

Enhanced Services to Improve the Usability of Digital Libraries

THE TOOL

OVERVIEW

Academic content has almost entirely been digitized. As a result, there is an ever-increasing need to manage this vast quantity of electronic data. Digital libraries provide a means to access a vast amount of electronic data, however, their lack of sufficient user-centred features makes finding relevant information difficult. There is a growing demand for enhanced services that allow researchers to perform their tasks more efficiently. Users want access to organised resources and a more streamlined research process. Additionally, users want visual-based interfaces and a more enjoyable experience.

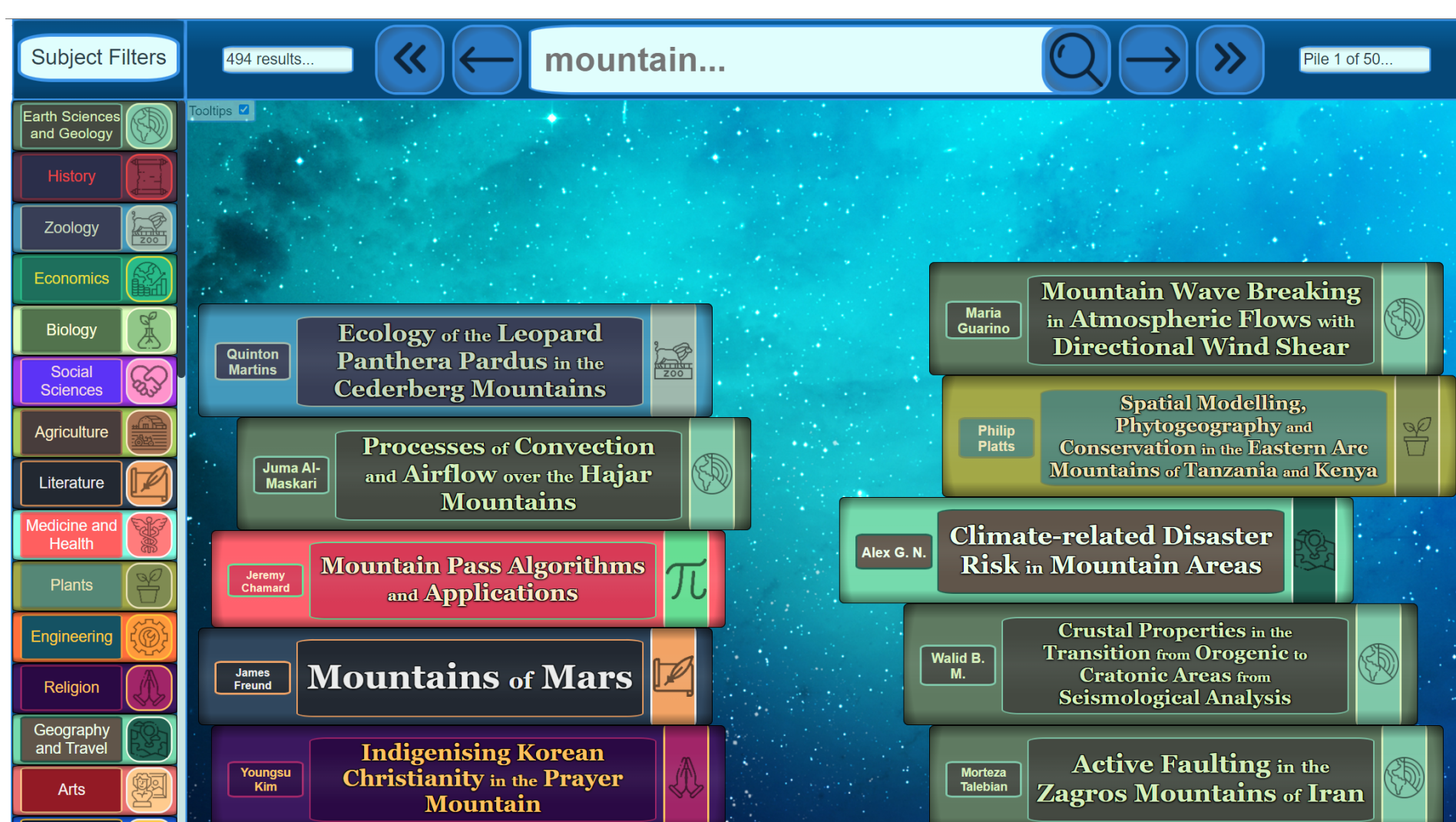
INVESTIGATIONS

Our two ideas were:

- Public and private reading lists may provide efficient access to resources and streamline the work process.
- A visualisation of search results may provide a useful visual-based interface and a better user experience.

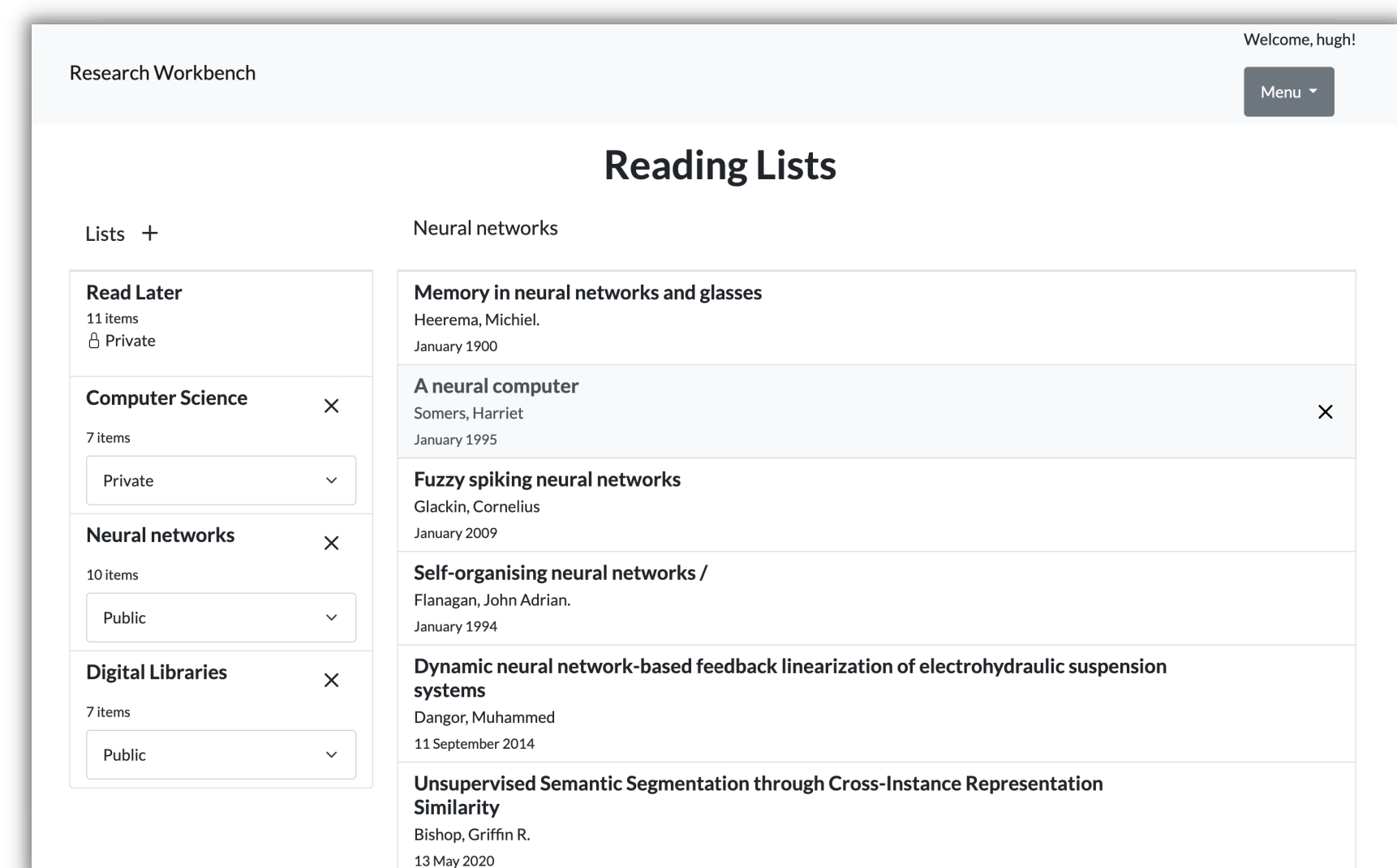
VISUALISATION

- Organisation based on genre.
- Search results visualised as colourful books.
- Colour and icons based on book genre.
- Quick and easy visual based genre filtering system.
- Entertaining animations and visual effects.



USER ORGANISED RESOURCES

- Organise resources with reading lists.
- Private reading lists that are only visible to the user.
- Public lists can then be viewed by all system users.
- Organise research into categories and provide a recommendation feature for the digital library.

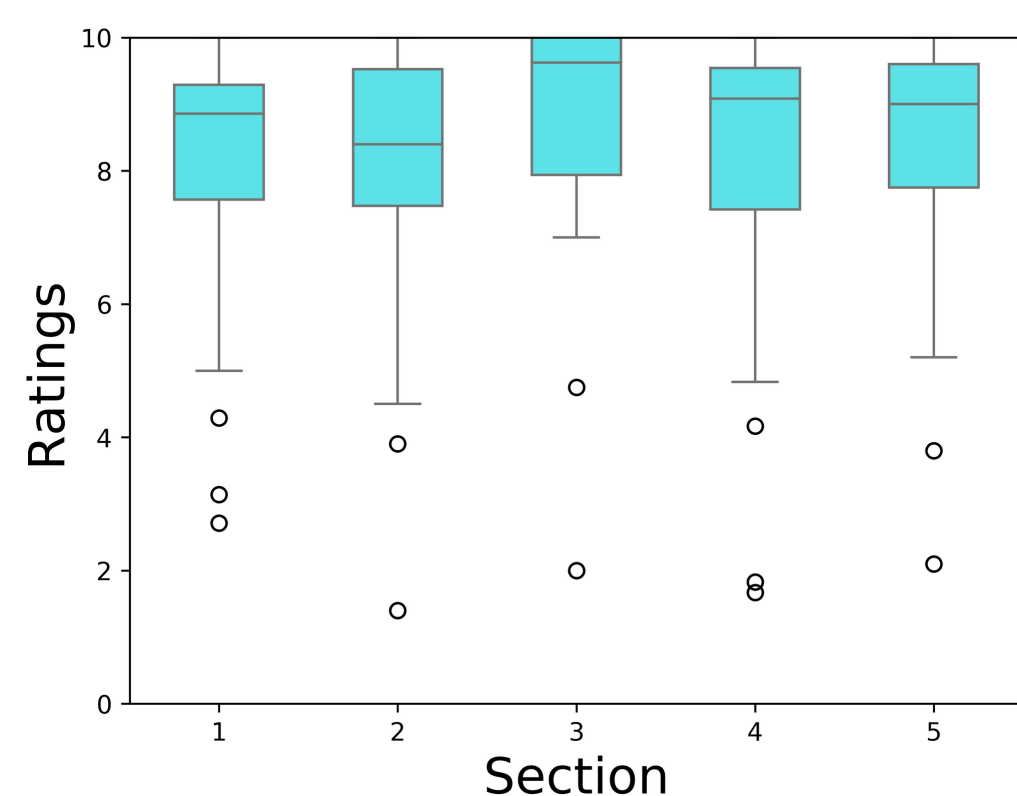


EVALUATION

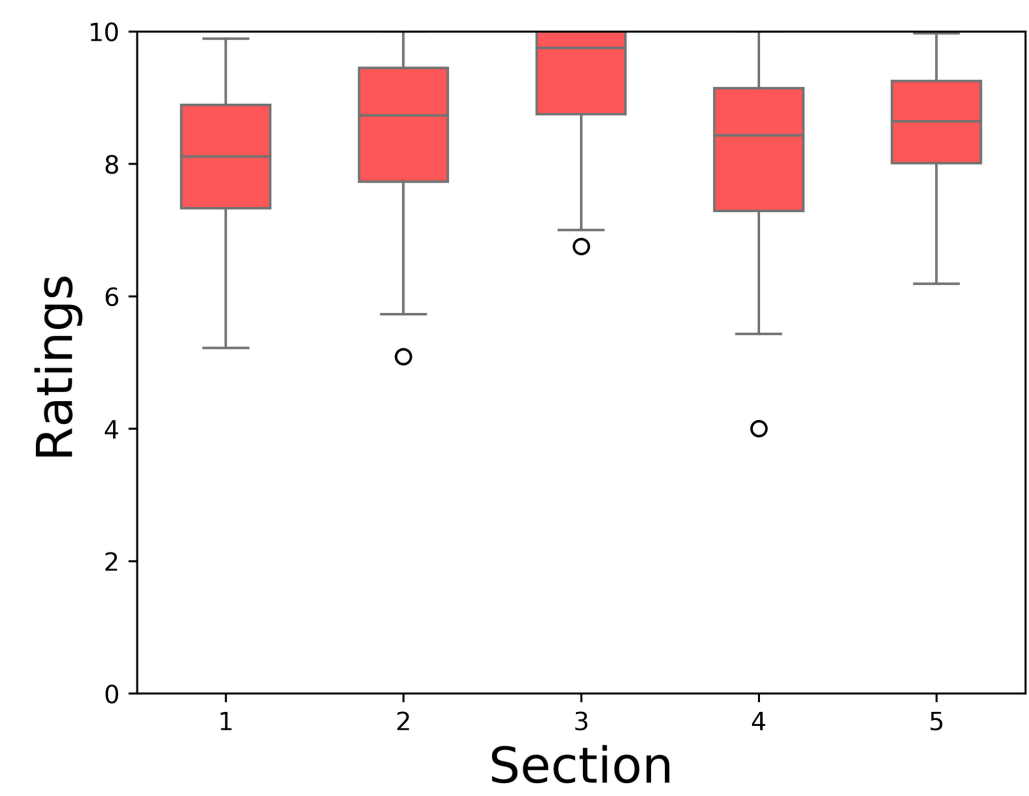
We conducted a survey to evaluate our systems. Thirty UCT students were asked to rate our systems out of 10 for different sections: Usefulness(1), Ease of Use(2), Ease of Learning(3) and Satisfaction(4). We then found the average rating of the sections (5).

RESULTS

- Organising publications by genre was useful.
- The visualisation provided a great user experience and was more useful than a text based interface.



- Public reading lists provide a useful recommendation feature to help users find relevant content.
- Private reading lists provide an efficient method of organising research.



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