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## Information retrieval and ranking on the Web: benchmarking studies II

Oliver King and Mei Kobayashi

IBM Research, Tokyo Research Laboratory  
IBM Japan, Ltd.  
1623-14 Shimotsuruma, Yamato  
Kanagawa 242-8502, Japan



**Research Division**  
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# Information Retrieval and Ranking on the Web: Benchmarking Studies II

Oliver King, king@math.berkeley.edu

Department of Mathematics, University of California, Berkeley  
Berkeley, California 94720 U.S.A.

and

Mei Kobayashi, mei@trl.ibm.co.jp

IBM Research, Tokyo Research Laboratory, IBM Japan, Ltd.  
1623-14 Shimotsuruma, Yamato-shi, Kanagawa-ken 242-8502 Japan

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## Abstract

The exponential growth of information available on the World Wide Web has been documented in numerous studies. The studies also indicate that Internet users are turning to search engines and search services in increasing numbers to find the information they are seeking, but they are not necessarily satisfied with their performance. Specific problems which have been cited in user surveys include the speed of transmission and retrieval of information and the format for presenting the results from searches. In this report, we describe some of the components of a new Web-based search and retrieval system prototype, which is part of a larger information outlining and visualization system for Web documents. Our system is based on a modified version of latent semantic indexing, the output from which is used to rank the relevance of Web pages for an input query.

We compare the speed of retrieval and ranking when two different methods (subspace iteration and Lanczos followed by Sturm sequence methods) are used to compute the singular values of a matrix representation of document-query space. Hardware and software-based methods to speed up computations are presented. In particular, our discussions will focus on mathematical algorithms, efficient dynamic data structures allocation procedures, and relevance ranking; linguistic techniques will be discussed only as necessary for the sake of completeness.

**keywords:** information retrieval, Internet, Lanczos algorithm, latent semantic indexing, relevance ranking, search engine, singular value decomposition, subspace iteration, relevance ranking, World Wide Web, WWW, W3.

# 1 Introduction

The exponential growth of information available on the World Wide Web has been documented in numerous studies. Furthermore, these studies indicate that Internet users are turning to search engines and search services in increasing numbers to find the information they are seeking, but they are not necessarily satisfied with the performance of current search services. The speed of transmission and retrieval of information and the format for presenting results from searches are often cited as factors contributing to user dissatisfaction. In this paper, we describe some of the components of a new Web-based search and retrieval system prototype (outlined in Figure 1) which is part of a larger information outlining and visualization system for Web documents proposed in [Kobayashi et al. 1999]. Our system retrieves and ranks a user-specified number of relevant pages for an input query. We report the speed of computation associated with retrieval and ranking of some sample sets of Web pages for some test input queries.

This paper is organized as follows. In the remainder of this section, we present the motivation for and significance of our prototype system. In the second section, we review *latent semantic indexing* (LSI), an IR procedure which is based on a mathematical (matrix) model for document-query space [Deerwester et al. 1988], [Deerwester et al. 1990] before going on to describe our variation and extension of LSI. In the third section, we discuss dynamic data structures used in our large, sparse matrix and vector computations for IR. Our data structure is attractive for LSI for several reasons, such as its ability to accommodate different query input formats, ease in executing updates (i.e., additions and deletions of documents and query terms), and speeding-up of searching and ranking of relevant documents. Our programs include a small library of matrix and vector routines which exploit the structures to reduce computation and data access and retrieval times. In the fourth section, we discuss our implementation of a very simple version of LSI. The successful application of LSI to Web-based searches is contingent on the fast and accurate computation of the singular values of a matrix representation of document-query space. We review three different approaches to computing the singular value decomposition to determine the top few hundred singular values and their associated singular vectors of a matrix representation of document-query space: (1) Householder reflections and Givens rotations, (2) subspace iteration and (3) variations of the Lanczos method followed by Sturm sequencing. And we report on our numerical experiments on the first method. Our discussions emphasize the performance and efficiency of mathematical algorithms and dynamic data structures so that linguistic techniques are discussed only as necessary.

## 1.1 Motivation and Background

One of the keys to becoming the most popular and successful search engine is the development of new algorithms specifically designed for fast retrieval of valuable information on the Web. “*Speed*” (i.e., search engine search and retrieval time plus communication delays) has consistently been cited as “*the most commonly experienced problem with the Web*” in the bi-annual WWW surveys conducted at the Graphics, Visualization, and Usability Center of Georgia Insti-

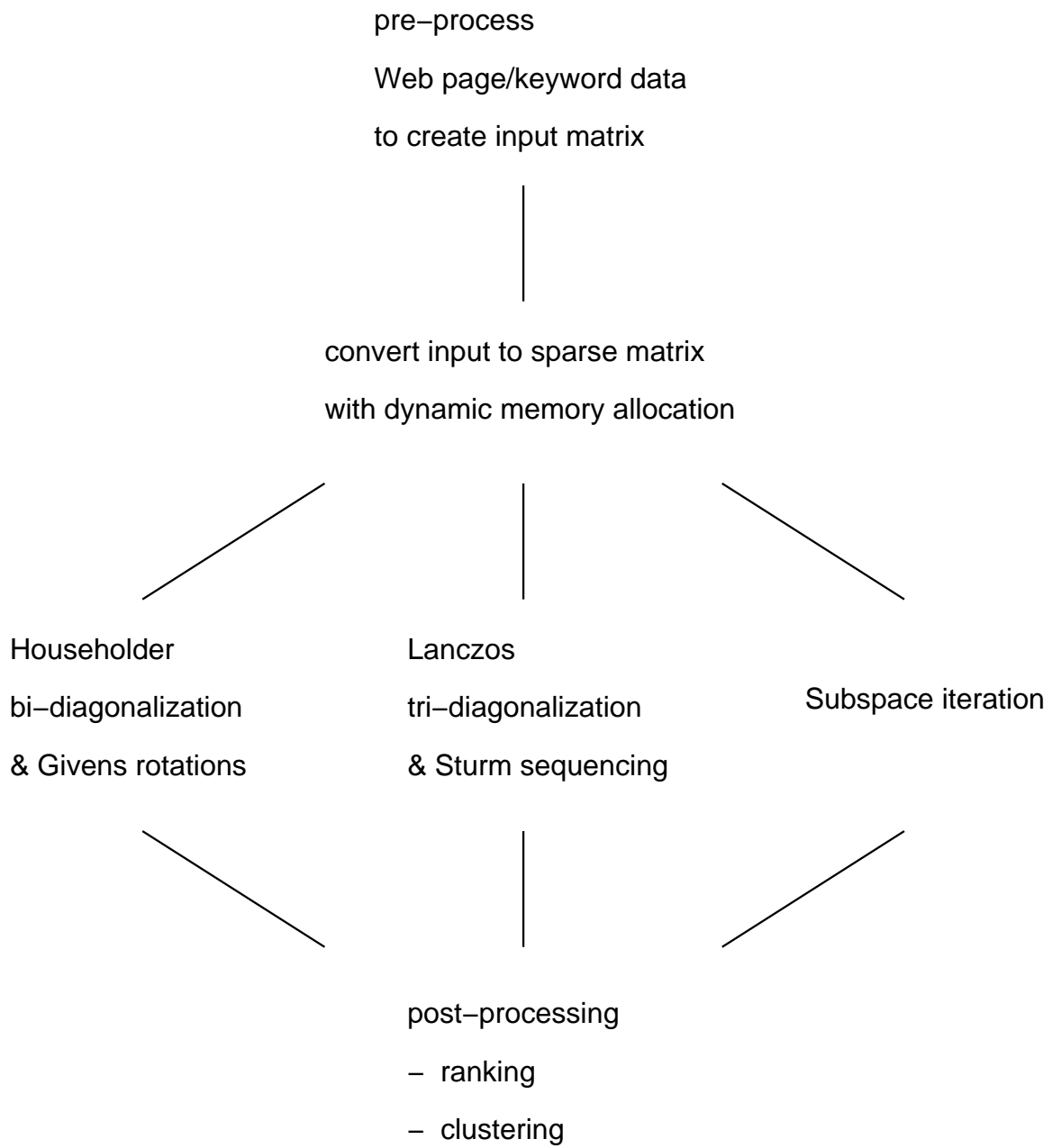


Figure 1: Overview of a Web document search and retrieval feature in an information outlining system

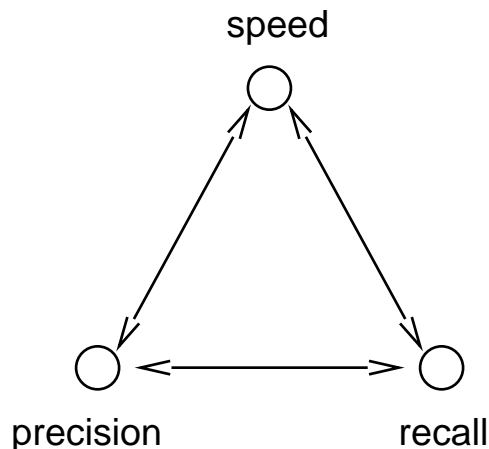


Figure 2: Three-way trade-off in search engine performance: (1) speed of retrieval, (2) precision, and (3) recall.

tute of Technology (GVU) <sup>1</sup> [GVU]. The tremendous growth in the number of Internet users and publicly accessible Web sites is making the problem with speed even more difficult to resolve. Although precise measurements of these numbers are difficult to make and verify, almost all studies report an exponential growth in both users and Web sites [Kobayashi, Takeda 1998].

Scientists are faced with a very delicate and difficult problem in developing Web search engines (illustrated in Figure 2): a three way trade-off between the speed of information retrieval, precision and recall becomes increasingly difficult to balance as the number of documents available through the Internet and number of users escalate. In the context of IR, *precision* is defined as the ratio of relevant documents to the number of retrieved documents, i.e.,

$$\text{precision} = \frac{\text{number of relevant documents}}{\text{number of retrieved documents}} ,$$

and *recall* is defined as the proportion of relevant documents that are retrieved, i.e.,

$$\text{recall} = \frac{\text{number of relevant, retrieved documents}}{\text{total number of relevant documents}} .$$

Speed, precision and recall are not the only factors contributing to user dissatisfaction with the Internet and Web. For example, Users have also cited dissatisfaction with input formats for queries, formats for presenting retrieved results, and the quality of retrieved information [Lawrence, Giles 1998]. A detailed discussion of ratings, with many references on search engines and their features is given in [Kobayashi, Takeda 1998]. Undoubtedly, the problems we have cited (and more !) are serving as an impetus for the tremendous amount of research on Web-based technologies.

In this report, we describe some solutions to the problem associated with speed of retrieval (dynamic data structures for storing and accessing large, sparse matrices and vectors

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<sup>1</sup>The GVU user survey appears to be one of the more reliable sources on user data. Its reports have been endorsed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and INRIA. It has recently come to be supported by a corporate council.

for computations and an implementation of LSI). The work described in this report and in [Dupret, Kobayashi 1999] serves as the basis for a Web-based information retrieval component in a larger Web information outlining system. Information outlining systems retrieve, then format the retrieved results in a more attractive and meaningful manner, for example, as a graph, or a color-coded map [Morohashi et al. 1995], [Takeda, Nomiya 1997]. The visual interface allows users to “*gain a better global understanding of the contents of digital libraries and navigate more easily through ... information*”.

## 2 Latent Semantic Indexing

The study of IR from data bases has such a long history, particularly for text-based documents, that it is impossible to give a complete review. In this section, we give references to some works which are closely related to ours. Details of numerical algorithms and comparison of retrieval benchmarks (when appropriate and fair) will be given in Section 4. A broader review with selected references to many of the topics covered in this report is [Kobayashi, Takeda 1998].

Although *latent semantic indexing* (LSI) was originally developed as a document retrieval method for very large, isolated data bases, with modifications and enhancements, it shows promise for application to Web document databases. The original LSI algorithm automatically indexes and retrieves documents by mathematically modeling user queries and documents by vectors, and their associations by matrices [Deerwester et al. 1990]<sup>2</sup>. The method has since been enhanced with the addition of differential term weighting and iterative retrieval methods [Dumais 1991]. The inventors of LSI claim that their algorithm overcomes deficiencies of earlier retrieval algorithms, such as hierarchical classification analysis (for term and document clustering) and factor analysis:

*“hierarchical clusterings are far too limited to capture the rich semantics of most document sets. (They) permit no cross classifications, and in general have very few free parameters. ... Empirically, clustering improves the computational efficiency of search; whether or not it improves retrieval success is unclear ...”*

– [Deerwester et al. 1990].

The view is shared by other experts, e.g., [Jardin, van Rijsbergen 1971], [Salton, McGill 1983], [Voorhees 1995]. Three of the more serious problems associated with factor analytic approaches are:

- high computational expense,
- difficulty/impossibility of implementation of all but low-dimensional representations, and

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<sup>2</sup>The inventors have been issued a patent for the basic algorithm, however Bellcore (their employer at the time of filing) is the owner [Deerwester et al. 1988].

- “the need for tedious data gathering techniques, requiring collection of thousands of similarity judgements from humans” [Borko, Bernick 1963], [Ossorio 1966].

According to the inventors of LSI, the three strengths of the algorithm are:

- it involves a high-dimensional representation, which allows one to better represent a wide range of semantic relations;
- both terms and text objects are explicitly represented in the same space; and
- objects can be retrieved directly from query terms

[Deerwester et al. 1990]. In the remainder of this section, we present the LSI algorithm and discuss some mathematical techniques, methods to improve computational efficiency, and memory requirement issues which arise during its implementation.

## 2.1 The LSI Algorithm

In LSI, the relationship between query terms and documents in a data base are represented by an  $m$ -by- $n$  matrix  $A$ , with  $ij$ -th entry  $a_{ij}$ , i.e.,

$$A = [a_{ij}].$$

The entries  $a_{ij}$  consist of information on whether term  $i$  occurs in document  $j$  and may also include weighting information to take into account factors, such as:

- the length of the document;
- the importance (or relevance) of the query term in the document; and
- the frequency of appearance of the query term in the document.

$A = [a_{ij}]$  is usually a very large, sparse matrix, because the number of (keyword) terms in any single document is usually a very small fraction of union of the (keyword) terms in all of the documents.

### 2.1.1 Weighting the Query-Document Matrix

In most implementations of LSI, both a local weighting term  $L_{ij}$  and global weighting term  $G(i)$  are applied to  $a_{ij}$  [Letsche, Berry 1997]. Examples of local weighting functions which are simple and inexpensive to implement in an LSI scheme are: binary weighting, term-frequency weighting, and log-entropy weighting. Examples of global weighting functions which are simple and inexpensive to implement in an LSI scheme are: normal, Gfidf, Idf, and entropy weighting [Dumais 1991]. Also reported in [Dumais 1991] are observations that log-entropy weighting schemes appear to lead to particularly good results in LSI experiments.

When weighting is used in LSI, the local and global weighting functions  $L(i, j)$  and  $G(i)$  are applied to each (non-zero) element  $a_{ij}$  of  $A$  to generate a new matrix

$$\tilde{A} = [\tilde{a}_{ij}], \quad (1)$$

with entries

$$\tilde{a}_{ij} = L(i, j) \cdot G(i) \cdot a_{ij} . \quad (2)$$

The value of  $\tilde{a}_{ij}$  can be further adjusted to take into account the frequency of occurrence of a query term by using, for example, a small multiplicative term  $\epsilon_1$  ;  $0 \leq \epsilon_1 \leq 1$  for a frequency of 1 to 3, a medium size multiplicative term  $\epsilon_2$  ;  $0 \leq \epsilon_1 \leq \epsilon_2 \leq 1$  for a frequency of 4 to 6, and a multiplicative factor of unity for a frequency of 7 or greater.

### 2.1.2 The Singular Value Decomposition

The next step of the LSI algorithm, after the creation and weighting of matrix  $A$ , is the computation of the singular value decomposition (SVD)

$$A = U\Sigma V^T \quad (3)$$

(illustrated in Figure 3). To simplify notation, hereafter, we will refer to the document-query matrix as  $A$ , whether or not a weighting procedure, such as the one described above in equations (1) – (2) has been employed. Proof of the existence of the SVD for any matrix  $A$ , is given in numerous texts, including [Golub, Van Loan 1996] (Chapter 2, section 2.5.2, page 70):

**Theorem:** (Singular Value Decomposition, existence of): *If  $A$  is a real,  $m$ -by- $n$  matrix, then there exist orthogonal matrices*

$$U = [u_1, u_2, \dots, u_m] \in \mathfrak{R}^{m \times m} ,$$

and

$$V = [v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n] \in \mathfrak{R}^{n \times n} ,$$

such that

$$U^T A V = \text{diag}(\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots, \sigma_p) \in \mathfrak{R}^{m \times n} ,$$

where  $p = \min\{m, n\}$ , and  $\sigma_1 \geq \sigma_2 \geq \dots \geq \sigma_p \geq 0$ .

The columns of  $U$  and  $V$  are called the *left* and *right singular vectors*, and  $\Sigma$  is a diagonal matrix with monotonically decreasing diagonal elements  $\sigma_i$ , which are known as the *singular*







**Corollary:** If  $A$  and  $A + E$  are in  $\mathbb{R}^{m \times n}$ , with  $m \geq n$ , then

$$|\sigma_k(A + E) - \sigma_k(A)| \leq \sigma_1(E) = \|E\|_2 ,$$

for  $k = 1, 2, 3, \dots, n$ .

**Proof:** Apply the theorem just above to

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & A^T \\ A & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

and

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & (A + E)^T \\ (A + E) & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Although the perturbation theorems for the SVD give us upper bounds on the changes in the singular values, it is not known how the results will ultimately affect the quality of results retrieved from searches using LSI. The quality can only be determined through implementation studies.

### 2.1.3 Query Projection and Matching

Processing the query in LSI-based IR takes place in two steps: *query projection* followed by *matching* [Letsche, Berry 1997]. In the query projection step, input queries are mapped to *pseudo-documents* in the reduced query-document space by the matrix  $U_k$ , then weighted by the corresponding singular values  $\sigma_i$  from the reduced rank, singular matrix  $\Sigma_k$ . The process can be described mathematically as

$$q \longrightarrow \hat{q} = q^T U_k \Sigma_k^{-1} ,$$

where  $q$  represents the original query vector and  $\hat{q}$  the pseudo-document. In the second step, similarities between the pseudo-document  $\hat{q}$  and documents in the reduced term document space  $V_k^T$  are computed using any one of many similarity measures, such as those discussed in [Kobayashi, Takeda 1998].

## 2.2 Implementation of LSI

Successful implementation of LSI depends on the proper use of linear algebra algorithms and techniques, particularly in the implementation of the SVD. There are many different ways to compute the SVD of a matrix. Evaluation of an algorithm depends on the specifics of the intended application and the available computing environment. In addition to straightforward considerations, such as the availability of computing and memory resources, attention should be given to data structures since they can facilitate or encumber the updating of information in the document-query matrix. Updating the matrix involves additions and deletions of rows and columns as well as updating specific matrix entries.

In Web-based IR, the document-query matrix is often enormous and very sparse, so pre-processing of the matrix is necessary to speed up computations. Pre-processing may change the degree of its sparsity and the size of the matrix to be considered for the SVD. For example, if all of the entries of one column (or row) of the matrix are zero or very, very small, the column (or row) might be eliminated during pre-processing since the document (or query term) is likely to have very little correlation with query terms (or documents). Also, if all of the entries of one column (or row) of a matrix are unity or close to unity, then the query term is a word found in a typical *stoplist* or the document is a Web page which is used for keyword *spamming*.

*Stoplists* are lists of words which occur very frequently and which give little information, if any, about the contents of a document. For example, the two most frequently occurring words, *the* and *of*, comprise 10% of words in an average English document; the next four most common words, *and*, *to*, *a* and *in*, comprise another 10%; and eighteen words (including the six above) account for about 30% of the words in an average document. Astute use of stoplists can reduce the size of a document by 30% to 50%. More detailed discussion on stoplists and other pre-processing algorithms associated with signature files can be found in Chapter 5 in [Korfhage 1997], Chapter 2 of [van Rijsbergen 1979], and [Fox 1992].

*Spamming* is a new phenomenon which appeared with the introduction of search engines, automatic indexers, and filters on the Web [Flynn 1996], [Liberatore 1998]. Its primary intent is to outsmart automated software systems for a variety of purposes. Spamming has been used as an advertising tool by entrepreneurs, cult recruiters, Web page authors seeking fame, and technically well-versed, but off-balanced individuals with a warped mentality similar to those of computer virus creators. A famous example of hidden text spamming was the embedding of words in a black background by the Heaven's Gate Cult, a technique which has come to be known as *font color spamming* [Liberatore 1998]. (Although the cult no longer exists, the Heaven's Gate home page is archived at the sunspot.net site: <http://www.sunspot.net/news/special/heavensgatesite>) We note that the term *spamming* has a broader meaning, related to the receiving of excessive amount of email or information. An excellent, broad overview of the subject is given in [Cranor, LaMacchia 1998]. In the context we are considering, the more specialized terms *spam-indexing*, *spam-dexing*, or *keyword spamming* are more precise.

The degree of sparsity and size of the post-processed (or post-filtered) matrix may affect the choice of the SVD algorithm. Another consideration in selecting the computational algorithm are output requirements, such as the number of singular values and singular vectors which must be computed and their degree of accuracy. Some algorithms require that all of the singular values be computed. For other algorithms, the computation amounts to constructing (either implicitly or explicitly) the symmetric, positive definite matrix  $B$ , where

$$B = A^T \cdot A \quad \text{or} \quad B = A \cdot A^T .$$

Since  $\text{rank}(A^T \cdot A) = \text{rank}(A \cdot A^T)$ ,  $B$  is set to be the matrix with fewer rows and columns. The eigenvalues  $\lambda_i$  of  $B$  are the square of the singular values  $\sigma_i$  of  $A$ , that is,

$$\lambda_i = \sigma_i^2 .$$

If only the largest few or only the smallest few eigenvalues (and possibly the corresponding singular vectors) need to be determined, then it may be more efficient to use this second type of algorithm. The recently revised classic text on the symmetric eigenvalue problem [Parlett 1998] is recommended for readers interested in details of this approach.

In LSI, the number  $k$  of singular values and their corresponding singular vectors which need to be explicitly computed is usually quite small, i.e., at most a few hundred. Optimizing the choice of  $k$  through experiments and analysis of the data, can significantly reduce overall computational costs. The trade-off between computational expense, volume of retrieved information, and noise can be summarized as follows. When  $A_k$  has a large rank (corresponding to a large  $k$ , with significantly high associated computational costs), it increases the amount of information used during retrieval, however, if the dimension of  $A_k$  is equal to or almost as large as that of  $A$ , then most of the noise in  $A$  will be passed on to  $A_k$ , and the noise will contribute to poor results in retrieval.

We discuss the nuts and bolts of computing the SVD using several different algorithms in section 4. In particular, we discuss: Householder reflections followed by Givens rotations, the power method, the power method with Aitken's acceleration, subspace iteration (also called simultaneous iteration and orthogonal iteration), the basic Lanczos algorithm, Lanczos with full reorthogonalization, Lanczos with selective orthogonalization with and without modifications.

### 3 Dynamic Data Structures

Dynamic data structures are useful for reducing memory requirements for storage of and computations involving large, sparse matrices and vectors. Some computational and bookkeeping (i.e. memory) overhead is associated with these methods, so these methods only offer significant advantages when very large, sparse matrices are under consideration, i.e., these methods will cost more in memory and computation time than straightforward methods when a matrix is small or dense. Document-keyword matrices in IR are usually huge and very sparse, so that dynamic data structures can yield significant savings in memory and computational resources. However, details in implementating these structures must be carefully tuned to optimize results. In this section, we describe some dynamic data structures, but first, we review the most straightforward method for allocating memory for matrix operations which can be used for any matrix, including those which are dense.

#### 3.1 Standard Memory Allocation

When a (possibly dense) matrix is stored in the most straightforward format found in textbooks, the time required to search and access its entries is of order one, but the memory requirement is relatively large, i.e.,  $M \times N$ , where  $M$  is the number of rows in the matrix, and  $N$  is the number of columns. This mode of storage is not recommended for very large, sparse matrices, because the memory requirement may be prohibitive, and for most computational algorithms,

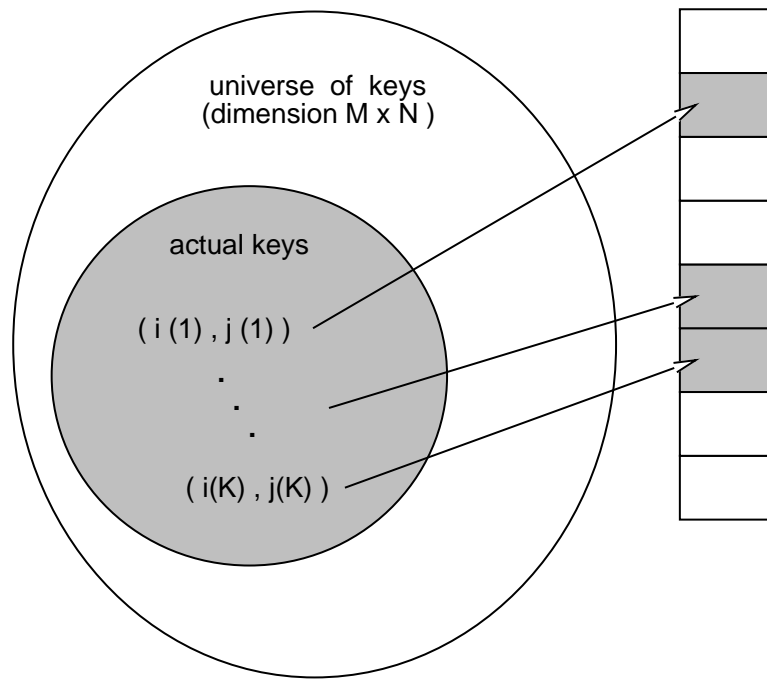


Figure 5: Hash tables

the associated speed is likely to be extremely slow, because of many unnecessary operations (e.g., addition, multiplication) with matrix entries which are zero.

### 3.2 Hashing

Hashing can significantly reduce the memory overhead associated with storage of and operations with large, sparse matrices. Hashing works as follows: Given an  $M \times N$  matrix with  $s$  non-zero entries, where  $s \ll MN$ , determine a function, commonly known as a *hash function*  $h$ , which maps the universe of keys (of dimension  $MN$ ) to a smaller space of dimension  $K$  (see Figure 5). To retrieve the value and indices of a non-zero entry of a matrix, compute its hash index using the hash function and retrieve the entry from the smaller space  $K$ . A very simple and commonly used hash function for an  $M \times N$  matrix operates as follows: Given a non-zero entry in the  $(i, j)$  position, compute  $[(i \cdot N) + j] \pmod{q}$ , where  $q$  is an integer greater than 1. Unless  $q$  is extremely large, usually a problem known as collision arises (even when a matrix is extremely sparse). *Collision* is said to occur when two or more keys in the original universe of keys are mapped to the same key in the subspace of dimension  $K$ .

A variety of approaches can be used to resolve the collision problem. One well-known method, known as *collision resolution by chaining*, uses linked lists. A linked list consists of a sequence of blocks, where each block stores the value of a unique, non-zero entry of the matrix along with its indices and a pointer which gives the location of the next block of the list (see Figure 6).

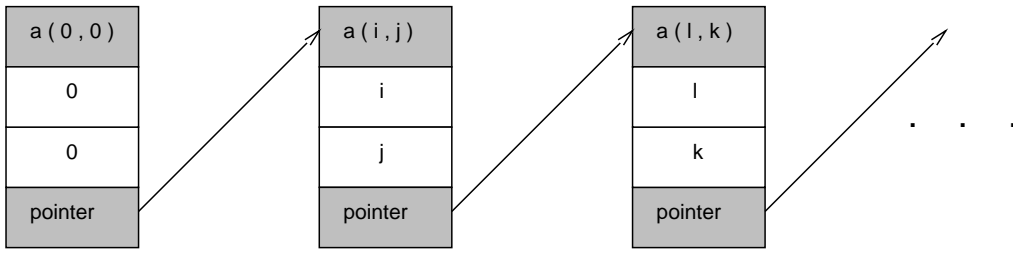


Figure 6: Collision resolution by chaining

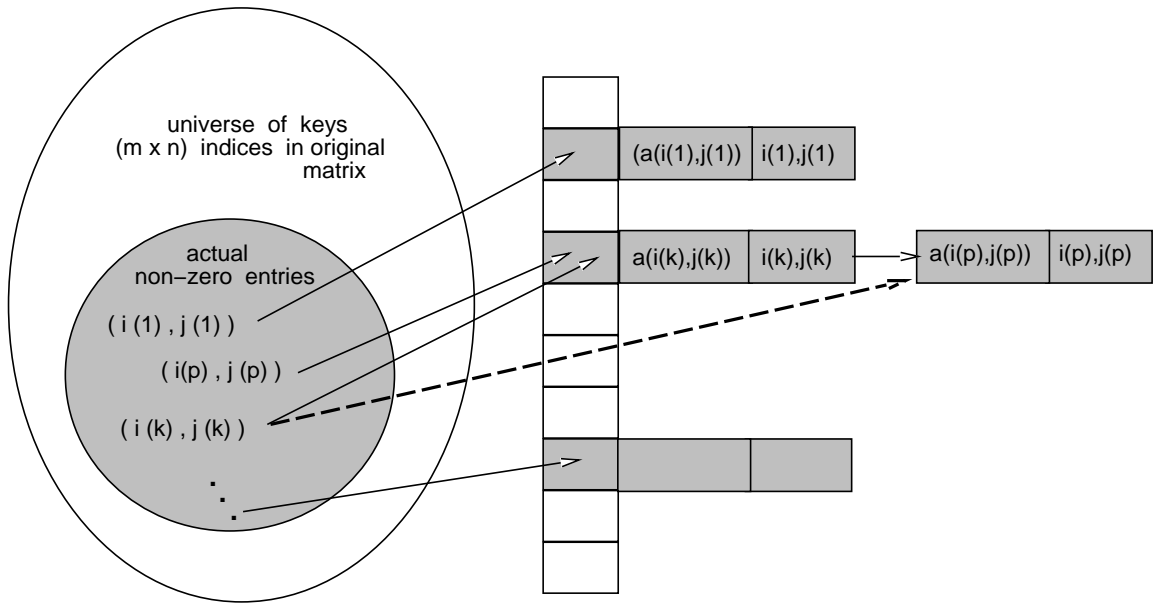


Figure 7: Storing Non-zero Elements

- **storage:** Each hash index is the origin of a linked list. In the absence of collision, each linked list has one or zero entries. But if collision occurs (i.e., information about a non-zero matrix entry is sent to a key already containing some entry) the new entry is added as an entry to the end of the appropriate linked list (see Figure 7).
- **retrieval:** To retrieve information about a matrix entry, its hash index is computed, and all of the entries in the corresponding linked list are examined to determine whether the entry is present. If the entry does not appear in the list, it is assigned the default value zero.
- **efficiency:** When the dimension of hash indices is  $K$ , and the mean number of entries per linked list is  $t$ , the average search time for an entry is of order  $(1 + K)/t$ .

A good hash function should distribute the information about the non-zero entries of a matrix as uniformly as possible in the smaller space of dimension  $K$  to minimize the average search time. The simple example given above, which uses a modulus function, is easy to implement and leads to fairly good results, in most cases.

### 3.3 Hashing: Our Implementations

In our data structures, the column index serves as a hash index. We create a vector of length  $N$  (where  $N$  is the number of columns), which consists of  $N$  pointers to  $N$  vectors. The  $n$ -th vector ( $1 \leq n \leq N$ ) consists of information on the non-zero entries of the  $n$ -th column of the matrix. Information on non-zero entries in a particular column are stored in consecutive memory locations and information on the columns are, in turn, stored consecutively with respect to their index order (see Figure 8).

In LSI, each column corresponds to a document, and each row index to the index of a keyword so that efficient storage of the matrix is simple, because we can input the columns one-by-one with pre-sorted rows indices. In most general applications of hashing, entries are input one at a time, and linked lists do not necessarily preserve any kind of ordering of the matrix indices. In our LSI application, search times are expected to be shorter because the lists are ordered and the entries are in consecutive memory locations (although the situation depends on the average number of entries in the linked lists and the average number of entries in the columns).

When our dynamic data structures are used to store matrices, vector-matrix multiplication can be carried out efficiently by: (1) determining the locations of non-zero entries  $a_{ij}$  of column  $j$  in the matrix (since the non-zero matrix entries of each column are stored consecutively in the memory along with their corresponding indices; and (2) carrying out the multiplication of  $v_i$  with each  $a_{i,j}; 1 \leq j \leq N$ . This two-step process minimizes the amount of time spent searching for and accessing the appropriate non-zero entries in the vector and matrix. Unfortunately, accessing non-zero entries by rows can be inefficient. One simple way to overcome this problem is to construct a vector  $row_i$  for each row, which contains information (i.e., pointers) to entries



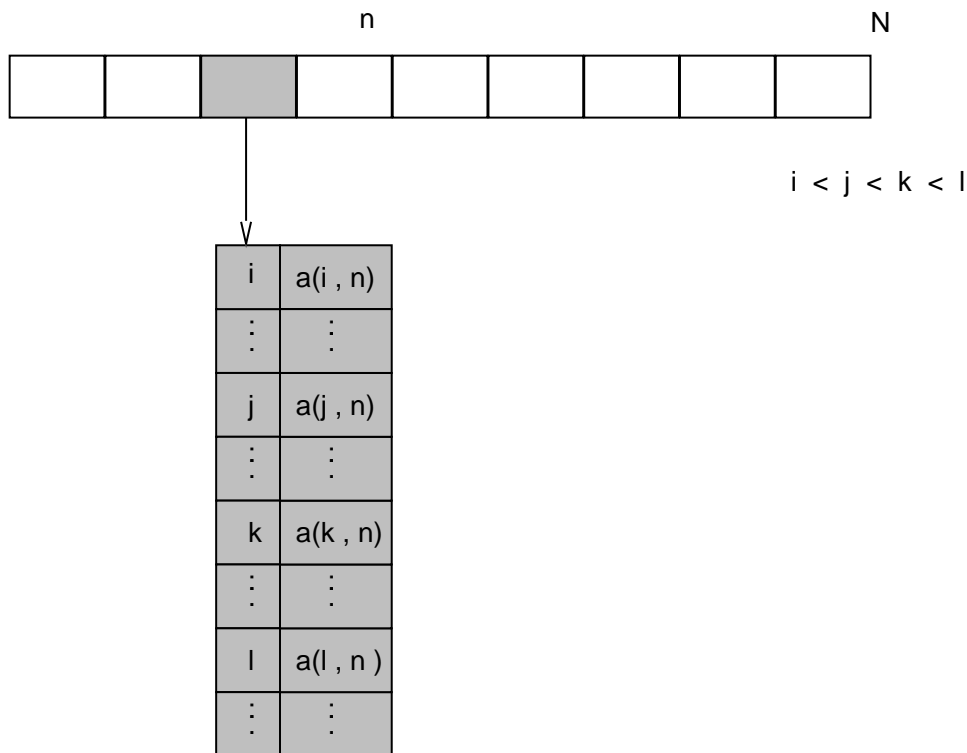


Figure 8: Storing Non-zero Elements

which are non-zero in that particular row (see Figure 9). The memory overhead associated with the addition of this feature is: (1) a vector of length equivalent to the number of rows in the original matrix (each entry of the vector has a pointer to a new vector) plus (2) the new vectors with indices of each of the non-zero elements in the row and pointers to the corresponding entry.

Our dynamic data structure is well-suited for Web-based LSI computations, because it is easy to add a new column to the matrix; addition of a column to the document-query matrix in LSI corresponds to updating the matrix to introduce a new document.

## 4 Implementation Studies

In this section, we briefly review some methods for computing the singular value decomposition of a matrix, i.e., methods to determine the top few hundred singular values and their associated singular vectors. And we present results from implementations studies in which the data are matrix representations of document-query space. Our implementations can be classified under two different approaches: (1) subspace iteration and (2) some variations of the Lanczos method followed by Sturm sequencing. We briefly mention a third approach, Householder reflections followed by Givens rotations, which were examined in a separate study using the same data [Dupret, Kobayashi 1999].

In our studies, we used matrices constructed from information in the Japanese newspaper *Nikkei* (1994) and ran our tests on a standard UNIX workstation (an IBM RS/6000 machine).

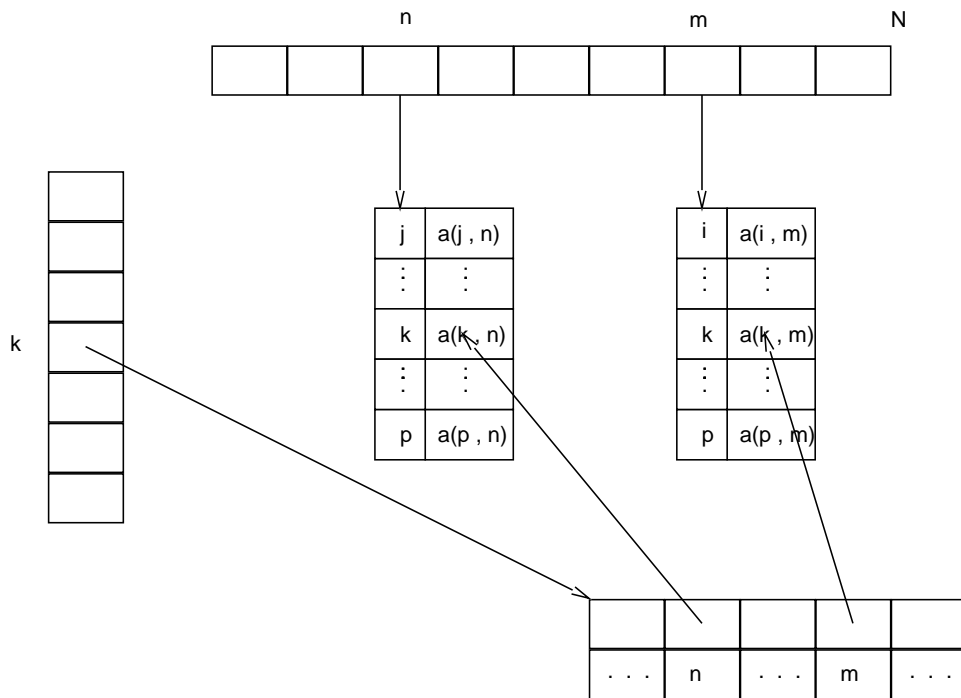


Figure 9: Storing Non-zero Elements

#### 4.0.1 Householder Reflections and Givens Rotations

If  $A$  is quite small and no longer very sparse after post-processing, a viable approach is to use *Householder reflections* to bidiagonalize  $A$ , i.e., transform  $A$  to the form

$$\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 & \beta_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & \alpha_2 & \beta_2 & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & \ddots & \ddots & \ddots & 0 \\ \vdots & & \ddots & \ddots & \beta_{n-1} \\ 0 & \cdots & \cdots & 0 & \alpha_n \\ * & \cdots & & \cdots & * \\ \vdots & & \ddots & & \vdots \\ * & \cdots & & \cdots & * \end{bmatrix},$$

where  $*$  denotes an entry, which may zero or nonzero. Next, apply a plane rotator to zero the superdiagonal elements  $\beta_i$ . *Plane rotators* (also called *Givens rotators* and *Givens transformations*) are matrices which all non-diagonal entries are zero and diagonal entries are one. Exceptions occur on the  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  rows and  $i^{\text{th}}$  and  $j^{\text{th}}$  columns, in which

$$\begin{aligned} (i, i) &= (j, j) = \cos \theta, \\ (i, j) &= -(j, i) = -\sin \theta, \end{aligned}$$



real, and all of its Jordan boxes are 1-by-1. In general eigenvalue finding programs, a substantial portion of extra code is devoted to tests for determine the (possible) existence of multiple roots and the size of associated Jordan boxes, and it is nearly impossible to write fail-safe, fast code which processes multiple and very very close roots.

In the *power method*, we begin with an arbitrary vector  $v$  of unit length and hope that the vector has a non-trivial component in the direction of the eigenvector associated with the largest eigenvalue. Then we compute the limit of the *Rayleigh quotient* of the matrix  $B$ , defined as

$$\lambda_1 = \lim_{m \rightarrow \infty} \frac{v^T B^{m+1} v}{v^T B^m v}$$

(details can be found in elementary numerical analysis texts, such as [Conte, de Boor 1980]). This computation can be reduced to matrix-vector and vector-vector multiplications so that explicit matrix-matrix multiplications can be avoided. More specifically, if  $B = A^T \cdot A$ , the  $v^T B v$  is computed as follows.

$$v^T B v = v^T (A^T (A v)) .$$

Similarly, multiplication begins from the rightmost vector and matrix when  $B = A \cdot A^T$ <sup>3</sup>. One way to determine the second largest eigenvalue is to select a starting vector of unit length with no component in the direction of the eigenvector  $v_1$ , corresponding to the largest eigenvalue  $\lambda_1$ . Subsequent eigenvalues  $\lambda_n$ , can be determined by using a starting vector with no component in the directions of the  $(n - 1)$  largest eigenvectors  $v_1, v_2, \dots, v_{n-1}$ , corresponding to the  $n - 1$  largest eigenvalues  $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_{n-1}$ . As many eigenvalues as desired can be computed this way, in theory, however, this “sequential” approach is not used in practice for determining multiple eigenvalues. The standard practice is to compute the desired number of eigenvalues simultaneously, using subspace or simultaneous iteration followed by modified Gram-Schmidt to ensure orthogonality of the recovered eigenvectors (details can be found in Section 5.2 in [Watkins 1991], Chapter 9 in [Jennings, McKeown 1979] or [Golub, Van Loan 1996]). Use of the modified, rather than classical, Gram-Schmidt is recommended since numerical roundoff often leads to poor results when the classical method is used.

Our implementations of subspace iteration to determine the singular values and singular vectors of a large matrix  $A$  were at least several times slower than any of the Lanczos methods that we quickly shifted our attention to variations of the Lanczos method. We give just a few notes below on our numerical experiments. Straightforward implementation of subspace iteration for the square matrix  $B$  was usually very slow to converge so that enhancement with a speed up technique was needed. We selected *Aitken’s acceleration* (see pp. 578–579 in [Wilkinson 1965]). Although the acceleration technique reduced the time required for convergence, it was not enough to make subspace iteration competitive with Lanczos methods. Furthermore, as noted in textbooks, we found that premature application of Aitken’s acceleration during subspace

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<sup>3</sup>If we just want  $v^T B v$ , we would be better off computing the value by taking the dot product  $Av \cdot Av$  (which would reduce the work by one matrix-vector multiplication), however, we would like to know the value of  $Bv$ .

iteration can waste computational resources since acceleration to determine the second largest eigenvalue usually works well only after the first eigenvalue and associated eigenvector have converged (or have almost converged) to the proper value. The primary advantage of subspace iteration is that it is extremely easy to program and the eigenvectors and eigenvalues of the square matrix  $B$  are determined simultaneously.

### 4.0.3 The Lanczos Algorithm

A good algorithm for computing some (but not all) of the singular values and the associated singular vectors of a large, sparse matrix  $A$  is to apply Lanczos tridiagonalization to the square matrix  $B = A^T A$ . Note that  $B$  should be computed implicitly to minimize the use of memory. Since  $B$  is symmetric, positive definite, Lanczos tridiagonalization will convert it to the form

$$\begin{bmatrix} \alpha_1 & \beta_1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ \beta_1 & \alpha_2 & \beta_2 & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & \beta_2 & \ddots & \ddots & 0 \\ \vdots & \ddots & \ddots & \ddots & \beta_{n-1} \\ 0 & \cdots & 0 & \beta_{n-1} & \alpha_n \end{bmatrix}$$

without many of the difficulties associated with the Lanczos method for more general matrices. A fast, reliable and parallelizable, eigenvalue routine, such as the Sturm sequence method can be used to compute the eigenvalues of  $B$ . Unfortunately, the associated eigenvectors must be computed separately. Concise references to the algorithms are given in [Golub, Van Loan 1996], [Jennings, McKeown 1979], [Parlett 1998], and [Watkins 1991]. Extensive, detailed coverage of many variations of the Lanczos algorithm, depending on the properties of the input matrix is a two volume set [Cullum, Willoughby 1985]. The theory is given in the first volume and programming code in an outdated version of FORTRAN in the second volume.

Specialized software packages designed for computing the SVD of very large matrices using the Lanczos algorithm are: the subroutine SSVDC in LINPACK (further information is given in the users' guide [Dongarra et al. 1979], and a handbook [Coleman, Van Loan 1988]), LANSO [LANSO], and LAPACK and ScaLAPACK [Anderson et al. 1995], [Blackford et al. 1997], [Demmel 1997]. SVDPACK and SVDPACKC are two Lanczos software packages which have been used extensively for IR [Anderson et al. 1995], [Berry et al. 1993]. These packages are specifically designed to minimize numerical operations and use of memory, however, installing the package and understanding the user input and output interfaces may be difficult for inexperienced users.

In our implementations of the Lanczos algorithm for (partial) tridiagonalization of a symmetric matrix, we followed the algorithm in section 13.1.1 (pp. 288–289) of [Parlett 1998]. In straightforward implementations of the algorithm, the computed Lanczos vectors ceased to be orthogonal to one another after some steps, and duplicate copies of eigenvalues were recovered. [Parlett 1998] lists the virtues of maintaining orthogonality of the Lanczos vectors, and points to

several useful techniques for carrying out orthogonalization, including: full reorthogonalization, selective orthogonalization, (with and without modifications) and Scott’s orthogonalization. We briefly describe each below and present benchmarks of our implementations.

#### 4.0.4 Full Reorthogonalization (FRO)

The simplest method for maintaining orthogonality of the Lanczos vectors as they are determined is to explicitly orthogonalize each newly computed Lanczos vector with all of its predecessors. The algorithm is described on p. 303 of [Parlett 1998] (nicknamed *step 5 $\frac{1}{2}$* , to be inserted between steps 5 and 6 of the basic algorithm on pp. 288-289). Results from our implementations of the Lanczos algorithm with full reorthogonalization are labelled “*fro*” in our benchmark graphs (Figures 4.1 to 4.1).

#### 4.0.5 Selective Orthogonalization (SO)

According to Paige’s Theorem (see p. 379 of [Demmel 1997]), as the Lanczos algorithm proceeds onward, the Lanczos vectors tilt in the direction of (nearly) converged Ritz vectors, so by orthogonalizing the newly computed Lanczos vectors with respect to only the (nearly) converged Ritz vectors (which are less numerous than the Lanczos vectors), we can preserve a fair amount of orthogonality while performing fewer orthogonalizations. This procedure, known as *Lanczos with selective orthogonalization*, was introduced in [Parlett, Scott 1979] (an excellent summary is given on p. 382–383 in [Demmel 1997]). We implemented *algorithm 7.3* in [Demmel 1997], but just after the line “*/\*Selectively orthogonalize ...*” on p. 382, we assumed that the  $k$ ’s should be  $(j - 1)$ ’s since  $\beta_k$  is not yet known at that point in the computation. Results from our implementations of the Lanczos algorithm with selective orthogonalization are labelled “*so*” in our benchmark graphs (Figures 4.1 to 4.1).

#### 4.0.6 Scott’s orthogonalization (SCO)

In the Lanczos with selective orthogonalization, all of the eigenvectors and eigenvalues of the partial tridiagonal matrix are computed after each step. According to [Parlett 1998] (p. 321), “*Scott now advocates that selective orthogonalization be applied only at the wanted end of the spectrum*”. In our targeted application (i.e., Web-based IR), we are only interested in determining the largest (say)  $r$  singular values, so in our implementations, we compute only the largest  $r$  eigenvalues and the corresponding eigenvectors at each step. Results from our implementations of the Lanczos algorithm with selective orthogonalization applied only at the wanted end of the spectrum are labelled “*sco*” (after Scott) in our benchmark graphs (Figures 4.1 to 4.1)

In our implementations of the three variations of the Lanczos algorithm (i.e., FRO SO and SCO) Lanczos FRO outperformed Lanczos SO and Lanczos SCO, even though FRO performs more orthogonalizations. A probable explanation is that Lanczos SO and (to a somewhat lesser extent) Lanczos SCO incur the overhead of having to compute all of the eigenvectors of a tridiagonal matrix  $T_j$  at each step, and (when warranted) the corresponding Ritz vectors.

In contrast, for Lanczos FRO, the eigenvectors need be computed only after the termination criterion has been satisfied: only the eigenvector for the  $r^{\text{th}}$  largest eigenvalue of  $T_j$  are computed at each step, where  $r$  is the number of desired singular values. When  $r^{\text{th}}$  Ritz vector has converged (i.e., satisfies the convergence criterion in our program), we check that the  $(r-1)^{\text{st}}$ ,  $(r-2)^{\text{nd}}$ ,  $\dots$ ,  $2^{\text{nd}}$ , and  $1^{\text{st}}$  Ritz vectors have also converged. Since the outer Ritz vectors usually converge before the inner, we normally will not have to compute many of the eigenvectors of the tridiagonal matrix  $T_j$  at each step.

#### 4.0.7 Selective Orthogonalization II (SO2)

It is quite possible that that our implementations of Lanczos SO and Lanczos SCO may outperform Lanczos FRO when the input is a sufficiently large matrix (or if we seek sufficiently many singular values). But it may also be possible to do less work in the selective orthogonalization schemes. For example, the (nearly) converged Ritz vectors are recomputed at each step, but if they are sufficiently close to convergence, then they will not change by much (if any at all) from step to step, so they need not be recomputed. We can expect the  $i^{\text{th}}$  largest eigenvalue of  $T_j$  to converge eventually to the  $i^{\text{th}}$  largest eigenvalue of  $A$ , so we can freeze the  $i^{\text{th}}$  Ritz vector when it converges. But [Demmel 1997] (p.371) points out that the  $i^{\text{th}}$  largest eigenvalue of  $T_j$  may misconverge. For example, it may first move towards the  $(i+1)^{\text{st}}$  eigenvalue of  $A$ , before moving towards the  $i^{\text{th}}$ . So we may (mistakenly) accept the  $i^{\text{th}}$  (apparently) converged Ritz vector as the  $i^{\text{th}}$  eigenvector of the matrix, and if the eigenvector turns out to have misconverged and later converges to another vector, we might neglect to orthogonalize against it.

We implemented a second version of the Lanczos algorithm with selective orthogonalization to reduce the recomputation of converged Ritz vectors and to circumvent the misconvergence (and associated problems). Our program recomputes Ritz vectors (which were thought to have converged properly) only when new Ritz vectors converge. Results from implementations of our second version of the Lanczos algorithm with selective orthogonalization are labelled “*so2*” in our benchmark graphs (Figures 4.1 to 4.1).

#### 4.0.8 Partial Orthogonalization

[Demmel 1997], p. 383, and [Parlett 1998], p. 319, also discuss the Lanczos algorithm with partial reorthogonalization, which can be used in conjunction with selective orthogonalization. By exploiting a recurrence relation which estimates the loss of orthogonality among the Lanczos vectors, orthogonalization with respect to converged vectors is performed only when the loss in orthogonality threatens to become unacceptable. We did not have time to implement the Lanczos algorithm with partial reorthogonalization, but it looks promising and should be included in future benchmarking when possible.

In the algorithms described above, we must compute (some of) the eigenvalues and the eigenvectors of the tridiagonal matrices  $T_j$ . Using Sturm sequences one may compute the number of eigenvalues of  $T_j$  which are larger than any given  $\sigma$ . Thus by using bisection we may locate all the eigenvalues to the desired accuracy. Once the eigenvalues are known, the eigenvectors may

be found using inverse iteration (shifted by the approximate eigenvalue). Although a random starting vector for this iteration usually works well and converges within a couple of iterations, we also implemented an algorithm dubbed *the method of Fernando* in [Parlett, Dhillon 1996], pp. 252-255, for finding the approximate eigenvector, which can be used as-is, or further refined by inverse iteration.

#### 4.1 Future Directions for Research

We can use our current SVD package as a springboard for many new directions for research. The most (seemingly) straightforward would be to extend the program to handle matrices of even larger order (10 million-by-10 million). Completion of the task requires more than just straightforward enlargement of memory space and data structures. Fast matrix and vector access and computation will require new algorithms and (possibly) different data structures. Implementation of solutions which recognize compromises, such as finding *most* of the relevant documents, rather than *all* may lead to significant speed-up in IR. If the large-scale SVD computation and IR problem are tackled, development and implementation of efficient algorithms for automatically adjusting the data structures and ranking of retrieved results with respect to the Web page database size will be required for the convenience of general users.

In our work, we noticed that input and output of data might be awkward for inexperienced users since the volume of data involved in access and retrieval is enormous. Development of computationally inexpensive and more friendly user interfaces is an important area for investigation. Specialized tools developed by computer graphics experts for visualization are often too computationally intense to be useful and are sometimes awkward for non-technical users to manipulate. Investigation of speech-based user interfaces (both isolated or combined with visual interfaces) may also lead to fruitful solutions.

Our SVD package was successfully ported to a Web-based IR system which handles both Japanese and English text data. Investigation of SVD-based ranking and retrieval from multilingual (more than two languages) databases is important if our tool will be applied to a world-wide network.



## Summary of SVD Techniques

- **Power Method:** is excellent for determining largest eigenvector and corresponding eigenvalue for a square matrix. Subsequent eigenvalues can be determined by combining it with deflation, however, more efficient methods, such as subspace iteration should be used if other eigenvalues and eigenvectors must be determined.
- **Power Method + Aitken's:** shows an improvement over the power method alone.
- **Subspace Iteration + modified Gram-Schmidt:** is better than the power method for determining the largest several eigenvalues (not just the largest one).
- **Subspace Iteration + Chebyshev Acceleration:** is better than the power method for determining the largest several eigenvalues (not just the largest one). The approach is used in SVDPACK C.
- **Basic Lanczos Method:** leads to recovery of multiple copies of the same eigenvalue(s), so the computation time to compute medium-range may be very long. The method may work better if efficient tracking of multiple copies can be carried out.
- **Lanczos + Full Reorthogonalization:** maintains the orthogonality of Lanczos vectors, however, associated computations are very expensive.
- **Lanczos + Selective Orthogonalization:** is much faster than Lanczos with full reorthogonalization since it only orthogonalizes Lanczos vectors against eigenvectors which have converged. Some simple modifications to selective orthogonalization include:
  - **Scott's Selective Orthogonalization:** which only orthogonalizes against specified eigenvectors.
  - **Partial Reorthogonalization:** which only subtracts components of converged eigenvectors periodically, rather than at every step.

Figure 10: Lanczos Algorithm Benchmarks (426 x 500 matrix, 3734 nonzero entries)

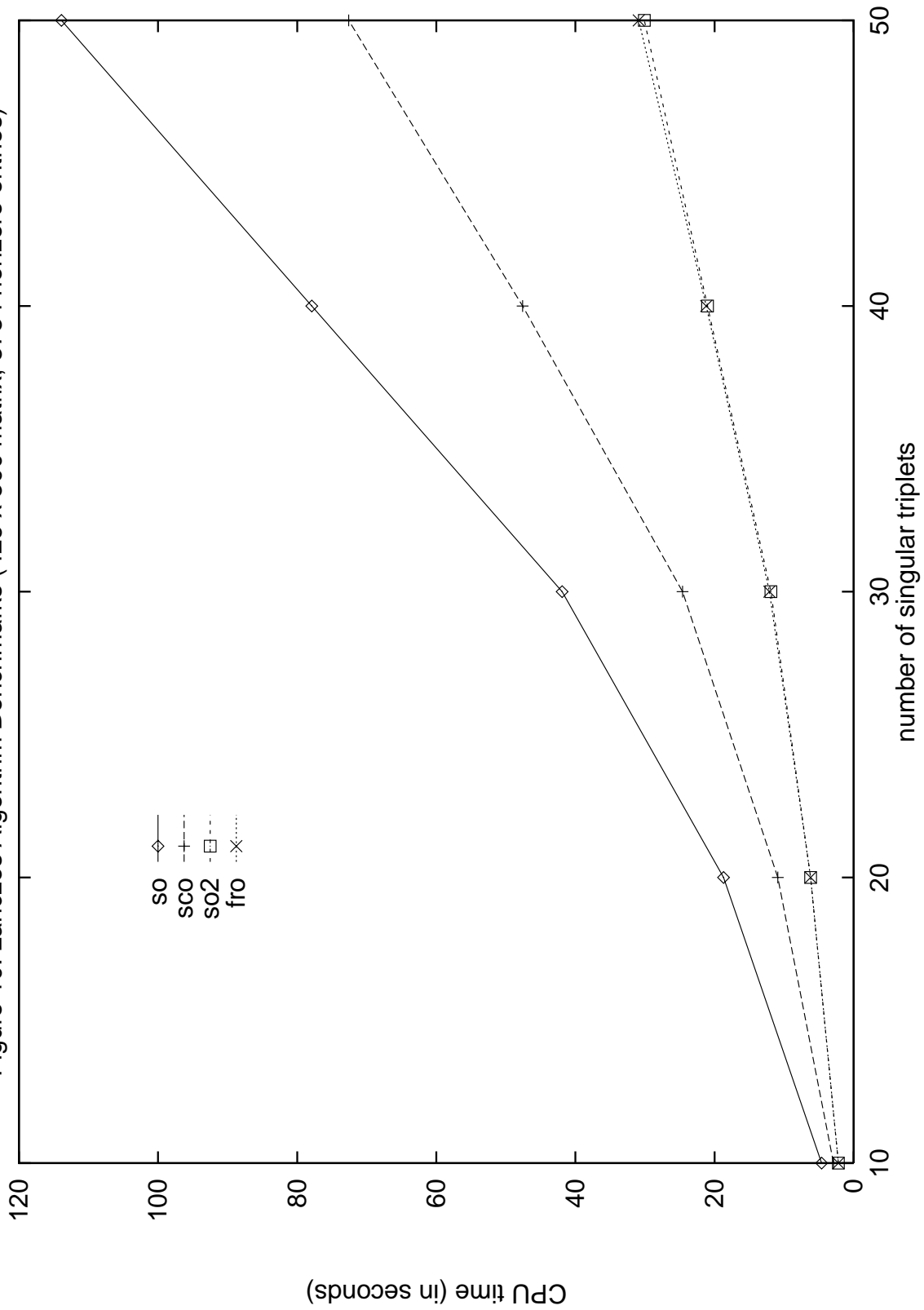


Figure 11: Lanczos Algorithm Benchmarks (1173 x 991 matrix, 3210 nonzero entries)

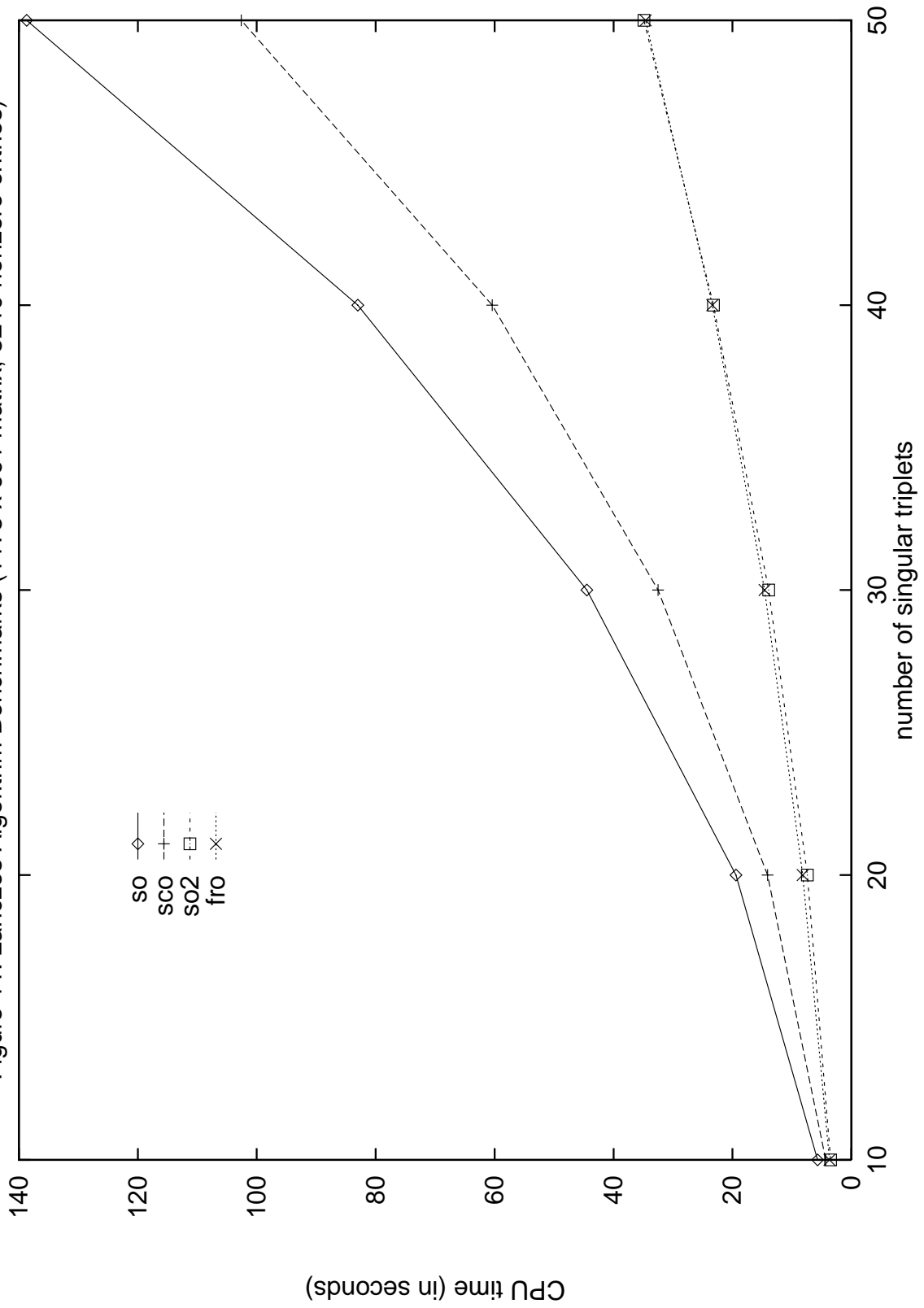


Figure 12: Lanczos Algorithm Benchmarks (8342 x 10000 matrix, 177411 nonzero entries)

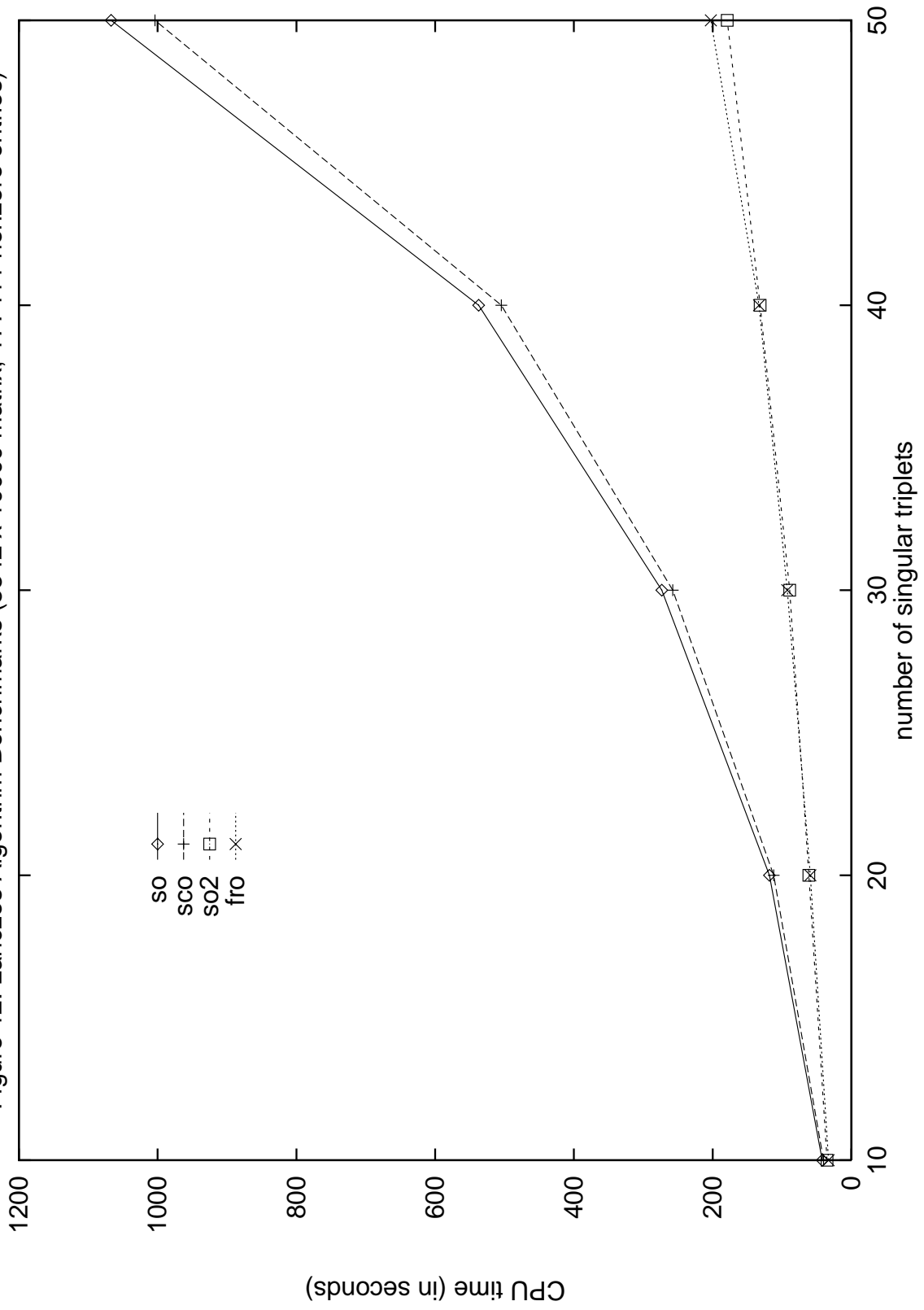


Figure 13: Lanczos Algorithm Benchmarks (1173 x 991 matrix, 3210 nonzero entries)

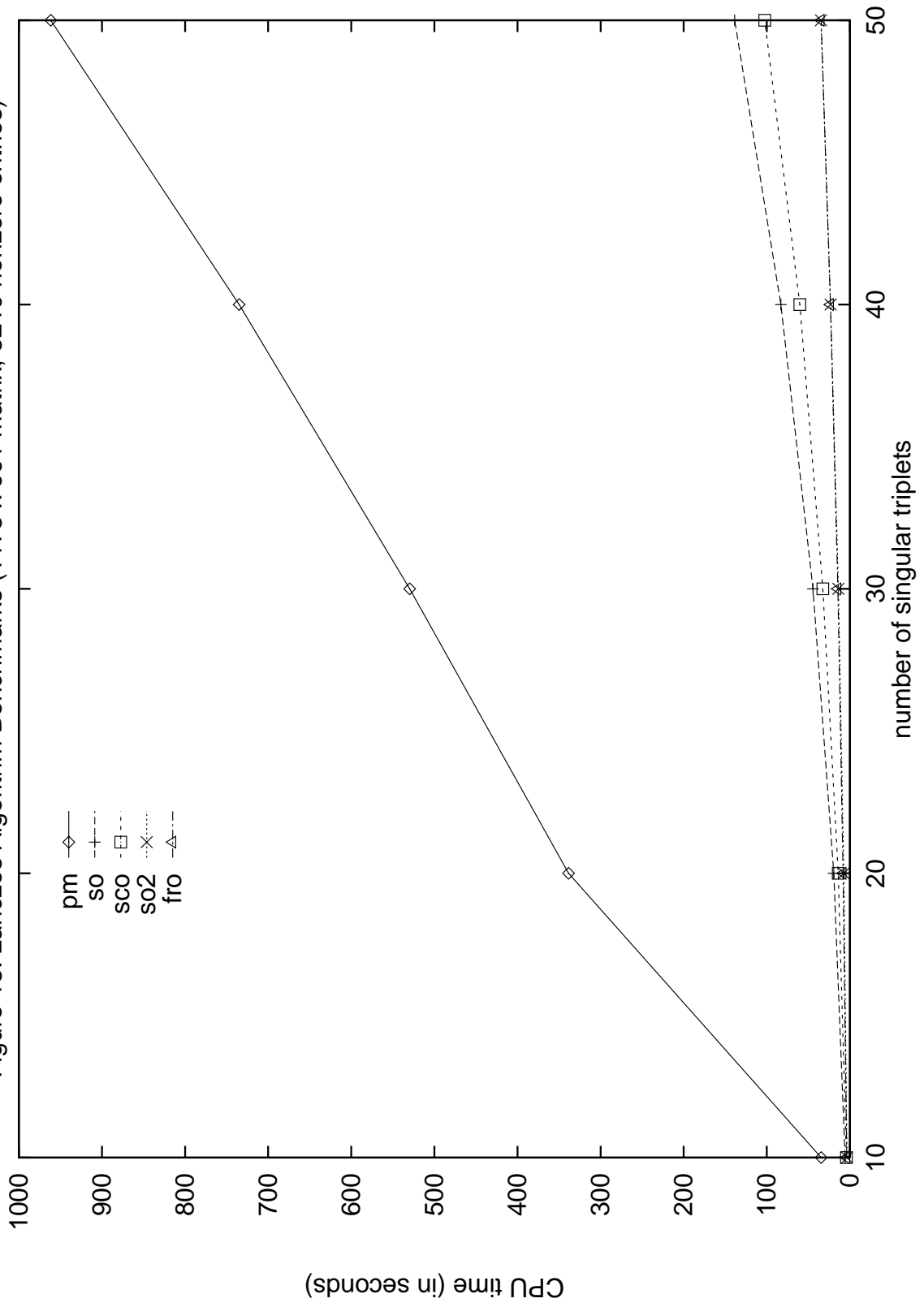
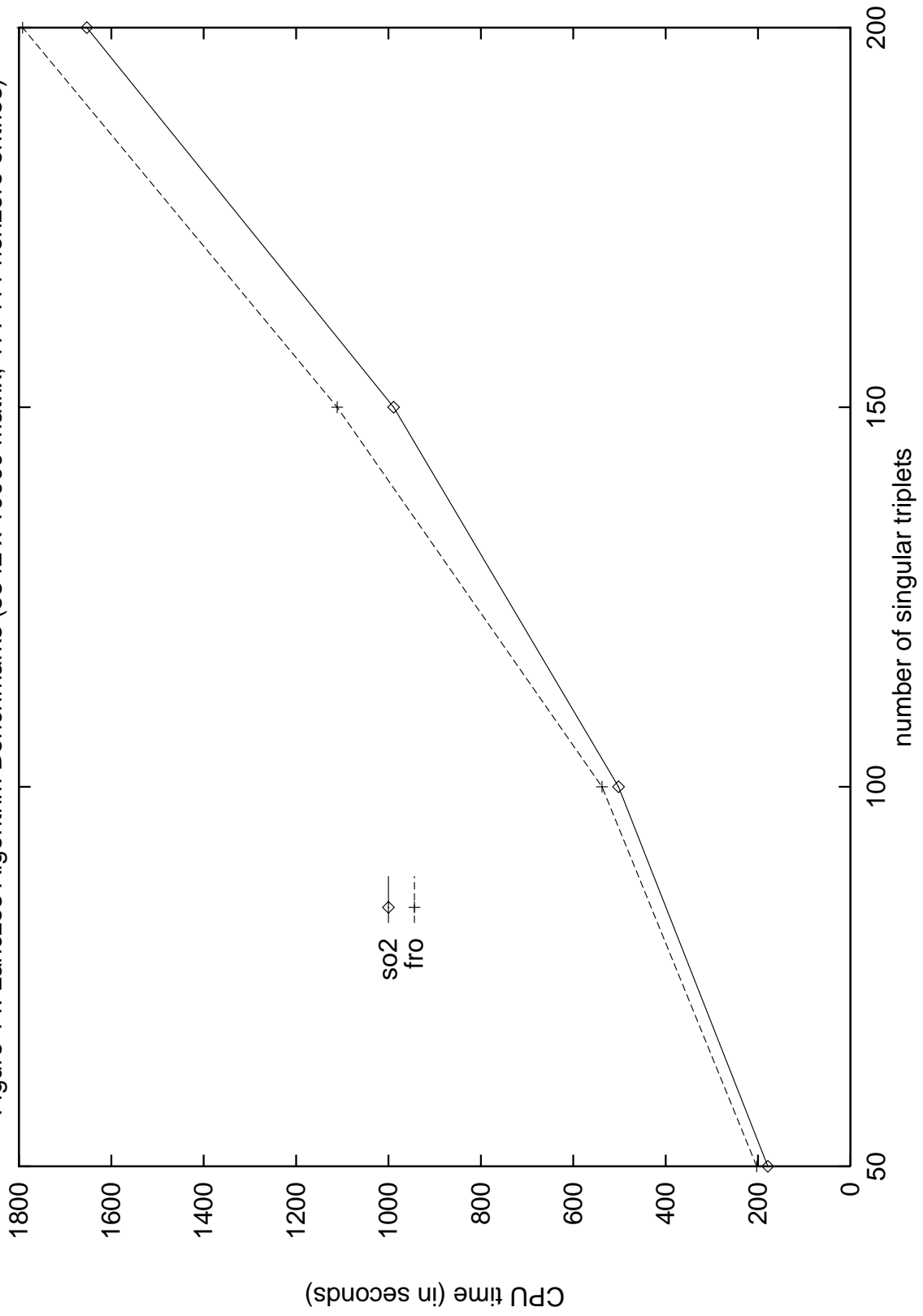


Figure 14: Lanczos Algorithm Benchmarks (8342 x 10000 matrix, 177411 nonzero entries)



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