# Information Extraction with Weak Supervision

**Keywords** information networks, natural language processing, information extraction, latent variable models

**Relevance to Army BAA: II. A. c. iii. (3) Information Networks** In order to provide decision makers with the information necessary to make informed choices as well as predict the effects of those choices, we must have an efficient representation of relevant information and a predictive model for the resultant state of the world given a choice. Information networks provide a graphical representation of information and how it propagates through a network. We focus on *knowledge graphs*, information networks where each node contains a set of facts about an entity and an edge describes how the facts in one node influence the facts in another. Knowledge graphs provide an intuitive and queryable representation of knowledge. A decision maker may query the relevant nodes to gain situational awareness, and when simulating a decision that alters the information in one node the graph can easily propagate those changes by virtue of its representation.

Given that a knowledge graph must represent an extremely large number of facts and relationships, it is infeasible to specify these completely by hand. Many recent works have focused on learning to fill in the missing edges of a knowledge graph by recognizing patterns in fully-labeled subgraphs in order to predict whether there should be an edge between two nodes in an unlabeled subgraph [2]. By filling in missing edges, we are able to use the relationships specified by the edges in order to reason about the facts contained in a node conditioned on the facts of its neighbours. For example, given two nodes corresponding to two different entities, we can leverage the relationships between the two nodes to infer the values of one given the other.

However, in addition to supervision over subgraphs, we generally also have access to large amounts of unlabeled and unstructured data in the form of natural language text. We propose an approach that is orthogonal to edge completion, which instead relies on jointly modeling text and the nodes of the information network. We aim to leverage natural language text by learning an information extraction system that is able to extract facts from text to fill in the nodes of a knowledge graph given **only** the assumption that the text was generated from the information represented in the knowledge graph. Although this is a strong assumption, we believe it is a reasonable starting point. We note that information extraction is complementary to edge completion as a method for inferring missing values in the nodes of a knowledge graph, and although we focus on information extraction due to its ability to leverage text, the two approaches can be combined in future work.

In this proposal we present a method towards automating the training of information extraction systems with unlabeled corpora by recasting the information extraction problem as a generative modeling problem. Specifically, we plan to use the performance of a deep generative model of text as signal for learning an extraction system.

**Introduction** The goal of information extraction is to produce structured representations of information given unstructured text. We use summaries of basketball games as an example to ground the concept of an information extraction system. In the context of a basketball game summary, an information extraction system would infer all the statistics associated with a player given the summary. A typical approach to an information extraction system is the following pipeline, where each stage has a model that is trained independently from the other stages: first segment the text into entities and values, then extract named entities and possibly perform coreference resolution by predicting whether segments refer to the same entity, and finally relation extraction where we identify the relationships between the extracted entities and values. We can then use the extracted relationships along with the associated entities and values to populate

the nodes of a knowledge graph, where each node would correspond to a player and contain their associated statistics. See Figure 1 for an example of this process. This process is orthogonal and complementary to using existing nodes in a knowledge graph to fill in missing ones. As we are interested in utilizing large amounts of unlabeled corpora for the training of an information extraction system, we restrict our focus to learning the values of each node independently given the text. Neural networks, in combination with latent variable models (LVMs), provide a method for training such an information extraction pipeline end-to-end.

The progression from a pipelined system into one that is trained jointly has precedent in the field of natural language processing: machine translation. Previously, statistical machine translation utilized a highly pipelined approach, where each stage utilized a model that was trained independently of the others. The approach was unified with an end-to-end neural model in Bahdanau et al. [1]. We recently recast Bahdanau et al. [1]'s model in the LVM framework in Deng et al. [3] which resulted in performance gains as well as improved sample complexity. Our proposal is inspired by the improvements seen in machine translation: we wish to specify an information extraction system that is learned end-to-end rather than stage by stage, and we use the LVM framework to do so. LVMs provide a principled way of specifying semi-supervised models [5], and have been shown to have better sample complexity than discriminative models [3, 7].

Although LVMs have recently been proposed in the context of knowledge graph completion [2, 8], they either do not utilize text or do not have a generative model of text. We argue that the generative model we specify should be as close to the data generating process as possible. In particular, Chen et al. [2] formalize predicting the relationship between two nodes as a LVM but do not utilize text at all. Qu et al. [8] also learn a LVM for the relationships between nodes, which includes using the text to learn a distributed representations of entities. However, their approach does not take into account the generative process of the text, which limits the expressibility of their model. We propose to explicitly model how a text is created given a knowledge graph using a conditional generative model with latent variables.

In this proposal, we focus on the class of LVMs known as hidden semi-Markov models (HSMMs), used in Liang et al. [6] as a generative model for the task of aligning segments of text to nodes in a knowledge graph without supervision. As in Liang et al. [6], we are interested in learning a generative model of text so that we can minimize the amount of supervision necessary for training an information extraction system. The performance of their generative model of text provides signal for learning the alignments: if the likelihood of a segment of text improves when moving from a past alignment choice to a new one, then the new alignment is more likely to be correct given a suitably strong likelihood model. We use that same intuition to formulate a related LVM for a semi-supervised information extraction which aims to model not just the alignments from segments of text to nodes in a knowledge graph but also the values in the nodes themselves. By parameterizing the generative HSMM with neural networks as in Wiseman [9], we hope to incorporate recent progress in parameterizing LVMs with neural networks so as to learn a more accurate information extraction system by using a more powerful generative model.

**Background** We consider datasets consisting of aligned data and text $\left\{(\mathbf{r}^{(1)}, \mathbf{y}^{(1)}), (\mathbf{r}^{(2)}, \mathbf{y}^{(2)}) \dots\right\}$. For brevity, we refer to a single datum and text as $\mathbf{r}, \mathbf{y}$, omitting the superscript. Each datum $\mathbf{r} = \{r_1, \dots, r_N\}$ is a set of $N$ records, where each record $r_i = (e_i, t_i, v_i)$ is a tuple containing an entity, type, and value. The datum $\mathbf{r}$ is a knowledge base, or equivalently an information network without a representation of the causal effects between records. We refer collectively to all the entities, types, and values in a given datum $\mathbf{r}$ as $\mathbf{e}, \mathbf{t}, \mathbf{v}$ respectively. Each text $\mathbf{y} = \{y_1, \dots, y_T\}$ is a sequence of tokens each from a vocabulary $V$.

We proceed to detail how to specify a LVM, then provide a concrete example linking the above dataset description to our LVM formulation: Let variables $\mathbf{z}$ be unobserved or latent, $\mathbf{y}$ observed, and $\mathbf{x}$ taken as conditioning and thus not modelled. For information extraction we are interested in distributions that can be specified as $p(\mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{y}, \mathbf{x})$, where $\mathbf{z}$ and $\mathbf{x}$ may correspond to various quantities depending on the task but

$\mathbf{y}$ is always the text.

As a concrete example, we use the Rotowire dataset [10]. Rotowire contains summaries of basketball games $\mathbf{y}$ aligned with the respective box scores $\mathbf{r}$ of those games. Consider a datum that consists of a single record, $\mathbf{r} = \{(e_1 = \text{Jeremy\_Lin}, t_1 = \text{POINTS}, v_1 = 19)\}$, and a simple statement $\mathbf{y} =$"Jeremy Lin scored 19 points". In its simplest incarnation, the process of information extraction may be to infer any subset of $\mathbf{r}$, which in this case will be our latent $\mathbf{z}$, given the remaining elements in $\mathbf{r}$ which corresponds to $\mathbf{x}$, as well as the text $\mathbf{y}$. For example, we may want to infer the value $v_1$ given the entity Jeremy Lin, the type POINTS, as well as the text $\mathbf{y}$. In this case, we would have $\mathbf{z} = \{v_1\}$ and $\mathbf{x} = \{e_1, t_1\}$. In an alternative task, we may want to infer the value $v_1$ as well as the type $t_1$ given $\mathbf{y}$ and $e_1$, therefore $\mathbf{z} = \{v_1, t_1\}$ and $\mathbf{x} = \{e_1\}$.

Note that we are not constrained to setting $\mathbf{z}$ to subsets of $\mathbf{r}$. We also consider the case where $\mathbf{z}$ includes alignments from individual words $y_t$ to records $r_i$. We denote the alignments $\mathbf{a} = \{a_1, \ldots, a_T\}$, where each $a_t$ is associated with $y_t$ and selects a record $r_i$ such that $a_t = i$.

**Proposal** We propose to verify the efficacy of the LVM framework in the weakly supervised information extraction setting, with the goal of demonstrating strong extractive performance with minimal labels. We present one instance of a LVM and outline how it can be used to obtain an information extraction model without direct supervision, then argue that the same approach can be applied in even more ambitious settings. Our first LVM is a conditional model that specifies the relationship between data, specifically the entities and types, and text. We denote this model `Values`. Similar to the models defined in Wiseman [9] and Liang et al. [6], our model takes the form of a hidden semi-Markov model (HSMM). The primary difference is that the other models simply assumed the records were complete and conditioned on them, whereas ours learns to generate the values. `Values` is given by the following generative process:

1. Value Choice: For each pair of entities and types in our datum of records, we predict a value. We assume that each record type constrains the values to be members of a finite set. Thus each record type is assigned a categorical distribution over its respective values, and the values are drawn independently from that respective distribution. Each $v_i \sim \text{Cat}(f_{t_i}(e_i))$ is drawn from a Categorical distribution, whose parameters $f_{t_i}(e_i)$ are output by a neural network $f_{t_i}$ that is shared across record types and takes as input the entity $e_i$.

2. Record Choice: Conditioned on our choices of values as well as the given entities and records, we choose a sequence of records $\mathbf{a} = \{a_1, \ldots, a_I\}$ to describe, given by their index $a_i$. Note that each record choice is described by at least one token, hence we have $I \leq T$. The record choices are parameterized as a Markov model where each $a_t \sim \text{Cat}(f_\theta(a_{t-1}, \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{t}))$, where $f_\theta$ is a neural network.

3. Word Choice: For each record alignment $a_i$, we choose a sequence of words $\mathbf{y}_i = \{y_{i1}, \ldots, y_{iJ}\}$ to describe the record. The words are modelled by an autoregressive emission model within each segment that is aligned to the same record: $y_{ij} \sim \text{Cat}(f_\theta(\mathbf{y}_{i1:ij}, v_{a_i}, e_{a_i}, t_{a_i}))$, where $f_\theta$ is another neural network and $\mathbf{y}_{i1:ij}$ is all tokens $y$ from indices $i1$ to $ij$.

The value and record choices correspond to prior distributions over values $p(\mathbf{v} \mid \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{t})$ and alignments $p(\mathbf{a} \mid \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{t})$ respectively, while the word choice model gives us the likelihood of some text given our value and alignment choices $p(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{a}, \mathbf{v}, \mathbf{e}, \mathbf{t})$. In this case, we have latent $\mathbf{z} = \{\mathbf{v}, \mathbf{a}\}$ and observed $\mathbf{x} = \{\mathbf{e}, \mathbf{t}\}$. We obtain an information extraction by using the **posterior** distribution over alignments and values:

$$p(\mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{y}, \mathbf{x}) = \frac{p(\mathbf{y}, \mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{x})}{p(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{x})} = \frac{p(\mathbf{y}, \mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{x})}{\sum_{\mathbf{z}} p(\mathbf{y}, \mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{x})}.$$

Although the HSMM formulation allows the summation (marginalization) over alignments to be carried out efficiently, we cannot marginalize over value assignments. We instead resort to variational inference as in Deng et al. [3], where we learn an approximation of the posterior distribution $q(\mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{y}, \mathbf{x})$ with a separate model. We can train the generative model and the approximate posterior jointly by maximizing a lower bound on the log marginal likelihood or evidence of $\mathbf{y}$, called the evidence lower bound (ELBO) which is given formally by the expression $\text{ELBO}_q \triangleq \mathbb{E}_{q(\mathbf{z}|\mathbf{y},\mathbf{z})}\left[\log p(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{z}, \mathbf{x})\right] \leq \log \mathbb{E}_{p(\mathbf{z}|\mathbf{x})}\left[p(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{z}, \mathbf{x})\right]$. This objective can be maximized with gradient-based methods. The resulting approximate posterior $q(\mathbf{z} \mid \mathbf{y}, \mathbf{x})$ can be used independently of the generative model as an information extraction system that gives a distribution over values in a table of records and alignments from text to records.

We proceed to motivate and outline an extension to `Values`. In addition to inferring values, ideally an information extraction system would also be able to infer new entities and relation types. We propose a possible route towards defining model that can learn to parameterize new relation types in an unsupervised manner using the same LVM framework as `Values`, which we denote `Types`. The motivation behind `Types` is that a segment of text may refer to multiple records at the same time. For example, in basketball games a 'triple-double' refers to more a player achieving a value of more than 10 in any three of the five categories: points, steals, rebounds, blocks, or assists. The goal of `Types` is to attempt to capture the latent relationship behind utterances such as 'triple-double' appearing in the text and the underlying records in an unsupervised manner. We plan to introduce a new step to the generative process of `Values` that allows the model to learn new records as boolean-valued functions of relations already defined in the data. By approximating these boolean functions with neural networks, we hope to find a model parameterization that admits an efficient approach to learning.

We will evaluate our initial approach on the Rotowire dataset, and extensions to our model that will include entity tracking and event resolution on the automatic content extraction (ACE) [4] and the Text Analysis Conference's Streaming Multimedia Knowledge Base Population (SM-KBP) datasets. We expect the variance of the gradient estimator to be an issue, in particular its effect on sample complexity. In previous work, we observed that gradient estimators based on exact inference resulted in better sample complexity than approximate inference [3], and we expect that controlling the variance of the gradient estimator will be of paramount importance for the success of our proposed method.

Given admittance to the NDSEG Fellowship Program, I will evaluate the application of LVMs to the problem of information extraction. As a result of the digital age, the ubiquity of information networks as well as their enormous growth makes it clear that a method for training information extraction systems with minimal supervision is a necessity. I will push for scalable information extraction systems that require minimal supervision by recasting information extraction as a generative modeling problem.

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