Experiential Hierarchical Datasets for Granular Route Directions

Martin Tomko  
Cooperative Research Centre for Spatial Information, Department of Geomatics, University of Melbourne, Email: m.tomko@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au

Stephan Winter  
Department of Geomatics, University of Melbourne, Victoria 3010, Email: winter@unimelb.edu.au

Problem: Extraction of experiential hierarchies in the urban street network for the generation of route directions with varying granularity.

- **Administrative hierarchies** are incoherent with human experience of the hierarchical structure of the environment.
- **Granular route directions** use hierarchical urban models to select appropriate elements of the city to provide directions to familiar wayfinders. References are made to prominent – well known – elements of the network.
- Grounded in the relevance-based communication theory, granular route directions require the **assessment of the shared knowledge** of a spatial entity in a given context.
- Experiential hierarchies reflect the likelihood of shared knowledge of those elements.

Hypothesis: The streets in the street network can be ranked by their prominence, quantified through measures of network connectivity reflecting the likelihood of shared experience among locals.

Method: Network analysis based on named paths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Street name</th>
<th>Betweenness value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Victoria St.</td>
<td>0.3117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>King St.</td>
<td>0.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Spencer St.</td>
<td>0.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Latrobe St.</td>
<td>0.1277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nicholson St.</td>
<td>0.1022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Streets are concatenations of street segments with the same label – street name. They are recognisable parts of the street network which can be referred to in route directions.

**Structural** properties of a street in the street network may not related to its administrative classification.

**Network analysis** based on streets allows the quantification of structural properties for each individual street, and cohesive groups of streets (see figure above).

**Experiential hierarchies** of streets reflect their ranking by structural prominence in the urban structure, as experienced by frequent wayfinders.

**Betweenness centrality** was chosen as the measure best reflecting this ranking, free of distortions from individuals’ wayfinding behaviour.

Analysis of Melbourne’s street network. Named paths of high prominence are highlighted.

Future work: Integrated hierarchical datasets  
Experiential hierarchies of **suburbs** and **landmarks** complement that of the street network. **Integrated hierarchies** of the urban structure allow for a transition between references of different types and are consistent with navigators’ experience.