Report

Introduction:

In this paper, I scrape posts from reddit and imacros related to web automation tasks.

For imacros, the results are collected from collections in How-To's and Examples for Form Filling, How-To's and Examples for Web Scraping, How-To's and Examples for Web Testing, and How-To's and Examples for Firefox / JavaScript Scripting.

For Reddit, the results are collected from different search keywords. For example scraps posts from searching by how to auto form, and how to web automation.

From the posts I got, there are several tasks appear frequentenly, such as form filling, account creating, and tasks related to email. Most of posts are still don't need a high-level understanding of the task semantics. The reason I think is that they didn't think of current tools have this possibility.

Form Filling

Form filling is the most frequency and popular task for web automation tasks.
In imacros, in their website collection there are 35 topics relate to form filling. Creating accounts automatically is most popular task in form filling.
Most of tasks are still just eliminate repetitive human effort which does not involve high understanding of semantic information. Many posts are confused on how to make complex actions automatic such as ticky file downloading and uploading cases, selecting from

drop-down menus. How to uploading files is the most frequency questions. For example, how to upload file when input field is not provided on the web form. Currently, the method due with upload files in web form is kind of complex.

Deleting Tasks

There are some tasks for auto delete facebooks or tweets, such as "How To Delete All Facebook Groups / Wall Posts From Facebook", and delete spams based on certain titles. From those tasks, I found it could require high understanding of semantic information. For example instead of delete all facebook groups or posts, could it delete posts based on certain requirement? Once if it require to delete posts that all relate to a person but I also require it need to identify all nick names, it needs high understanding of semantic information to identify whether this posts relate to this person. And for deleting spams, if it require to detect spams automatically, it needs to first identify and classify the spams and non spams.

Other Tasks

Auto-reply is also a popular task. if we need a more human-like auto-reply, understanding text and generate human-like language is also important,