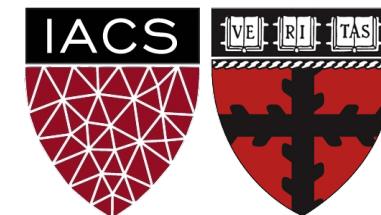


Lecture 16: Coreference Resolution

Determining who is who and what is what

Harvard IACS

Chris Tanner





COREFERENCE RESOLUTIONARY



"You would rather have a Lexus or justice? A dream or some substance? A Bimmer, a necklace, or freedom?

-- Dead Prez

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- HW4 is out
- HW2 and Phase 2 are Quiz 5 have been graded
- Research Project Phase 3 due Oct 28 (Thurs) @ 11:59pm

Outline

■ Coreference Resolution

- Conjoined CNN

- Neural Clustering

- Results

■ Improvements

- Leveraging Data

- No Data

- Better Data

■ Additional Research

Outline



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Additional Research

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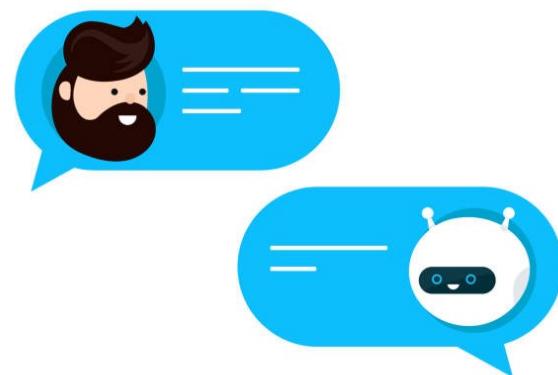
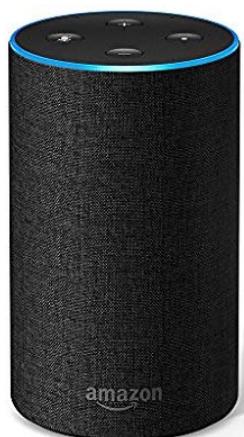
- No Data

- Better Data

■ Additional Research

Discourse

These systems hinge upon understanding *what you're saying* (**discourse**) and the *meaning* of it (**semantics**)



Discourse

Also necessary for information retrieval, question-
answering, document summarization, etc



Google Translate

"TL;DR crypto stocks are surging"

Event coreference for information extraction. Humphreys et al., 1997

Question answering based on semantic structures. Narayanan and Harabagiu, 2004

Sub-event based multi-document summarization. Daniel et al., 2003



Opinion

The Freeing of the Ever Given

The stuck container ship became the butt of online jokes, but it was no minor crisis.



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Coreference Resolution

The task of determining which words all refer to the same underlying real-world *thing*

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EASY FOR HUMANS

wedged six days earlier. A spring tide finally set the Ever Given and its containers afloat again, drawing cheers from Egyptians on the shore and a virtual world beyond.

State-of-the-art neural model?

End-to-end Neural Coreference Resolution. Lee et al. 2017

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HARD FOR COMPUTERS

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Types of referring expressions

Indefinite noun phrases:

- I saw an incredible oak tree today

Definite noun phrases:

- I read about it in the New York Times

Pronominal mentions:

- Emily aced the quiz, as she expected

Nominal mentions and names:

- The amazing marathoner, Des Linden, is a true inspiration

Demonstratives:

- These pretzels are making me thirsty.

This, that, these, those

Good models should be able to
perform coreference resolution
across multiple documents

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SUEZ, Egypt (AP) — Experts boarded the massive container ship Tuesday that had blocked Egypt's vital Suez Canal and disrupted global trade for nearly a week, seeking answers to a single question that could have billions of dollars in legal repercussions: What went wrong?

And handle **events**

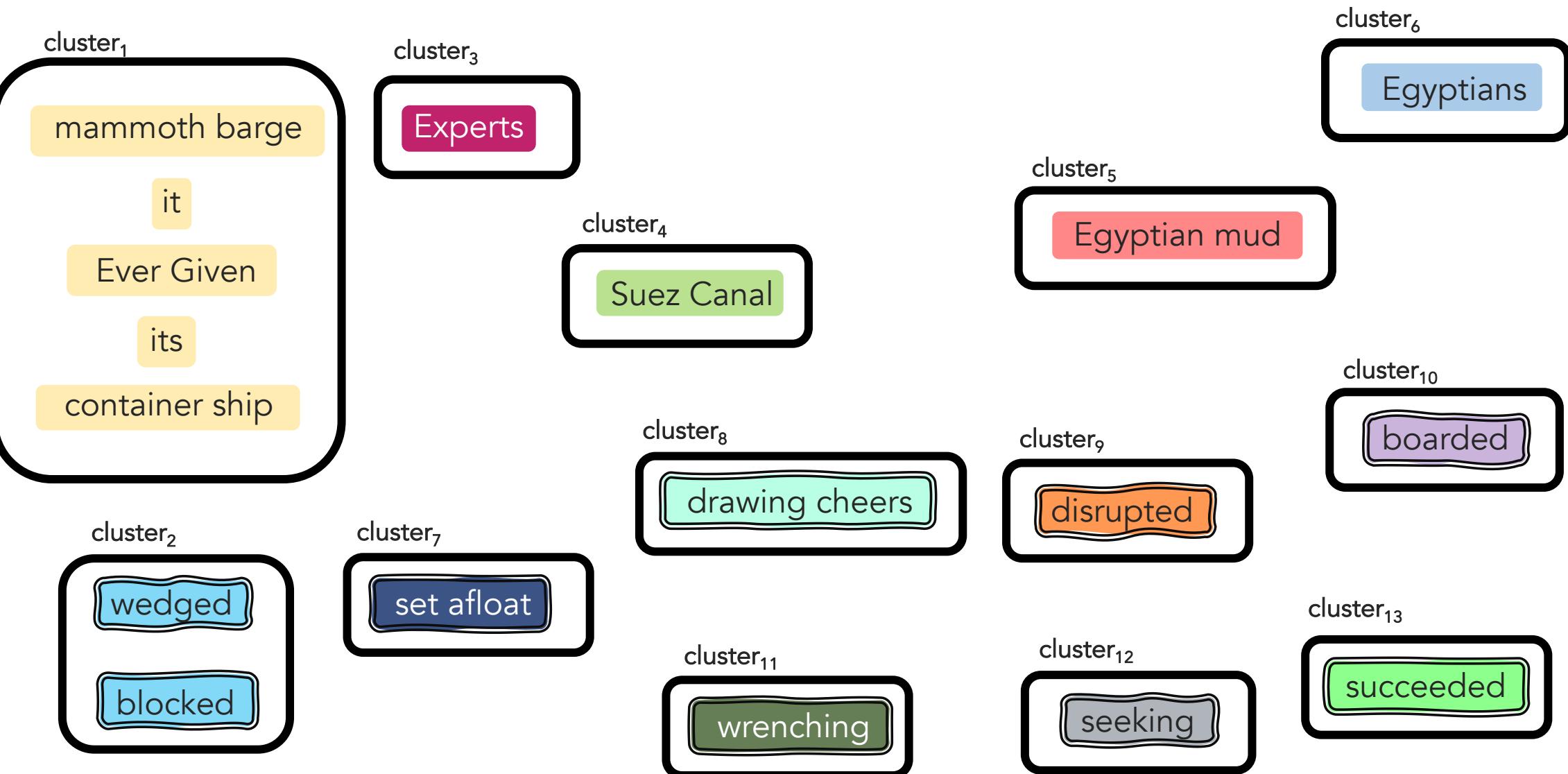


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Takeaway #1

Coreference resolution determines which mentions all refer to the same underlying **entity** or **event**, and is ultimately a clustering task.

cluster₂

wedged

blocked

cluster₇

set afloat

cluster₁₁

wrenching

cluster₁₂

seeking

cluster₁₃

succeeded

cluster₁cluster₂cluster₆

mamm

Eve

contai

disrupted

Entity Coreference (2010 – present)

Early research demonstrated
highly-effective **rule-based**
entity coref systems

CoNLL F1: 58.3

Ordered sieves

1. **Mention Detection Sieve**
2. **Discourse Processing Sieve**
3. Exact String Match Sieve
4. **Relaxed String Match Sieve**
5. Precise Constructs Sieve (e.g., appositives)
- 6-8. Strict Head Matching Sieves A-C
9. **Proper Head Word Match Sieve**
10. **Alias Sieve**
11. Relaxed Head Matching Sieve
12. **Lexical Chain Sieve**
13. Pronouns Sieve

Table 1: The sieves in our system; sieves new to this paper are in bold.

Entity Coreference (2010 – present)

Rule 1: cluster together all entity mentions that are identical

The Ever Given cargo ship has been stuck for the past six days. While reports of Ever Given started to ...

Entity Coreference (2010 – present)

Rule 10: cluster together all entity mentions
that are aliases according to Wikipedia

Donald Glover, better known
as Childish Gambino, has
written and produced an
incredible TV series titled
Atlanta.



Glover at the premiere of *The Martian* in September 2015

Born	Donald McKinley Glover Jr. September 25, 1983 (age 37) Edwards Air Force Base , Edwards, California, U.S.
Other names	Childish Gambino • mcDJ

Entity Coreference (2011 – present)

Then, many systems threw
tons of manually-defined
features into their models

CoNLL F1: 65.3

Narrowing the Modeling Gap: A Cluster-Ranking Approach to Coreference Resolution. Rahman and Ng. JAIR 2011

Improving Coreference Resolution by Learning Entity-Level Distributed Representations. Clark and Manning. ACL 2016

Features describing m_j , a candidate antecedent	
1 PRONOUN_1	Y if m_j is a pronoun; else N
2 SUBJECT_1	Y if m_j is a subject; else N
3 NESTED_1	Y if m_j is a nested NP; else N
Features describing m_k , the mention to be resolved	
4 NUMBER_2	SINGULAR OR PLURAL
5 GENDER_2	MALE, FEMALE, UNKNOWN
6 PRONOUN_2	common first name
7 NESTED_2	Y if m_k is a pronoun
8 SEMCLASS_2	the semantic class
9 ANIMACY_2	NOMINALIZATION, DATE, MANNER, LOCATION, LIST
10 PRO_TYPE_2	mined using WordNet (Finkel, Grenager, and Manning, 2009) or named entity recognizer (Finkel, Grenager, and Manning, 2009) and the nominative case feature value for the mention
Features describing the relationship between the mention to be resolved	
11 HEAD_MATCH	C if the mentions have the same head word
12 STR_MATCH	C if the mentions have the same string
13 SUBSTR_MATCH	C if one mention is a substring of the other
14 PRO_STR_MATCH	C if both mention are strings
15 PN_STR_MATCH	C if both mention are proper nouns
16 NONPRO_STR_MATCH	C if the two mention are not strings; else I
17 MODIFIER_MATCH	C if the mentions have the same modifier
18 PRO_TYPE_MATCH	C if both mention are of the same type; else I
19 NUMBER	C if the mention has the same number for one or both mentions
20 GENDER	C if the mentions have the same gender for one or both mentions
21 AGREEMENT	C if the mentions have the same agreement features in both number and gender
22 ANIMACY	C if the mention has the same animacy for one or both mentions
23 BOTH_PRONOUNS	C if both mention are pronouns
24 BOTH_PROPER_NOUNS	C if both mention are proper nouns; else NA
25 MAXIMALNP	C if the two mention are maximal NPs; else I
26 SPAN	C if neither mention spans the other
27 INDEFINITE	C if m_k is an indefinite pronoun; else I
28 APPOSITIVE	C if the mentions are in appositive construction
29 COPULAR	C if the mentions are in a copular construction; else I

Additional Mention Features: The type of the mention (pronoun, nominal, proper, or list), the mention's position (index of the mention divided by the number of mentions in the document), whether the mentions is contained in another mention, and the length of the mention in words.

Document Genre: The genre of the mention's document (broadcast news, newswire, web data, etc.).

Distance Features: The distance between the mentions in sentences, the distance between the mentions in intervening mentions, and whether the mentions overlap.

Speaker Features: Whether the mentions have the same speaker and whether one mention is the other mention's speaker as determined by string matching rules from Raghunathan et al. (2010).

String Matching Features: Head match, exact string match, and partial string match.

Entity Coreference (2011 – present)

Features describing m_j , a candidate antecedent	
1 PRONOUN_1	Y if m_j is a pronoun; else N
2 SUBJECT_1	Y if m_j is a subject; else N
3 NESTED_1	Y if m_j is a nested NP; else N
Features describing m_k , the mention to which m_j may refer	
4 NUMBER_2	SINGULAR OR PLURAL
5 GENDER_2	MALE, FEMALE, UNKNOWN

Additional Mention Features: The type of the mention (pronoun, nominal phrase, or list), the mention's document (mention's document divided by document), other mentions in the document, whether the mention is a common first name, etc.

Takeaway #2

Research has largely relied on ML models w/
many manually-defined features.

Strong results but clear limitations.

21	AGREEMENT	C if the mentions have the same gender; else NA
22	ANIMACY	C if the mention is animacy for one of the other mentions; else I
23	BOTH_PRONOUNS	C if both mentions are pronouns; else NA
24	BOTH_PROPER_NOUNS	C if both mentions are proper nouns; else NA
25	MAXIMALNP	C if the two mentions are maximal NPs; else I
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Event Coreference (2014 - present)

ECB+ corpus has 982 short documents

Actress Lindsay Lohan finally checked into court-mandated rehab at the Betty Ford Center late Thursday.

Lindsay Lohan checked into the Betty Ford Clinic in Rancho Mirage, California on Thursday night, for what is to be a three-month stay, her rep confirms to People.

Event Coreference (2014 - present)

SameLemma: if two mentions have the same lemma (base form), classify them as being coref!

Original word	Lemmatization
running	run
ran	run

This shouldn't work so well, but it does.

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- No Data
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Additional Research

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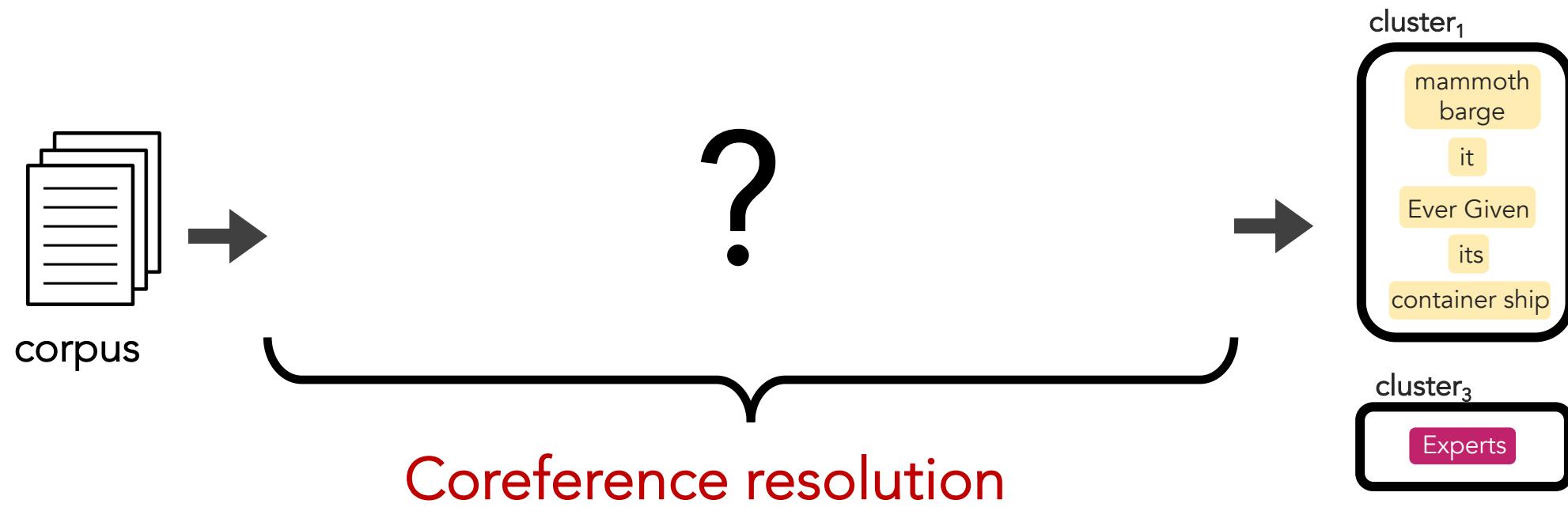
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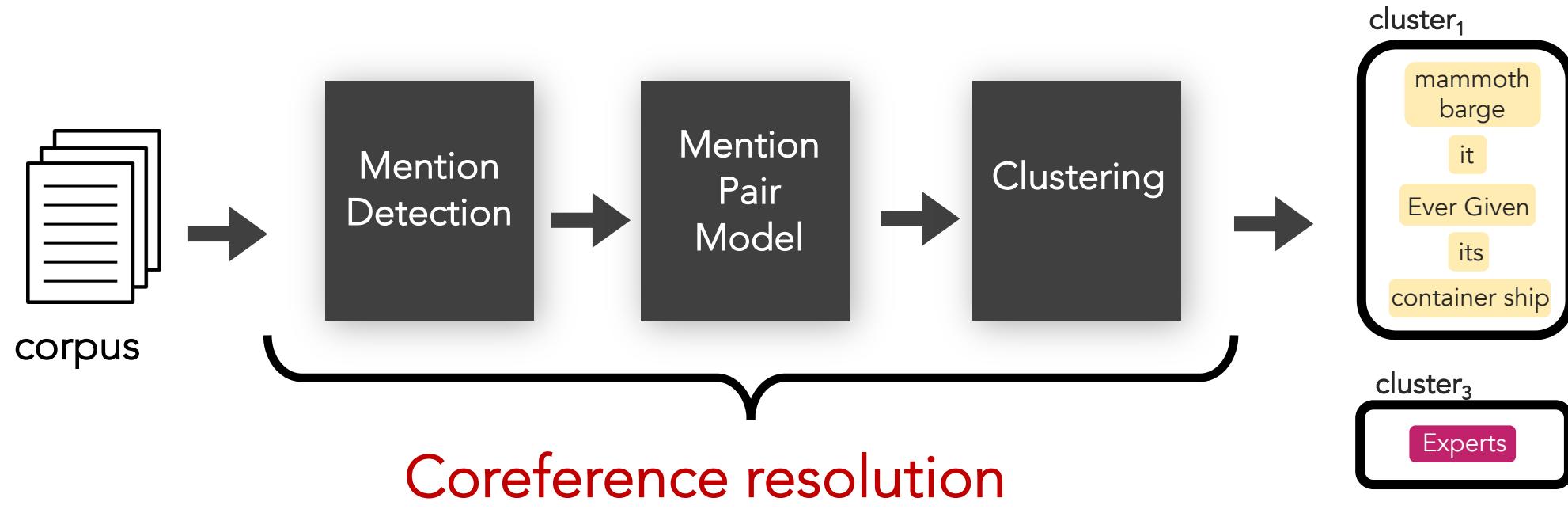
- Leveraging Data

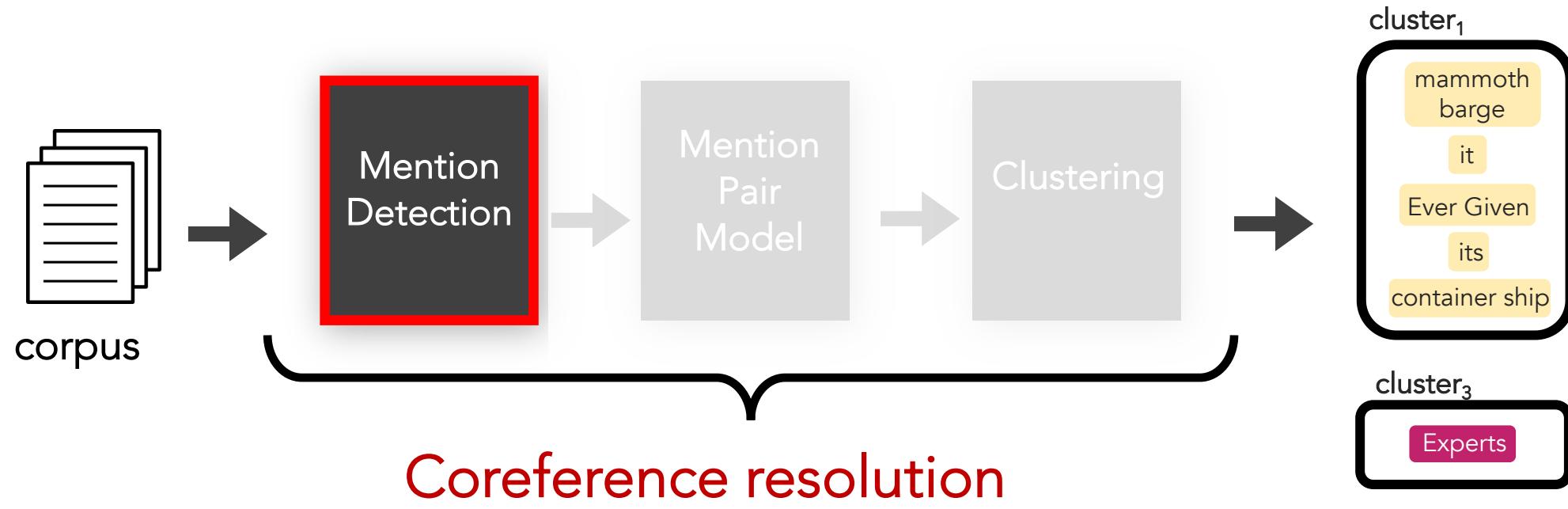
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■ Additional Research







Mention Detection

Determines which spans of words constitute a mention

4.6 Magnitude Quake Recorded in Sonoma County

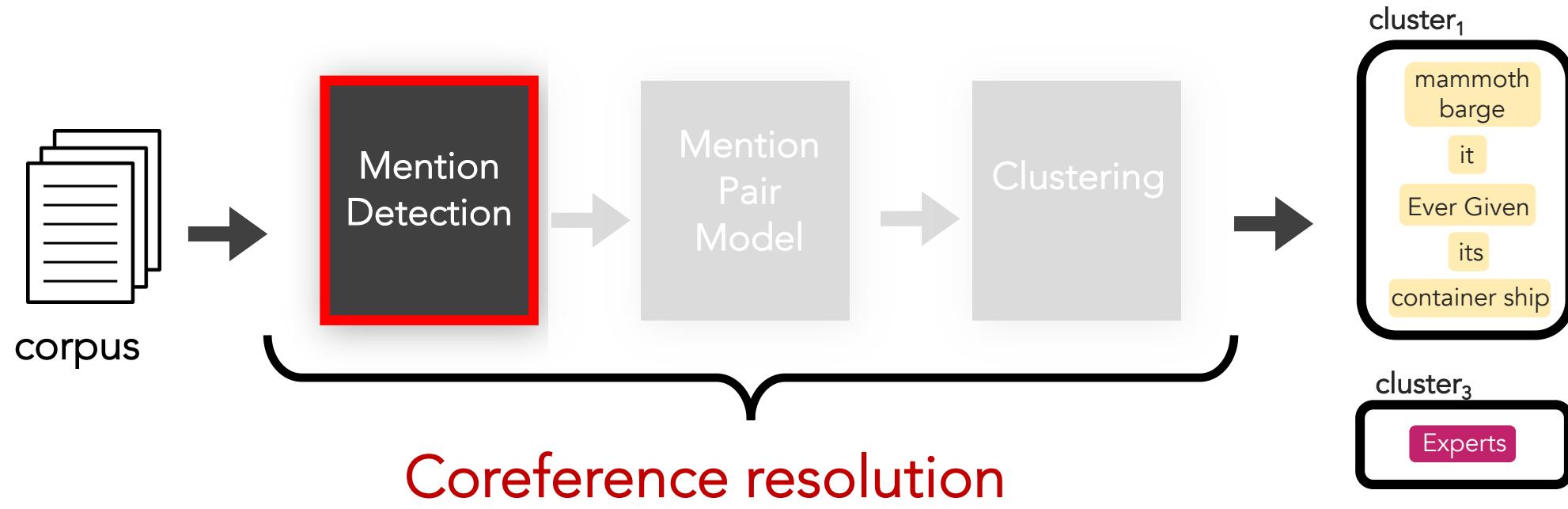
An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 4.6 was recorded in the North Bay this morning, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The quake occurred at 2:09 a.m. about 14 miles north-northeast of Healdsburg and had a depth of 1.2 miles. It was followed by a 2.9 aftershock at 2:12 a.m. and a 2.2 at 2:15 a.m.... there are no reports of injuries or major damage.

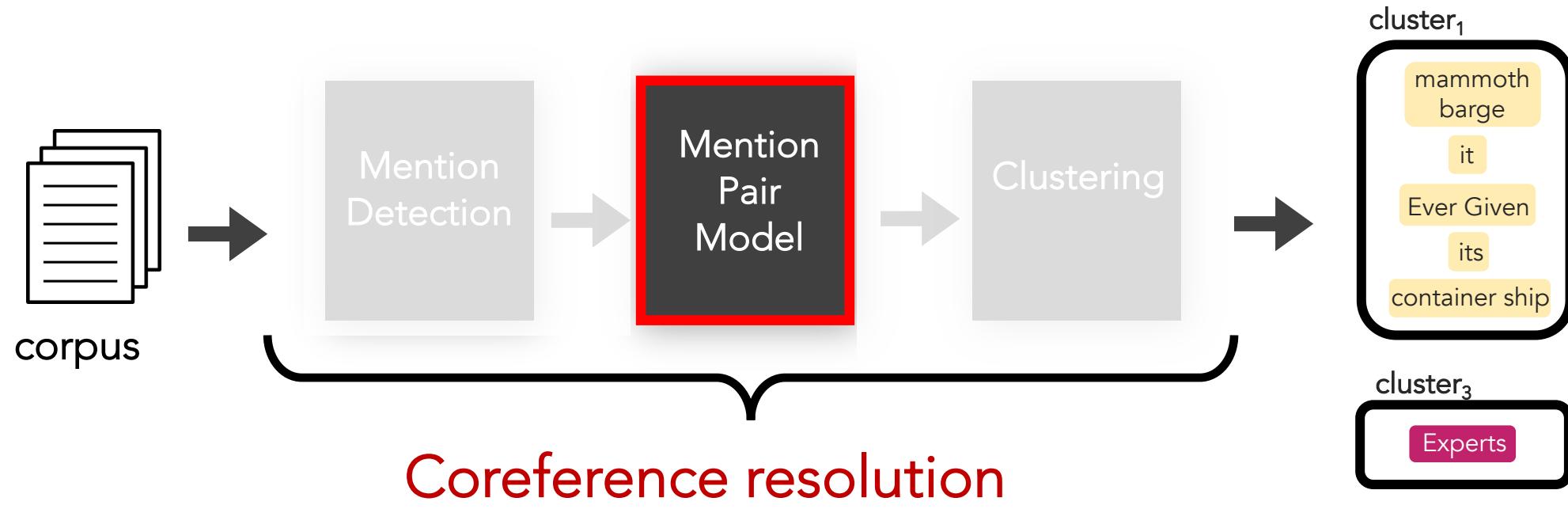
Doc 1

4.6 Magnitude Quake Rattles Sonoma County Early Thursday

An earthquake measuring 4.6 rattled Sonoma and Lake counties early Thursday, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. The quake occurred at 2:09 a.m., about 14 miles northeast of Healdsburg, on the Maacama Fault with a depth of 12 miles. A Sonoma County Sheriff's dispatcher said around 7 a.m. that there had been no reports of damage or injuries.

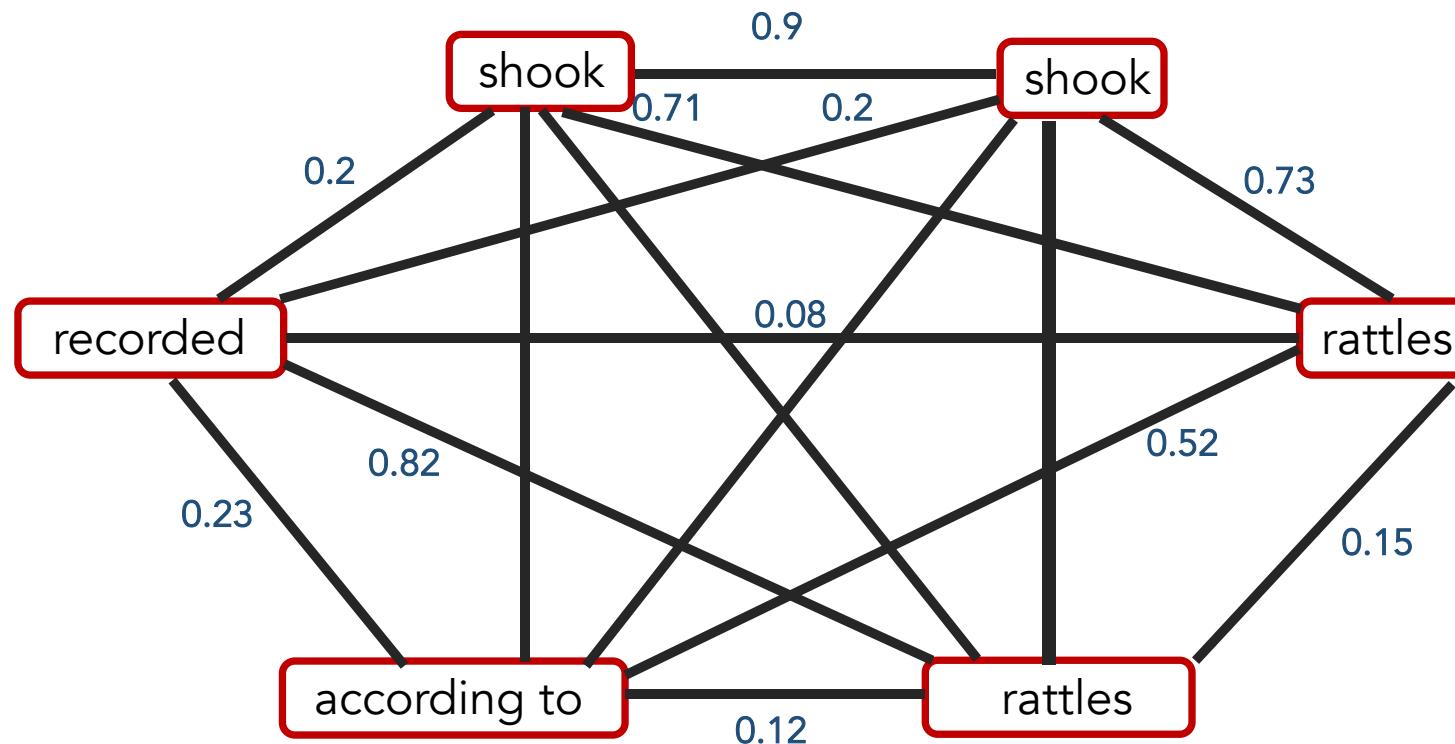
Doc 2





Mention Pair Model

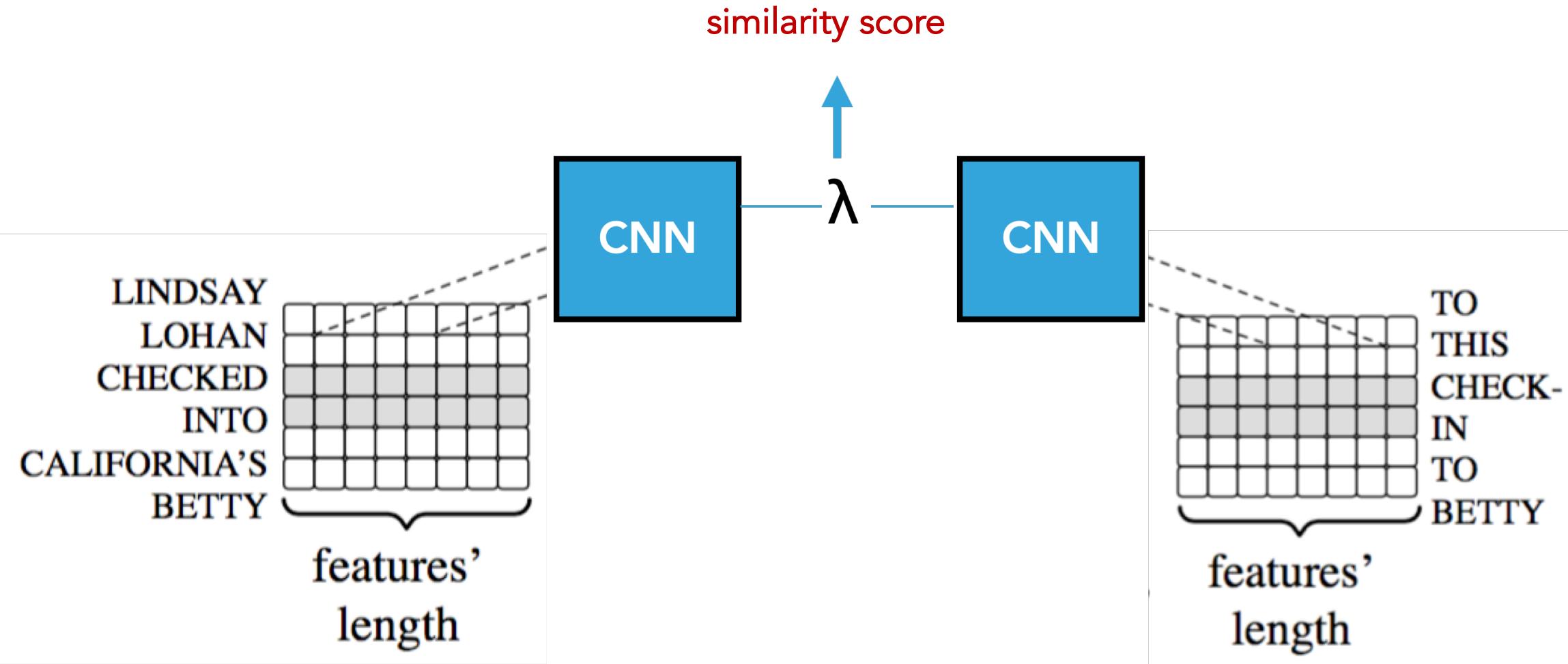
Calculates a coref probability for all pairs of mentions



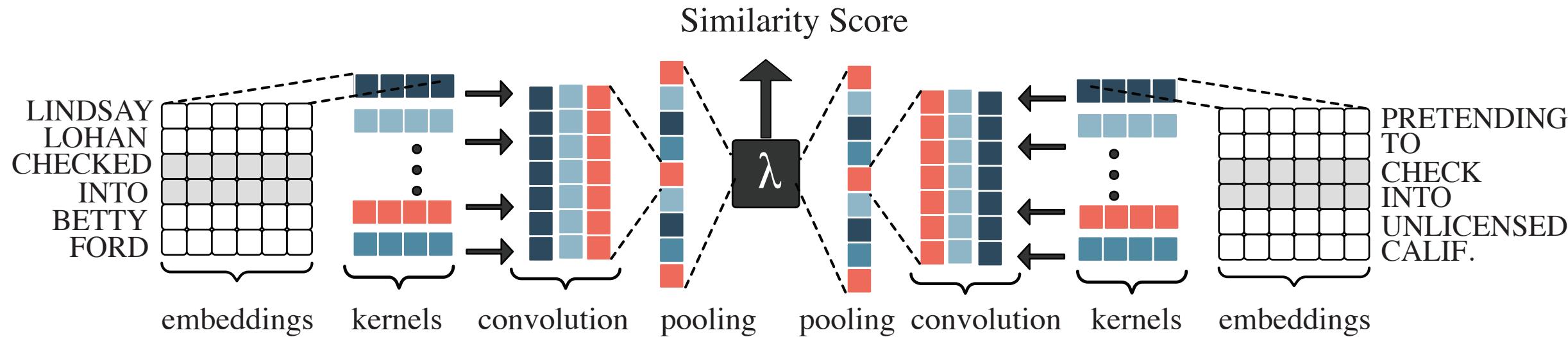
Conjoined CNN

Feature	# dimensions
Word embeddings	300
Lemma embeddings	300
Dependency Parse embeddings	400
Character embeddings	100
Part-of-speech embeddings	300

Conjoined CNN



Conjoined CNN



Distance Score: L² norm

Loss Function: Contrastive Loss

$$(1 - Y) \frac{1}{2} (D_W)^2 + (Y) \frac{1}{2} \{ \max(0, m - D_W) \}^2$$

Two identical networks with tied weights

Conjoined CNN

We predict these should coref as pairs

m_{17}, m_2	0.0	erupted	erupted
m_{17}, m_4	0.0	erupted	erupted
m_5, m_{923}	0.03	announced	announce
m_{78}, m_{57}	0.05	erupt	erupted

0.5 threshold

m_{801}, m_{39}	0.97	revealed	broke into
m_{26}, m_{48}	0.98	handed down	confirmed

accuracy: **92.4**

precision: **55.8**

recall: **71.2**

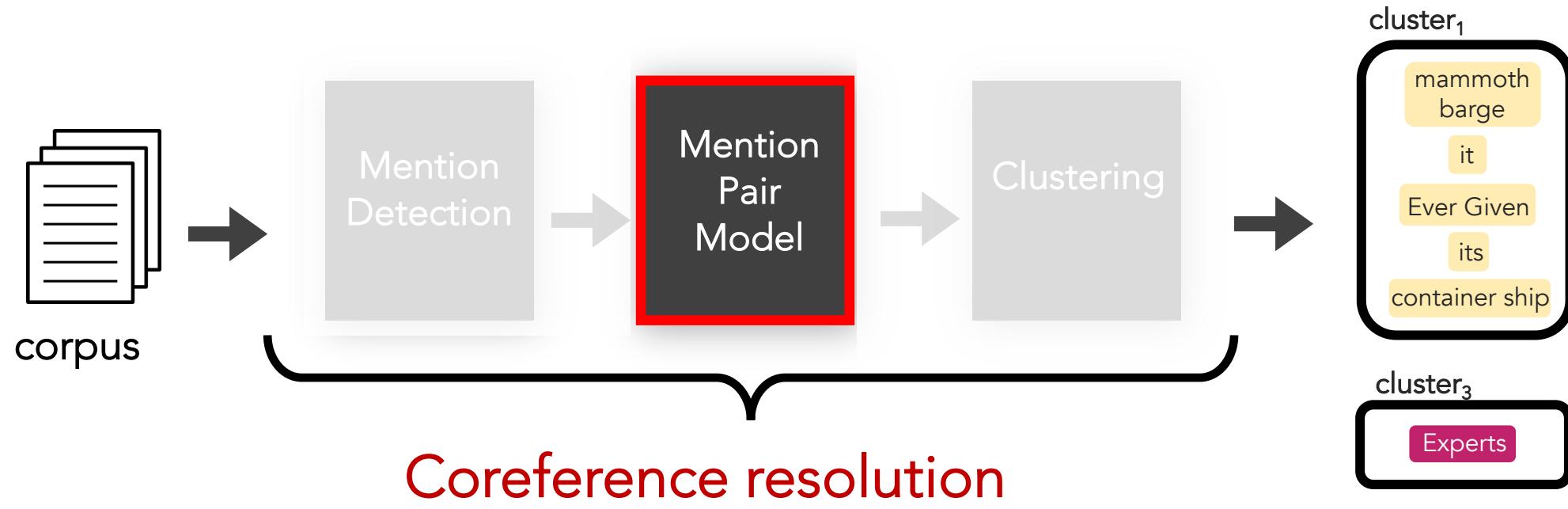
f1: **62.8**

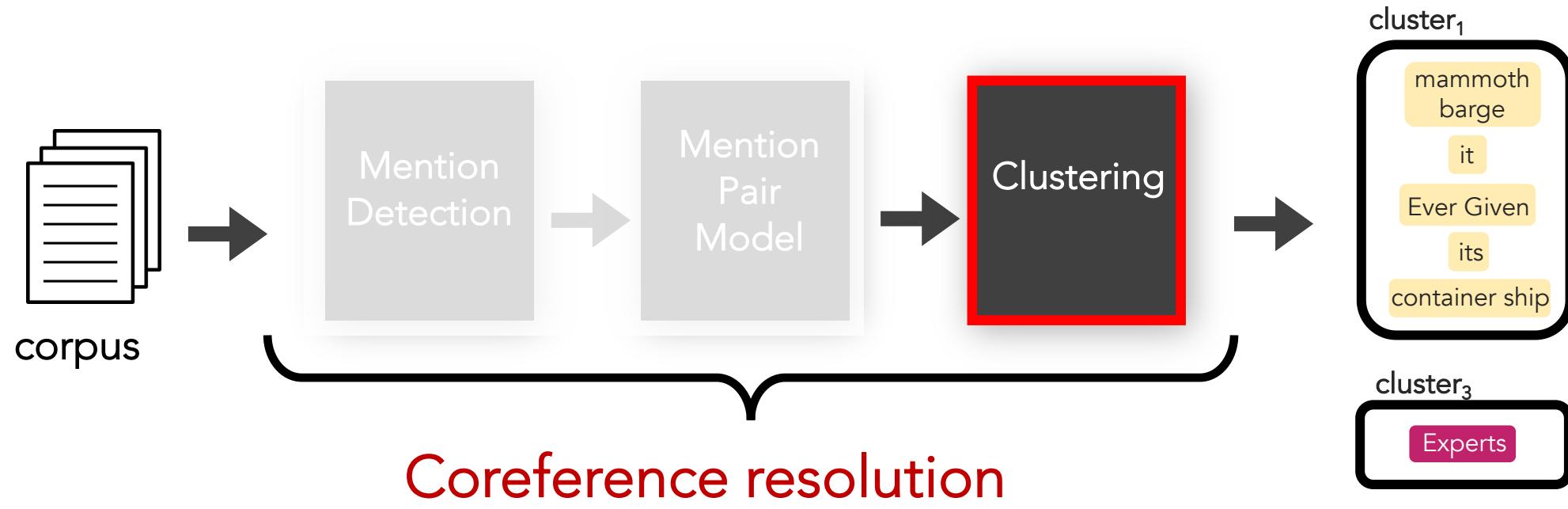
We predict these should NOT coref as pairs

Development Set Results

	Precision	Recall	F1
Within-Document			
SameLemma	53.9	48.0	50.8
LibSVM	51.2	52.0	51.6 (0.01)
FFNN	50.3	59.8	54.6 (0.5)
CCNN	51.5	68.2	58.7 (0.8)
Cross-Document			
SameLemma	55.6	54.1	54.8
LibSVM	58.6	59.1	58.8 (0.02)
FFNN	55.3	62.0	58.5 (0.6)
CCNN	55.8	71.2	62.8 (0.6)

LibSVM and FFNN received same features as CCNN,
plus relational features (e.g., cosine sim., dot-product, WordNet)





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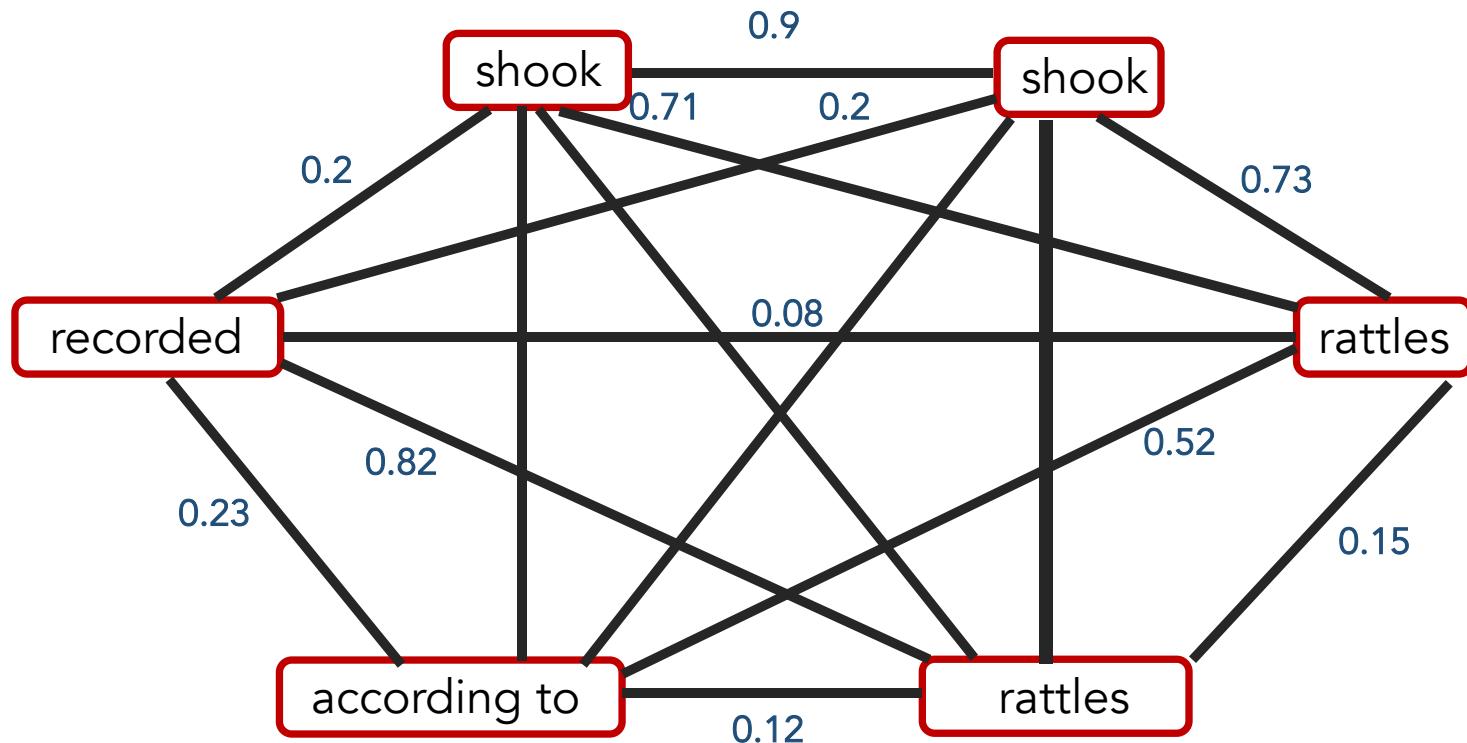
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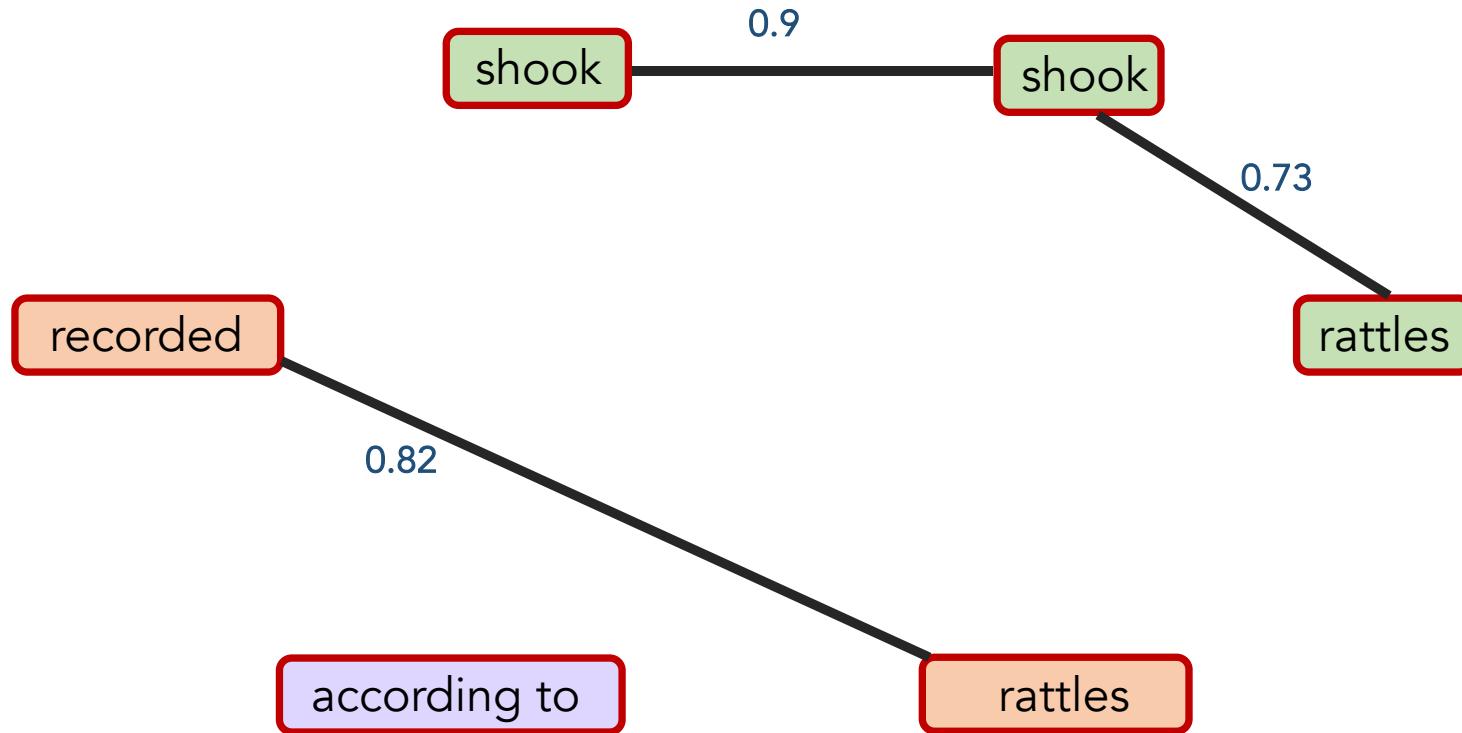
■ Additional Research

Goal is to return clusters from the fully-connected graph



Clustering

Goal is to return clusters from the fully-connected graph

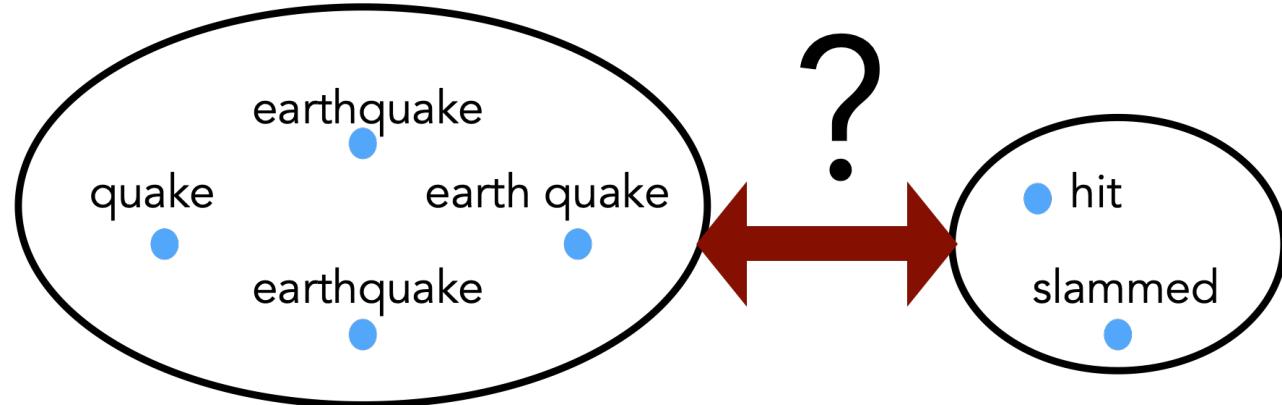


Nearly 100% of past systems simply performed **agglomerative clustering**.

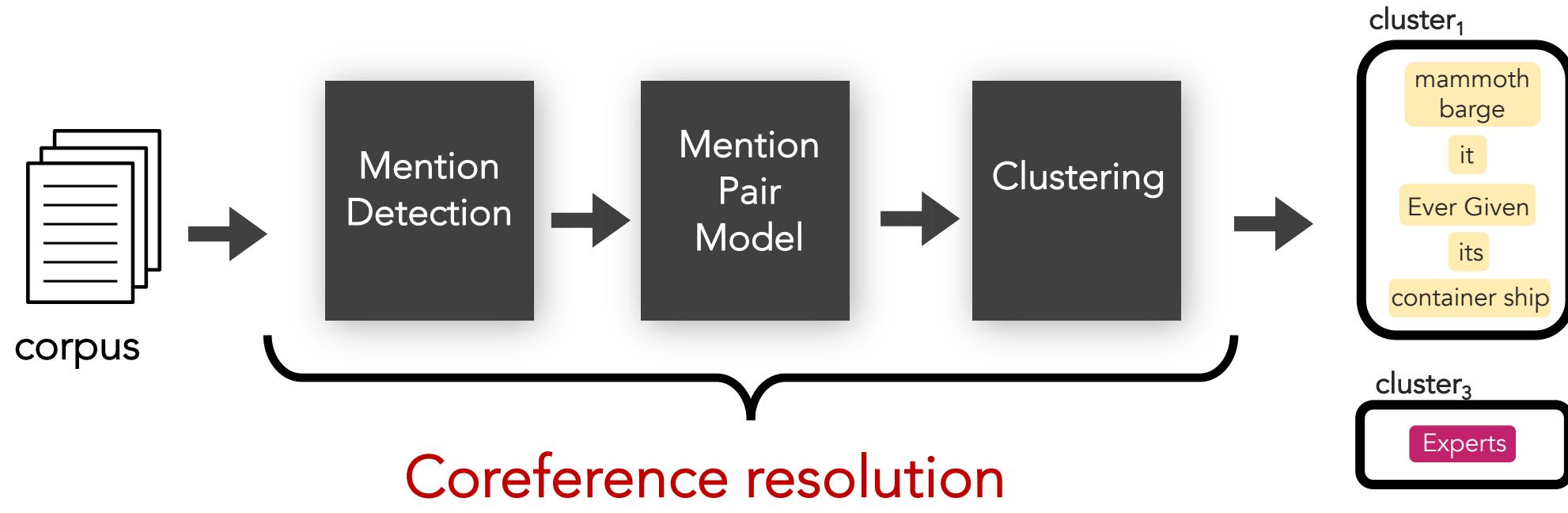
We want:

- More holistic, cluster-to-cluster predictions
- Less sensitivity to non-uniformity across topics
- No additional stopping parameter
- Prevention against an all-subsuming cluster

Clustering



- min-pair distance: $\min_{m_i, m_j} d(m_i, m_j)$
- avg-pair distance: $\frac{\sum_{m_i, m_j} d(m_i, m_j)}{\|C_x\| \|C_y\|}$
- max-pair distance: $\max_{m_i, m_j} d(m_i, m_j)$
- size of candidate cluster: $\frac{\|C_x\| + \|C_y\|}{\sum_z \|C_z\|}$



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Mention Detection

Gold Test Mentions

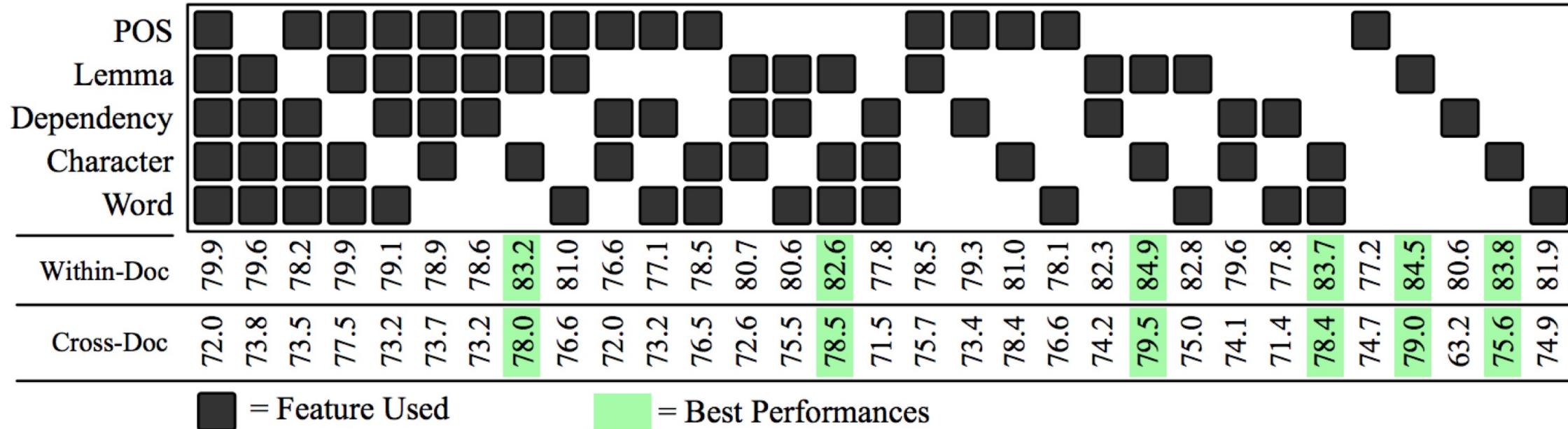
... as Peter Capaldi stepped into Matt Smith's soon to be vacant ...

Predicted Test Mentions

... as Peter Capaldi stepped into Matt Smith's soon to be vacant ...

Feature Ablation (full system)

ECB+ Development Performance



Lemma + Character Embeddings yields the best performance

Using Predicted Mentions

	Within-Document				Cross-Document			
	MUC	B ³	CEAF	CoNLL F1	MUC	B ³	CEAF	CoNLL F1
SameLemma _{any}	40.4	66.4	66.2	57.7	66.7	51.4	46.2	54.8
HDDCRP [108]	53.4	75.4	71.7	66.8	73.1	53.5	49.5	58.7
Choubey [20]	62.6	72.4	71.8	68.9	73.4	61.0	56.5	63.6
FFNN+AGG	61.6	73.6	69.1	68.1 (0.14)	74.8	55.3	60.2	63.4 (0.21)
FFNN+NC	62.5	73.2	70.8	68.8 (0.17)	76.1	56.0	60.4	64.2 (0.18)
CCNN+AGG	65.2	74.2	69.0	69.5 (0.16)	75.8	55.8	62.7	64.8 (0.21)
CCNN+NC	67.3	73.3	69.6	70.1 (0.20)	77.2	56.3	62.0	65.2 (0.22)
CCNN+NC (ensemble)	67.7	73.6	69.8	70.4 (0.13)	78.1	56.6	62.1	65.6 (0.17)

Table 4.6: Coreference Systems' clustering performance on the ECB+ test set, using the predicted mentions and testing procedure from Choubey and Huang [20]. Our CCNN models use only the Lemma + Character Embedding features. FFNN denotes a Feed-Forward Neural Network Mention-Pair model. AGG denotes Agglomerative Clustering. Our models' scores represent the average from 50 runs, with standard deviation denoted by ().

Using Gold Mentions

	Within-Document				Cross-Document			
	MUC	B ³	CEAF	CoNLL F1	MUC	B ³	CEAF	CoNLL F1
Test Set: ECB+ Gold Mentions								
SameLemma	58.3	83.0	75.9	72.4	84.2	68.2	48.0	66.8
FFNN+AGG	59.9	85.6	78.4	74.6	77.7	69.9	50.1	65.9
FFNN+NC	60.7	86.7	79.4	75.6	74.9	67.8	56.3	67.0
CCNN+AGG	70.5	89.1	83.5	81.0	84.1	70.7	55.5	70.1
CCNN+NC	70.9	88.9	83.6	81.2	86.4	71.7	59.1	72.4

FINDINGS

- State-of-the-art for **event** coref
- Contextualized representations
- More holistic clustering
- Char + Lemma Embeddings were the only two necessary features

Errors

Total # of Mention-Pairs to test: **8,669**

False Positives: **86**

False Negatives: **569**

False Positives

semantics — 82%

context-dependent (30%)

similar meanings (38%)

wide-reading (14%)

unclear — 13%

syntax — 3%

too difficult for me — 2%

False Negatives

semantics — 42%

unclear — 20%

slang — 16%

longer names — 14%

pronouns — 8%

CCNN + Clustering

False Positive

Sony announced today ...

Friday, Obama announced ...

False Negatives

The casting of Smith ...

Smith stepped into the role ...

Smith was handed the keys to play ...

False Negative

Two of the bombs fell within the Yida Camp, including ...

The UN Refugee Agency on Friday strongly condemned the aerial bombing of ...

False Positives

False Negatives

Sony an

Friday,

False N

Takeaway #3 The community needs a **better corpus**.

Takeaway #4 Event coref is especially hard, but using deep learning w/ **contextualized representations works well**.

Two of the bombs **fell** within the Yida Camp, including ...

The UN Refugee Agency on Friday strongly condemned the aerial **bombing** of ...

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■ Additional Research

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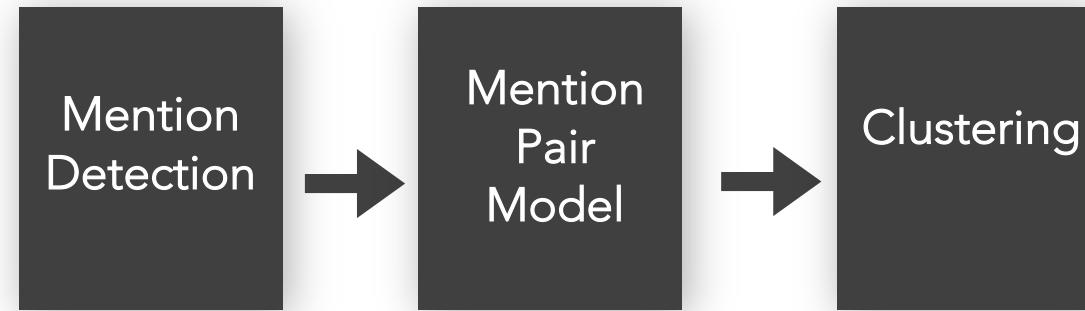
- Leveraging Data

- No Data

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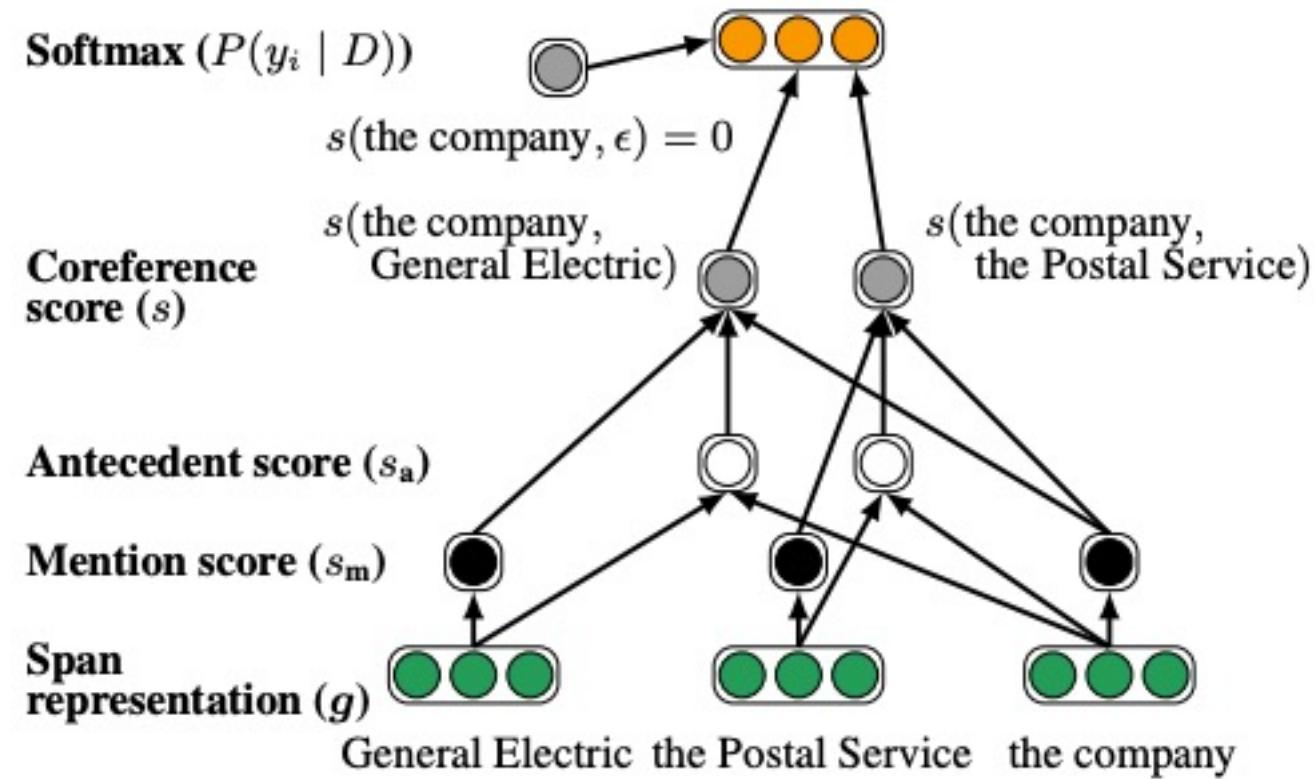
■ Additional Research

End-to-end neural systems



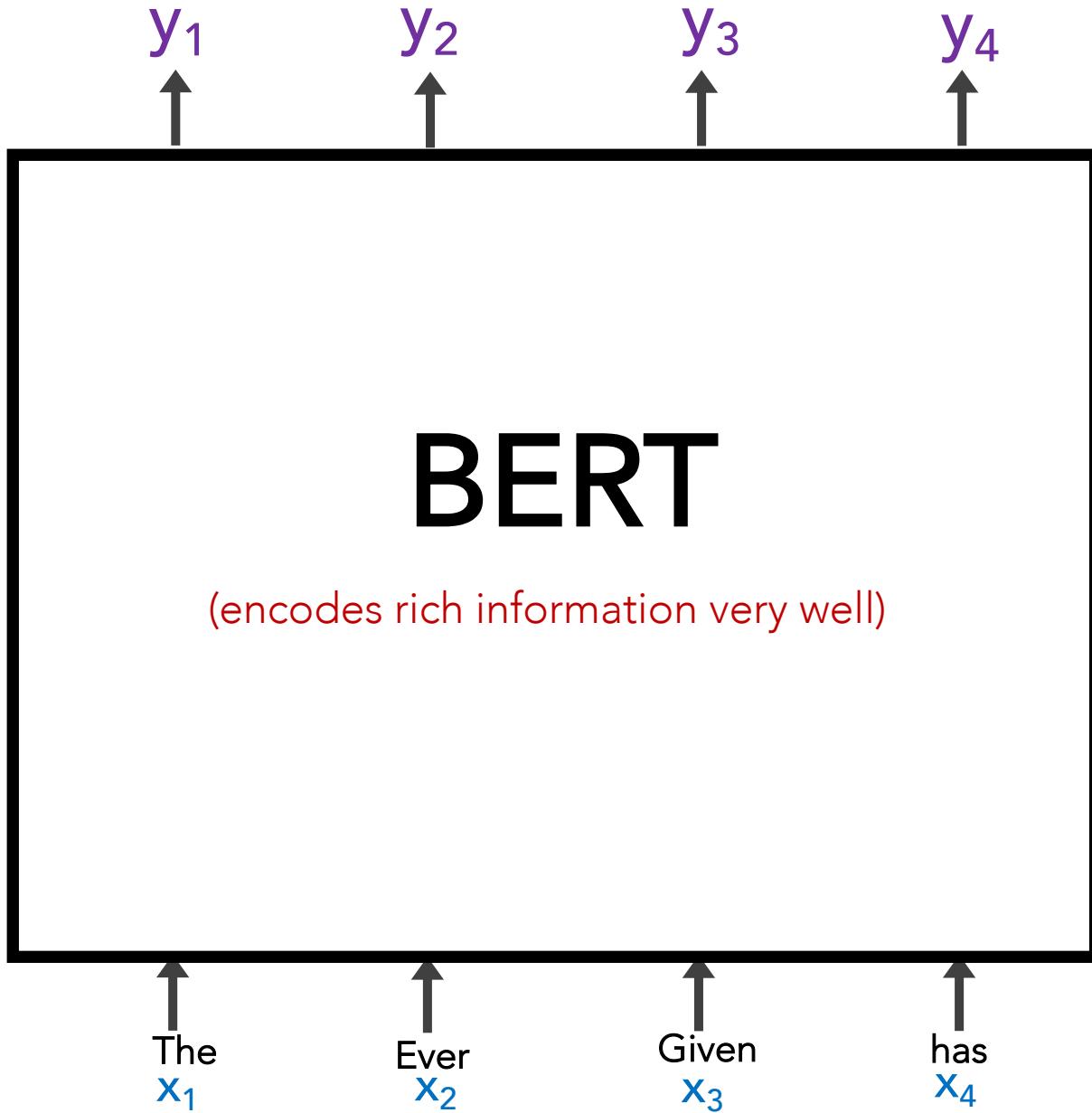
Entity Coreference

End-to-end

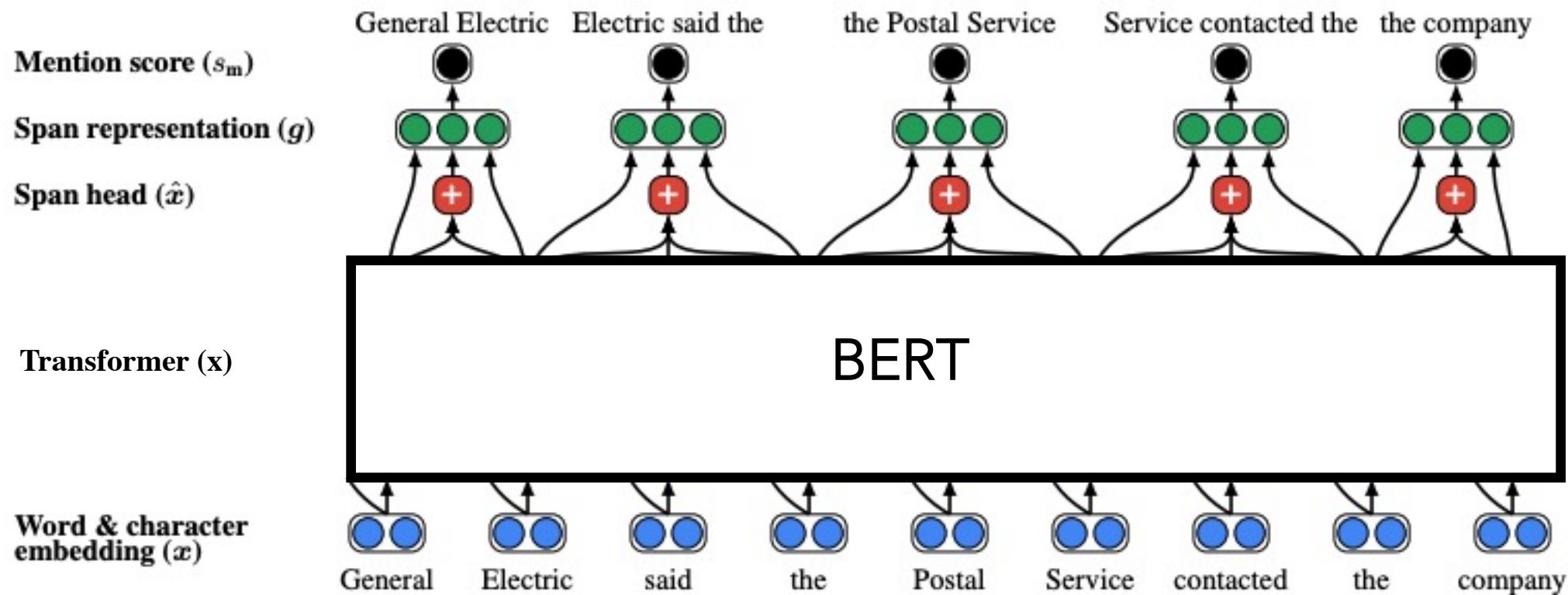


Uses several important features

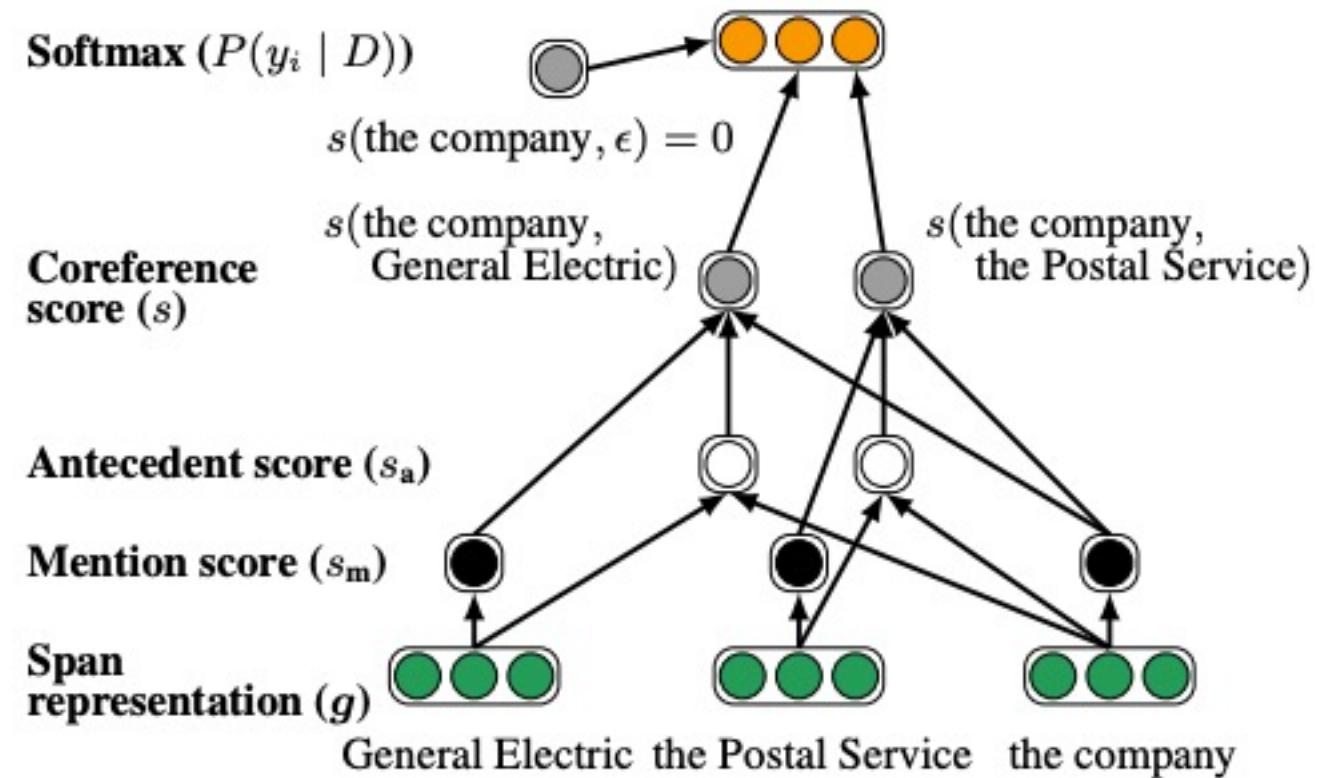
	Avg. F1	Δ
Our model (ensemble)	69.0	+1.3
Our model (single)	67.7	
– distance and width features	63.9	-3.8
– GloVe embeddings	65.3	-2.4
– speaker and genre metadata	66.3	-1.4
– head-finding attention	66.4	-1.3
– character CNN	66.8	-0.9
– Turian embeddings	66.9	-0.8



End-to-End



End-to-End



- Pronouns (especially in conversation)
- Conflating relatedness with equality
(e.g., “*Flight attendants*” with “*pilots*”)
- World-knowledge

Also such location devices, (**some ships**) have smoke floats (**they**) can toss out so the man overboard will be able to use smoke signals as a way of trying to, let the rescuer locate (**them**).

- Mention paraphrasing
(e.g., “*Royals*” with “*Prince Charles and his wife Camilla*”)

Coref is still far from solved

Category	Snippet	#base	#large
Related Entities	Watch spectacular performances by dolphins and sea lions at the <i>Ocean Theater</i> ... It seems the North Pole and the <u>Marine Life Center</u> will also be renovated.	12	7
Lexical	Over the past 28 years , <i>the Ocean Park</i> has basically.. The entire park has been ...	15	9
Pronouns	In the meantime , our children need <i>an education</i> . That's all we're asking.	17	13
Mention Paraphrasing	And in case you missed it <i>the Royals</i> are here. Today Britain's Prince Charles and his wife Camilla ...	14	12
Conversation	(Priscilla:) My mother was Thelma Wahl . She was ninety years old ... (Keith:) <i>Priscilla Scott</i> is mourning . Her mother Thelma Wahl was a resident ..	18	16
Misc.	He is my , She is my Goddess , ah	17	17
<i>Total</i>		93	74

Table 3: Qualitative Analysis: #base and #large refers to the number of cluster-level errors on a subset of the OntoNotes English development set. Underlined and **bold-faced** mentions respectively indicate incorrect and missing assignments to *italicized* mentions/clusters. The miscellaneous category refers to other errors including (reasonable) predictions that are either missing from the gold data or violate annotation guidelines.

However, coref is still far from solved

Category

Takeaway #5

Pre-trained LLM (e.g., **BERT**) capture rich information but miss nuanced cases

Related Entities

Lexical

Pronouns

Mention

And in case you missed it *the Royals* are here.

14

12

Paraphrasing

Today Britain's Prince Charles and his wife Camilla...

Conversation

(Priscilla:) **My** mother was Thelma Wahl . She was ninety years old ...

18

16

(Keith:) *Priscilla Scott* is mourning . **Her** mother Thelma Wahl was a resident ..

Misc.

He is my, She is my Goddess , ah

17

17

Total

93

74

Table 3: Qualitative Analysis: #base and #large refers to the number of cluster-level errors on a subset of the OntoNotes English development set. Underlined and **bold-faced** mentions respectively indicate incorrect and missing assignments to *italicized* mentions/clusters. The miscellaneous category refers to other errors including (reasonable) predictions that are either missing from the gold data or violate annotation guidelines.

However, coref is still far from solved

Category

Related Entities

Lexical

Pronouns

Mention

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14

Paraphrasing

Today Britain's Prince Charles and his wife Camilla

12

Conversa

Misc.

Total

Takeaway #5

Pre-trained LLM (e.g., **BERT**) capture rich information but miss nuanced cases

Takeaway #6

Until we have better data, **we don't fully understand the capabilities of our existing systems**, nor do we know what is possible.

Table 3: Qu

OntoNotes

missing assignments to *italicized* mentions/clusters. The miscellaneous category refers to other errors including (reasonable) predictions that are either missing from the gold data or violate annotation guidelines.

Takeaway #1

Coreference resolution determines which mentions all refer to the same underlying **entity** or **event**, and is ultimately a clustering task.

Takeaway #2

Research has largely relied on ML models w/ **many manually-defined features**. Strong results but clear limitations.

Takeaway #3

The community needs a **better corpus**.

Takeaway #4

Event coref is especially hard, but using deep learning w/
contextualized representations works well.

Takeaway #5

Neural pre-trained text encoders (e.g., **BERT**) capture rich information but miss nuanced cases

Takeaway #6

Until we have better data, **we don't fully understand the capabilities of our existing systems,** or know what's possible.

INSIGHTS

Performance is reaching an asymptote.

Instead of hammering away on a problem and throwing complex models at it, pay close attention to:

1. What you're trying to model (i.e., **your data**)
2. How you're framing the problem
(e.g., a **clustering task** via pairwise predictions)

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■

Additional Research

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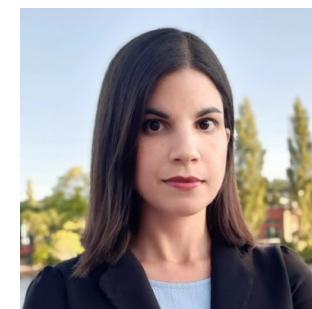
How can we equip our coreference resolution models with **common sense** **knowledge?**



Sahithya Ravi
UBC
PhD Student

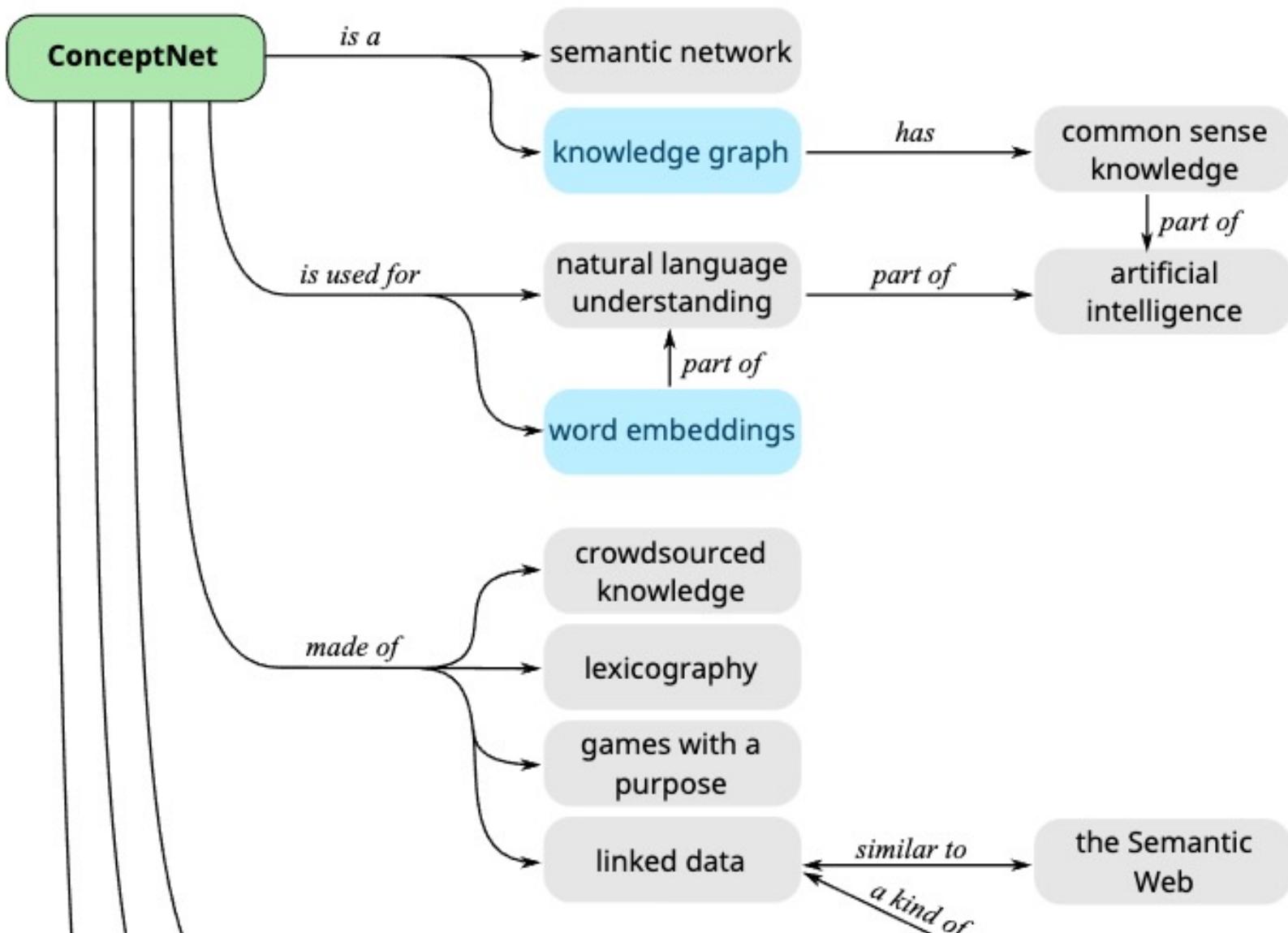


Ning Hua
Harvard
Bioinformatics MS

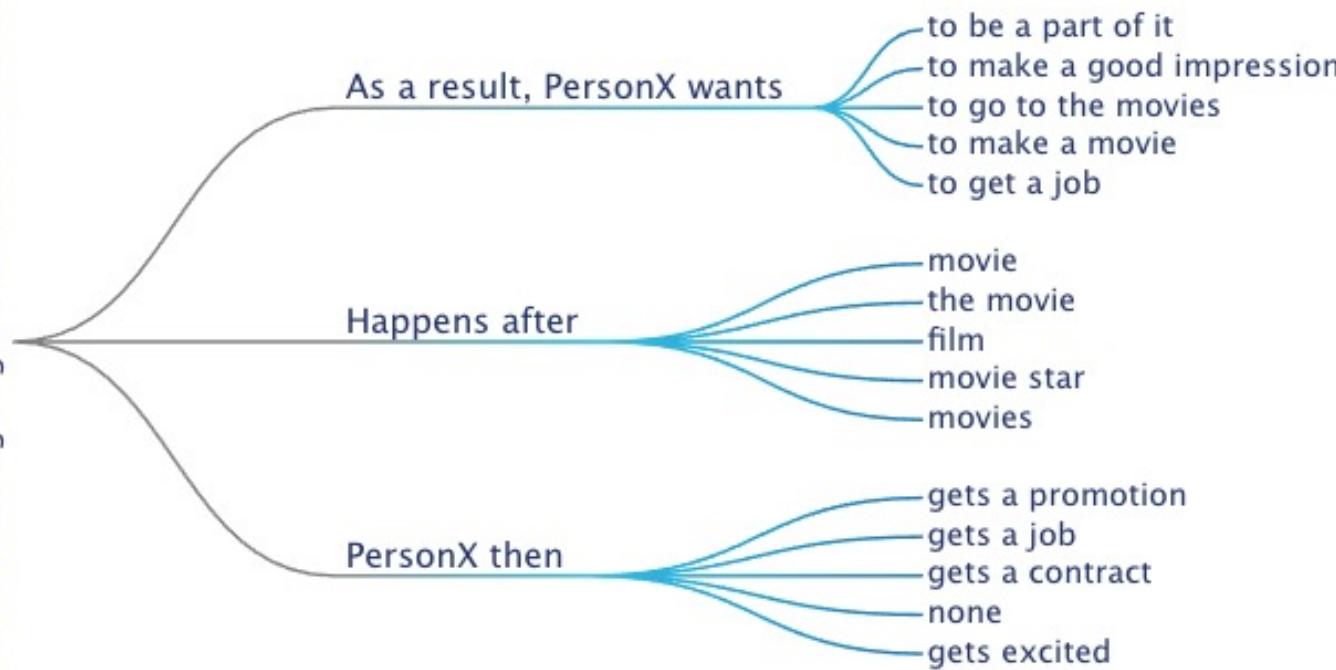


Vered Shwartz
UBC
Assistant Professor

- SOTA coref model uses RoBERTa as a base.
- Before coref training, we fine-tune the RoBERTa base on ConceptNet



COMeT Predictions Graph



- Also, using graph embeddings and graph alignments to influence coref modelling

Can Bayesian clustering improve joint **entity** and **event** coreference?

Joint Entity and
Event Coreference



Xin Zeng

IACS MS Thesis

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Since labelled data is a scarce commodity, can we build a powerful unsupervised model?



Alessandro Stolfo

ETH-Zurich
PhD Student



Vikram Gupta

ETH-Zurich
Research Affiliate



Mrinmaya Sachan

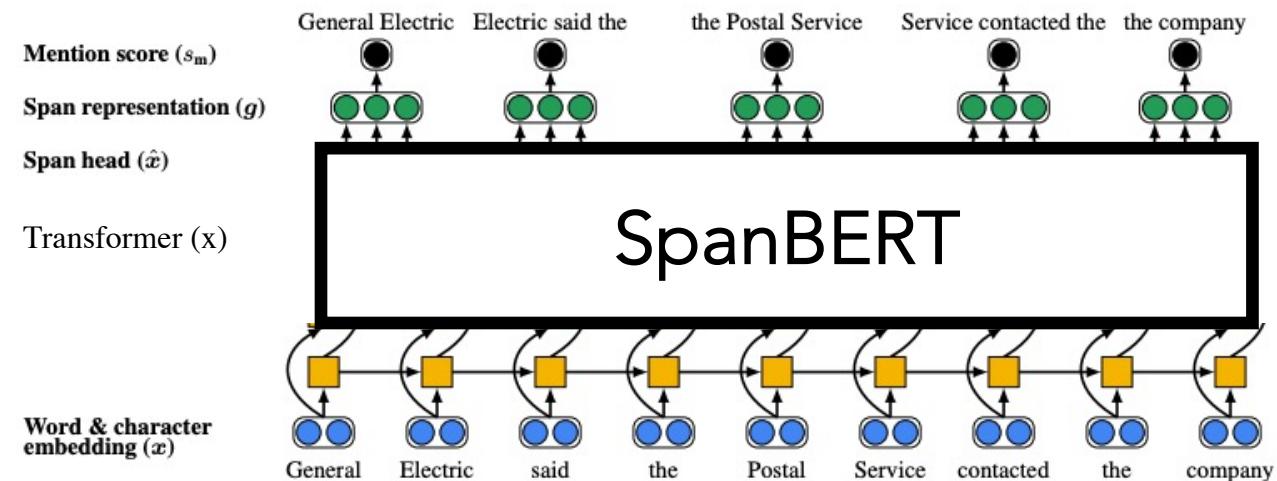
ETH-Zurich
Assistant Professor

We combine the old school,
manual rule-based system

with the SOTA **BERT**-
based end-to-end model

Ordered sieves

1. **Mention Detection Sieve**
2. **Discourse Processing Sieve**
3. Exact String Match Sieve
4. **Relaxed String Match Sieve**
5. Precise Constructs Sieve (e.g., appositives)
- 6-8. Strict Head Matching Sieves A-C
9. **Proper Head Word Match Sieve**
10. **Alias Sieve**
11. Relaxed Head Matching Sieve
12. **Lexical Chain Sieve**
13. Pronouns Sieve

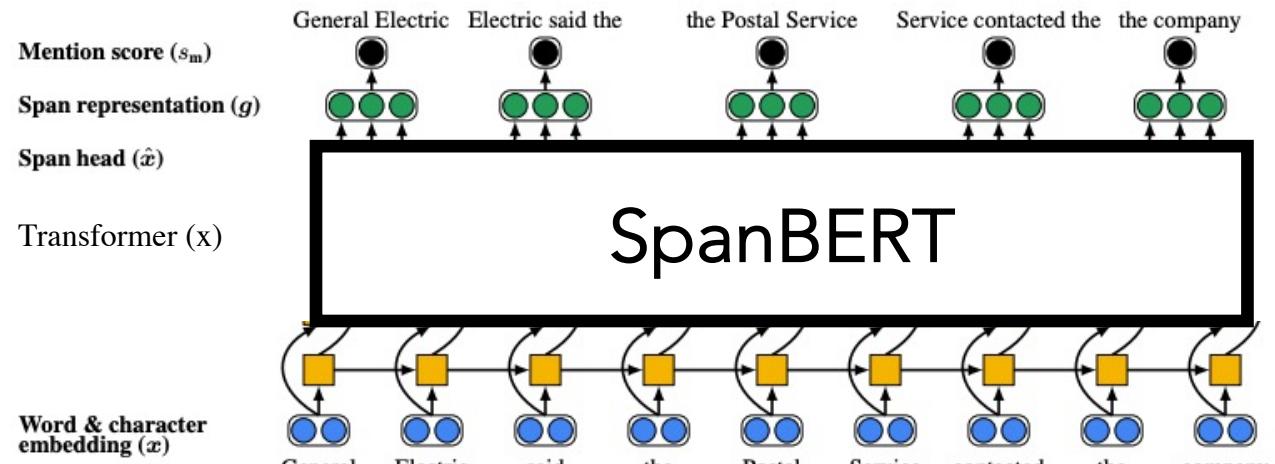


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Unsupervised
(doesn't need training data)

Supervised
(needs training data)

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Unsupervised
(doesn't need training data)



CONCERN

Training with **noisy (imperfect) rule-based labels** would limit our BERT model to perform no better than the rule-based system

CONCERN

Training with **noisy (imperfect) rule-based labels** would limit our BERT model to perform no better than the rule-based system

FINDINGS

Our combined BERT model successfully uses *distant-supervision* to outperform the **rule-based system**

	MUC			B ³			CEAF ϕ_4			CoNLL	
	P	R	F ₁	P	R	F ₁	P	R	F ₁	F ₁	
Stanford (Lee et al., 2011)	64.3	65.2	64.7	49.2	56.8	52.7	52.5	46.6	49.4	55.6	
Multigraph (Martschat, 2013)	-	-	65.4	-	-	54.4	-	-	50.2	56.7	
Unsup. Ranking (Ma et al., 2016)	-	-	67.7	-	-	55.9	-	-	51.8	58.4	
c2f-coref	65.7	68.0	66.9	50.9	59.4	54.8	52.9	49.1	50.9	57.5	
BERT-base + c2f-coref	66.8	69.2	68.0	51.5	60.6	55.7	53.1	50.3	51.7	58.5	
SpanBERT-base + c2f-coref	67.6	68.5	68.1	53.1	60.1	56.4	54.8	50.4	52.5	59.0	
BERT-large + c2f-coref	67.2	69.7	68.5	52.3	61.2	56.4	54.0	51.0	52.5	59.1	
SpanBERT-large + c2f-coref	67.4	69.8	68.6	52.4	61.8	56.7	54.1	51.4	52.7	59.3	

Table 1: Results on the test set of the English CoNLL-2012 shared task³. The scores relative to the c2f-coref model are obtained after training on the labels produced by Stanford’s system. Scores for Multigraph and the Unsupervised Ranking model are reported in Ma et al. (2016).

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Additional Research

Conclusions

Coreference Resolution has had many exciting advances in the last 10 years, but it's far from solved and remains one of the most challenging and exciting NLP tasks.