seven weeks. In both tests participants were asked to perform the three top tasks while thinking aloud. Participants filled out a questionnaire after each task and two general usability questionnaires after performing all tasks. The tests were concluded with an interview with the participants. Results of the first test show that participants were able to upload and search MIs. However, participants experienced problems in the annotation task, with finding the annotation page as well as with saving and viewing their annotations. The PAT Workbench was improved before the second test was conducted. Results of the second test are still being processed.