Outcome Prediction of DOTA2 Using Machine Learning Methods

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ABSTRACT

With the widespread of network and capital inflows, Electronic Sport (ES) is developing rapidly in recent years and has become a competitive sport which cannot be ignored. Compared with traditional sports, the data of this industry is large in size and has the characteristics of easy-accessing, normalization. Based on these, data mining and machine learning methods can be applied to improve players' skills and help players make strategies. In this paper, a new approach of outcome prediction of an electronic sport DOTA2 was proposed. In earlier studies, the heroes' lineup of a team was represented by a unit vectors or its evolution. The complex interactions among heroes were not captured. In our approach, outcome prediction was performed in two steps. In the first step, Heroes in DOTA2 were quantified from 17 aspects in a more accurate way. In the second step, we proposed a new method to represent a heroes' lineup. A priority table of 113 heroes was created based on the priori knowledge to support this method. The value of evaluation indexes of several machine learning methods on this task have been compared and analyzed in this paper. Experimental results show that our method was more effective and accurate than previous methods.

CCS Concepts

• Computing methodologies→ Machine learning • Applied computing→Computers in other domains

Keywords

DOTA2; Machine Learning; Electronic Sports.

1. INTRODUCTION

DOTA2 is a worldwide popular Multiplayer Online Battle Arena(MOBA) game. In each game ten players are divided into two teams (Radiant and Dire) average, each player picks and controls a game character (usually called hero) from a pool of 113 heroes. The team that destroys the enemy's base first will win. In order to achieve this goal, players need to accumulate gold and experience to purchase items and upgrade skills by killing enemy soldiers, heroes and destroying enemy's defense towers.

In a DOTA2 match, 10 different heroes are picked from the heroes' pool (113 heroes, September 2017) by two teams, in other words, there are

$$\frac{C_{113}^5 * C_{108}^5}{2} = 4.69 \times 10^{17}$$

different heroes' lineup to be selected. Different heroes have their own skills and roles in the team. There are five roles in DOTA2:

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Carry, Solo, Offlane, Support and Hard-Support. Complex interactions are among the heroes for their restraints and improvement to each other.

In major championships, both audiences and players are greatly interested in outcome prediction once the heroes' lineup has been determined in a match. An accurate prediction method can establish tournament's authority and improve the enjoyment of the audiences. For players, it also can help to build their advantages during the BP (ban & pick) phase. In TI7 (The International DOTA2 Championships 2017), an artificial intelligence nonprofit organization OpenAI proposed a DOTA2 bot. It challenged 'Dendi', which was one of the best human player, to a 1v1 match. The result was 'Dendi' has been completely defeated. (https://blog.openai.com/dota-2/)



Figure 1. OpenAI's bot dispatches DOTA2's top players live at TI7.

OpenAI said the bot learned the game from scratch by self-play, and does not use imitation learning or tree search. That is a step towards building AI systems which accomplish well-defined goals in messy, complicated situations involving real humans. Their next goal is to get the bot ready for the infinitely more complex 5v5 matches, it might have something ready in TI8.

For any team that attempt to win a match need to analysis the hero lineups of both sides to find the strengths and weaknesses and develop strategies. This work is usually completed by one or more players in a human team. So how to BP heroes, evaluate strengths and weaknesses of the heroes' lineup has become an important issue for a robot team. Predicting the outcome of a match from its hero lineup is a significant step for the target.

Despite the effect of hero choosing, the Match Making Rating (MMR) of players is the main factor affecting the match result, and it makes the result hard to be predicted. Expert's prediction has been used in most cases nowadays. Different from traditional

sports, the data of electronic sports are easily collected. Therefore, machine learning methods can be well used with these large amounts of data. In the paper, a new approach to predict the outcome of a match was developed. In our approach, outcome prediction was performed in two steps. In the first step, Heroes in DOTA2 were quantified from 17 aspects in a more accurate way. In the second step, we proposed a new method to represent heroes' lineup. A priority table of 113 heroes was created based on the priori knowledge to support this method. The value of evaluation indexes of several machine learning methods on this task have been compared and analyzed in this paper. Experimental results show that our method was more effective and accurate than previous methods.

2. RELATED WORKS

DOTA2 got attention from researchers only recently, the main research directions are 1) outcome prediction from team draft[8][2][3][4][5]. 2) real time prediction[1][9]. 3) BP system[2]. 4) robot heroes' development.

Johansson and Wikstrom have made a real-time prediction in their paper[1], they attempted to create a model using machine learning that can predict the winning team of a DOTA2 game given partial data collected as the game progressed, a couple of different classifiers were tested, out of these Random Forest was chosen to be studied more in depth. Wijaya and Baskara analyzed the interface design of DOTA2 using SAW method for the beginner players by using one of the design principles, ease of use[6]. Drachen and Yancey presented three data-driven measures of spatiotemporal behavior in DOTA2: 1) Zone changes; 2) Distribution of team members and: 3) Time series clustering via a fuzzy approach. They presented a method for obtaining accurate positional data from DOTA2. They investigated how behavior varies across these measures as a function of the skill level of teams, using four tiers from novice to professional players[7].

Among the above research directions, the winning probability prediction from team draft is the most popular topic in applications of machine learning to DOTA2. Conley & Perry were the first to demonstrate the importance of information from the draft stage of the game with Logistic Regression and k-Nearest Neighbors (kNN)[2]. Wang tries to use naive Bayes model to solve this problem[3]. But they all represented the heroes' lineup by a vector with only value of 0, 1, it is very clear that the interaction among heroes within and between teams were hard to capture with such a simplistic approach.

Agarwala and Pearce tried to take that into account including the interactions among heroes into the logistic regression model[4]. To define a role of each hero and model their interactions, they used PCA analysis of the heroes' statistics (kills, deaths, gold per minute etc.). But they got a worse result than without considering the interactions. Although too few features they extracted lead to the PCA-based models couldn't match predictive accuracy of logistic regression, the composition of teams they suggested looked more balanced and reasonable from the game's point of view. Another approach to that problem of modeling heroes' interactions was proposed by Kuangyan Song et al.[5]. They took 6,000 matches and manually added 50 combinations of 2 heroes to the features set and used forward stepwise regression for feature selection. With 10-fold CV for Logistic Regression on 3,000 matches. They concluded that only addition of particular heroes improves the model while the others might cause the prediction to go wrong.

The main defects of current methods of outcome prediction from drafts are: 1) the more representative interactions were not captured detailly. 2) 0-1 vectors remain too much useless information that could slow the training speed. 3) 0-1 vectors have significant limitations for it cannot carry more heroes' features. The following sections will describe how could we solve those problems.

3. DATA SETS

To get enough real match data, we used the valve's (The company that developed dota2) API. The API allows participants to get detailed information about a match by match number. The information includes the account id of players, heroes used, tower damage and hero damage, gold of players, duration, score on both sides, etc.

Dota2 matches players by their own rank, the players with similar rank will be matched together. After every ranked match, the ranked mark of each player in the winning team increases while for the defeated team, the ranked mark decreases accordingly. This mechanism ensures the two-opposing team are approximately at the same level. In other words, it weakens the effect of players' skills on the match result. But it is undeniable that the player strength is still an important factor affecting the results of the game.

Data set I:

Considering players with low MMR (Match Making Rating) are less able to play full ability of a hero, low level matches were not used in the training. What we need is the match data of players with high MMR. To get enough high-level match data, We came up with an effective method, we set "IG.V.Paparazi", the player with highest rank in China (As of September 2017), as a seed. Search for his last 200 matches, list the players who play with him in these matches, then search for their last 200 matches. So that we'll have at most 360200 high level matches. Filter out the duplicate data, we collected 125255 different real match data.

Data set II:

To further eliminate the effect of player strength on game results and make the data more representative, we finally selected 38629 match data, all winning teams in the reserved matches have at least twice as much scores as their opponents.

These data sets have the following advantages:1) real and reliable.
2) high-level matches can faithfully reflect the interactions among heroes. 3) Further filtering makes the interactions more obvious.

Our experiments are all completed on those data sets or their subset.

4. FEATURES EXTRACTION FOR HEROES

Heroes have a variety of abilities, such as output damage, heal teammates, control enemies, etc. We divided these abilities into two categories:1) explicit abilities and 2) hidden abilities. An effective feature extraction method requires correctly describe both of the two kinds of abilities. For explicit abilities, it is uncomplicated to describe it by statistical analyzing the heroes' data, such as GPM, XPM, last hits. But this simple method does not work for hidden abilities. Previous researchers have adopted different methods to extract the features of each hero, however the aspects of extraction are not comprehensively considered. To solve this problem, we developed a new approach which is suitable for DOTA2 as well as other MOBA games. We consider

that each hero has three levels of inherent features: a) attributes. b) statistics. c) probability. Therefore, we quantify a hero from three

levels and 17 aspects, that is, each hero can be mapped into a vector of length 17. The details are shown as follows:

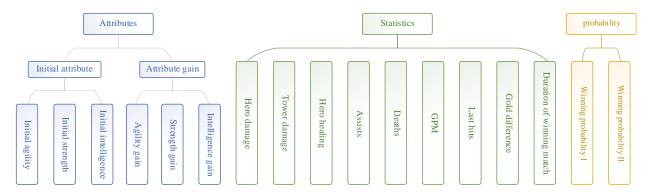


Figure 2. The heroes' features

These features are explained as follows:

- 1. Hero damage: the damage to enemy heroes, including magic damage and physical damage. This feature demonstrates a hero's ability to output damage.
- Tower damage: the damage to enemy structures which can be physical damage only. This feature describes a hero's ability to output physical damage and the ability to attack structures.
 - 3. **Hero healing**: the healing for teammates.
- Assists: the times of helping friendly heroes kill enemies. This feature describes the melee ability of a hero.
- 5. **Deaths**: death frequency of the heroes during the match. This feature describes the viability of the heroes.
- 6. GPM: average increment of gold per minute during a match. Gold can be used to purchase items, the hero with more gold accordingly has better items.
- 7. Last hits: the number of units killed by a hero, including towers, heroes and soldiers. The last hits are mainly from killing enemy soldiers. This feature describes a hero's pushing ability.
- 8. Gold difference: we statistical analyzed the gold gain speed of each hero in the winning and failing matches separately, and calculate the differences to describe a hero's handing stress ability while under inferior position.
- 9. **Duration of winning match**: different heroes have their own strong period during a match in DOTA2. As shown in Figure 3, we plotted the curves of duration of winning match of 3 different heroes: Lina, Spectre and Lycanthrope. From this figure, you can see Lycanthrope will be stronger in the early period, but Spectre's strong period is later, and Lina's is between them. To extract the feature of heroes' strong period, we statistical analyzed the duration of their winning matches.

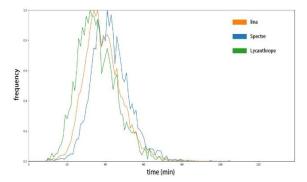


Figure 3. Different heroes have different strong periods

- 10. Initial attribute: each hero has three attributes: intelligence, strength, agility. Different attributes bring different amounts of mana point, health point, and defense.
- 11. Attribute gain: the attributes will increase with the heroes' upgrade. Different heroes have different increased step length; different attributes have different increased step length for one hero as well.
- 12. Winning probability I: this feature was statistical analyzed from the high-level match data of past two months according to the following formula:

$$P^{i}_{I} = \frac{cont^{i}_{w}}{cont^{i}}$$

Where $cont^i$ stand for the number of matches that hero i has been picked, $cont^i_w$ stand for the number of matches that hero i has

13. Winning probability II: We developed a method to quantify the objective synergy and counter between individual heroes through statistical analysis. For any two heroes i and j, we call $P_c(i|j)$ the counter coefficient of j against i.

$$P_c(i|j) = \frac{cont_{j_w}^i}{cont_i^i} - P_{i_1}^i$$

where $cont_{j}^{i}$ is the number of matches that hero i and hero j were picked as opponents, $cont_{j_{ij}}^{i}$ is the number of matches that i

$$P_{s}(i,j) = \frac{cont_{i,j}}{cont_{i,j}} - P^{i}$$

We call $P_s(i,j)$ the synergistic coefficient between j and i. $P_s(i,j) = \frac{cont_{i,j}}{cont_{i,j}} - P^i_{\ \ l}$ Where $cont_{i,j}$ is the number of matches that hero i and hero jwere picked as teammates, $cont_{i,j,u}$ is the number of matches that *i* and *j* won the game.

Then calculate the Winning probability II of a hero by the following formula:

$$P^{i}_{II} = \sum_{j \in teammates} P_{s}(i, j) + \sum_{k \in opponents} P_{c}(i|k)$$

It should be noted that, the winning probability II is not the same in different lineup for a hero. The counter and synergistic coefficients between every two heroes were visualized as following pictures.

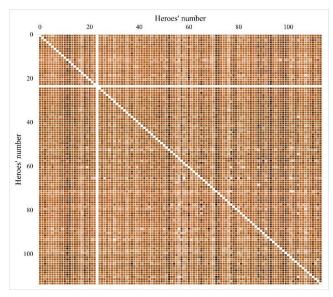


Figure 4. Counter coefficients, each unit stand for the counter degree between corresponding heroes. The darker the color is, the stronger the relationship is.

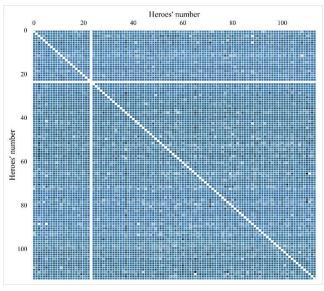


Figure 5. Synergistic coefficients, each unit stand for the synergistic degree between corresponding heroes. The darker the color is, the stronger the relationship is.

14. Predictive value of Na we Bayes model: after repeated Wang's experiment, we produced the idea that treat the results predicted by the Na ve Bayes model as a feature incorporate into the feature vector. There are two reasons for its feasibility:1) the predictive value of the Na ve Bayes model is continuous and 2) relatively reliable.

The Na ve Bayes classifier greatly simplify learning by assuming that features are independent given class. Wang's outcome prediction classifier also based on this hypothesis. He used a vector of length 115 to represent a heroes' lineup with only value of 0, 1, and -1 in the vector. The first attribute represents the result of the game with the value of 1 or -1. 1 means victory for the team Radiant and -1 represents victory for the team Dire. Attribute 2 to the 115 represent the selection of heroes with the value of 1, 0 and -1. If the hero is selected by Radiant, the value will be 1, and -1

for team Dire. In addition, 0 means the hero has not been selected by any team.

According to the Bayes' theorem, the wining probability of a

given heroes' lineup
$$x(C, a_1, a_2, ..., a_{114})$$
 is:
$$P(c_i|(a_1, a_2, ..., a_{114})) = P(c_i) \times \frac{P((a_1, a_2, ..., a_{114})|c_i)}{P(a_1, a_2, ..., a_{114})}$$
Where c_i stand for Radiant win or Dire win. Then simplifies the

above equation with the conditional independence hypothesis into the following form:

$$P(c_i|(a_4, a_5, ..., a_{116})) = P(c_i) \times \prod_{i=1}^n P(a_i|c_i)$$

The priori probability can be obtained by statistical analyzing a large amount of match data:

n data:

$$P(a_{i}|c_{i}) = \frac{count(a_{j})}{count(c_{i})}$$

$$P(c_{i}) = \frac{count(c_{i})}{count}$$

Finally, the relative winning probability is:

$$P(Radiant \ win) = \frac{P(1|(a_1, ..., a_{114}))}{P(1|(a_1, ..., a_{114})) + P(-1|(a_1, ..., a_{114}))}$$

$$P(Dire \ win) = \frac{P(1|(a_1, ..., a_{114})) + P(-1|(a_1, ..., a_{114}))}{P(1|(a_1, ..., a_{114})) + P(-1|(a_1, ..., a_{114}))}$$

Then draw a conclusion by comparing the value of P(Radiant)and P(Dire).

His experiment shows that it is a relatively efficient classifier. However, the accuracy of Naive Bayes classifier needs to be improved. The reason is that Naive Bayes makes the conditional independence hypothesis for conditional probability distribution,

$$P(X = x | Y = c_k) = P(X^{(l)} = x^{(1)}, ..., X^{(n)} = x^{(n)} | Y = c_k)$$

$$= \prod_{j=1}^{n} P(X^j = x^j | Y = c_k)$$

in other words, Na ve Bayes model assumes that every pick of heroes is independent and distributed. This is clearly untenable. In fact, to make the heroes' lineup more reasonable, players are purposeful when choosing a hero. For instance, if two players have picked a Carry hero and a Solo hero, other teammates will no more pick a Carry hero. Although outcome prediction only based on Na ve Bayes Model is not accurate enough, it still worth

Through the above feature extraction method, for each hero, we obtain 17 features, these features were normalized according to the following formula:

$$f_i = \frac{f_i - min_f}{max_f - min_f}$$

5. A NEW APPROACH TO REPRESENT THE HEROES' LINEUP

The outcome prediction of DOTA2 can be described as a twoclassification problem with only two different results: Radiant win or Radiant lose. If the heroes' lineups are represented by continuous vectors correctly, the prediction problem can be solved by using machine learning methods with a large amount of match data.

In the previous studies, heroes' lineups were represented by 0-1 vectors. The vectors are shown as follows:

$$x_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if hero i is picked by Ridant} \\ 0 & \text{if hero i is not picked} \end{cases}$$

$$x_{i+114} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if hero i is picked by Dire} \\ 0 & \text{if hero i is not picked} \end{cases}$$

or

$$x_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \textit{if hero i is picked by Ridant} \\ -1 & \textit{if hero i is picked by Dire} \\ 0 & \textit{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Where i stand for the hero's number (No.24 has no corresponding hero), x stand for eigenvector of the lineup. It is noteworthy that the results of these two methods are equal for machine learning algorithms. Besides, this method is more like a description of heroes' co-occurrence due to the lack of consideration of the interaction among heroes. As mentioned above, there are 4.69×10^{17} different lineups to be selected. It is difficult and inaccurate to use a model trained on tens of thousands of data to predict so many possibilities. Only by developing a different approach can we solve this problem.

To extract the features that can capture the interaction among heroes within and between teams, we developed a new approach: 113 heroes are quantified from 17 different aspects, such as: average hero damage, average tower damage, average gold per minute (gpm), average experience per minute (xpm). For example, assuming each hero has n features. i th hero's features are represented as

$$F_i = \langle f_0^i, f_1^i, ..., f_n^i \rangle$$

When the team lineup has been selected, the sequence of heroes' number is determined. Suppose Radiant pick < 23,45,89,113,0 >; Dire pick < 99,24,58,11,8 >. Re-ordering the heroes' number in the following order:

A priority table was designed manually according to the prior knowledge to automate the re-ordering procedures.

In this case, the rearranged lineup is Radiant: < 0.113,45,89,23 >; Dire: < 8,58,24,99,11 >. By Concatenating them, we obtain a eigenvector of length 10*n;

$$< F_0, F_{113}, F_{45}, F_{89}, F_{23}, F_8, F_{58}, F_{24}, F_{99}, F_{11} >$$

This process is illustrated in Figure 6:

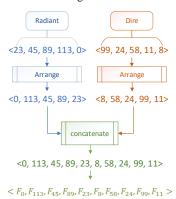


Figure 6. The method of representing the heroes' lineup

The feature vectors represented by this approach have the following advantages:1) continuous. 2) the implication of each component of the vector is unchanged. We expect to explore the interaction among heroes through this extraction method.

6. EXPERIMENT AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the results of performance of several machine learning methods in the dataset under study. The experiments were completed with Scikit-learn[10] on Python with an AMD Ryzen 5 1400(3.20GHz) processor. In order to verify the effectiveness of the proposed method in this paper, many experiments, in which feature vectors were obtained by different methods, have been implemented and the experimental results have been analyzed.

The two feature extraction methods are 1) the classical method: represent a lineup with 0-1 vector. 2) the method proposed in this paper. Three kinds of classifiers have been used to predict the outcomes of matches. The experiments were completed on the data set I, which contains 125255 data, including 58061 positive samples and 67194 negative samples. Before the experiments, 18789 data have been selected as the test data set randomly, the remaining data were the training data set, so the test set and the training set were the same for all the experiments. The results are shown in the follow tables:

Table 1.	. The result	s of the	classical	l feature	extraction	method

classifier	classification	precision	recall	f1-score	support
	-1	0.58666	0.7221	0.64737	10144
Logistic	1	0.55275	0.40301	0.46615	8645
Regression	total	0.57106	0.57528	0.56399	18789
	-1	0.58623	0.73423	0.65193	10144
Random Forests	1	0.55687	0.3919	0.46004	8645
	total	0.57272	0.57672	0.56364	18789
	-1	0.58972	0.72052	0.64859	10144
SVM	1	0.55668	0.4118	0.4734	8645
	total	0.57452	0.57848	0.56799	18789

Table 2. The results of the feature extraction method proposed in this paper

classifier classification precision recall f1-score support	classifier	classification	precision	recall	f1-score	support
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	-1	0.65436	0.70584	0.67912	10144
Logistic Regression	1	0.61973	0.56252	0.58974	8645
Regression .	total	0.63842	0.63990	0.63800	18789
	-1	0.63139	0.73925	0.68108	10144
Random -	1	0.61733	0.49358	0.54856	8645
rorests -	total	0.62492	0.62622	0.62011	18789
	-1	0.65446	0.72240	0.68675	10144
SVM	1	0.62908	0.55246	0.58829	8645
-	total	0.64278	0.64421	0.64145	18789

The classification evaluation indexes showed that using new method makes the classification accuracy have been significantly improved. This is a result of extracting more accurate features. As mentioned above, 17 features were extracted for each hero, with the increase of the number of features, the prediction accuracy also increases. We draw a fold line chart (see Figure 7) to show the relationship between the number of features and the accuracy (using Logistic Regression). From the chart we can see an obvious promotion after considering the winning probability II.

Furthermore, we have completed the same experiments on data set II. As we mentioned above, data set II only contains the match data that the winning teams have at least twice as much scores as their opponents in those matches. There are stronger constraints between two sides, because usually only the great advantage of drafts can lead to such one-sided situations. Thus, these data further reduce effect of the players' skills on the game, and using these data to test can better reflect the real ability of the model.

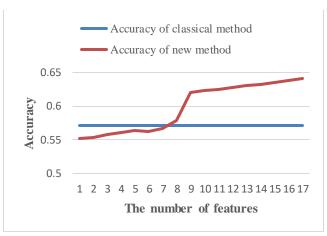


Figure 7. There is a positive correlation between the number of features and the accuracy

Table 3. Results on data set II

classifier	classification	precision	recall	f1-score	support
	-1	0.72972	0.77826	0.75321	3202
Logistic Regression	1	0.70168	0.64404	0.67163	2593
Regression	total	0.71717	0.71821	0.71671	5795
	-1	0.71603	0.76702	0.74065	3202
Random Forests	1	0.68457	0.62437	0.65309	2593
Forests	total	0.70195	0.70319	0.70147	5795
	-1	0.72831	0.79700	0.76111	3202
SVM	1	0.71628	0.63286	0.67199	2593
	total	0.72293	0.72355	0.72123	5795

From above table we can see after further reducing the effect of the players' skills, the evaluation indexes have been significantly improved. These experiments have proved the effectiveness of the feature extraction method proposed in this paper, and reflected the influence degree of players' skills on the games.

7. CONCLUSION

Predicting the result of DOTA2 matches form heroes' drafts is a valuable and interesting problem, as researchers pay more attention to the interaction among heroes, feature extraction of heroes becomes more critical. This work is still in the early stage, both previous researches and this paper are significant attempts. The contribution of this article is to extract the heroes' features in more details and faithfully. Heroes' features have been divided

into 3 levels and 17 aspects to describe heroes' explicit abilities and hidden abilities in a better way. Besides, a new approach to represent the heroes' lineup has been introduced in this paper. We re-order the heroes' sequence according to a priority table to make the implication of each component in the feature vector fixed. This is a method that can carry more features and reduce the useless information. Although the results of this paper were better than classical method very much, we still found that the extraction of heroes' features were not comprehensive. This is a result of the lack of important information such as control time, deceleration time, etc in the data published by Valve. Moreover, the previous authors used different data set in their researches, this factor weaken the reference value of their experimental results. So, we call on Valve here to publish the standard data set, add more

match details and update it in time to promote the development of machine learning in DOTA2 and even ES.

8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Linlong Xiao	Master student	Ontology Modeling, Expert System	

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