A study of learning and retention with a Web-based IR interface
S.M. Zabed Ahmed, Cliffmcknight And Charles oppenheim
This article reports on an empirical study on novices' learning and retention with the Web-based interface to the Web of Science. The aim was to evaluate the performance of novice searchers in initially learning to use the search interface and in later use. Their performance in both sessions was measured in terms of time taken to perform tasks, search terms used, success of the tasks performed and error rates. At the end of each session, novices' subjective satisfaction with the interface was also measured. The results showed that novices' performance was better in the learning session. Their performance in the retention session declined significantly in terms of success score as they forgot the interface functionalities from one search session to another. Novices' subjective satisfaction with the interface was also higher in their learning session. Their satisfaction rating with the interface declined sharply in the retention session. The Web of Science interface suffers from usability problems which made its functionalities difficult to learn and remember for naive searchers.