

11-712: NLP Lab Report

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Abstract

Dependency parsing is a core task in NLP, and it is widely used by many applications such as information extraction, question answering, and machine translation. In general, the resources for Chinese dependency parsing are less accessible than English, and publicly available Chinese dependency parsers are still very limited. In this project, the goal is to build a Chinese dependency parser that can be used by others.

1 Basic Information about Chinese Dependency Parsing

Chinese dependency parsing has attracted many interests in the past decade. Bikel and Chiang (2000) and Chiang and Bikel (2002) are among the first to use Penn Chinese Tree Bank for dependency parsing, where they adapted Xia (1999)’s head rules. A few years later, the CoNLL shared task opened a track for multilingual dependency parsing, which also included Chinese (Buchholz and Marsi, 2006; Nilsson et al., 2007). These shared tasks soon popularized Chinese dependency parsing by making datasets available, and there has been growing amount of literature since then (Carreras, 2007; Che et al., 2010; Duan et al., 2007; Nivre et al., 2007; Sagae and Tsujii, 2007; Zhang and Clark, 2008). In this work, we aim at building a new publicly available Chinese dependency parsing tool, using new technologies that aim at improving the accuracy of the state-of-the-art.

2 Past Work on the Syntax of Chinese

Chao (1968) is among the first to study the syntax of Chinese. Unlike English, there has been long debate on the wordhood of Chinese (Duanmu, 1998). Chao and others’ work investigate the free and bound forms, prosodic aspects (Shen, 1990), semantics Li (1972); Wu (1999), and morphological aspects (Dai, 1992; Sproat and Shih, 2002; Tang, 1989) to define the unit of word in Chinese. In addition, he has also studied the complex compound constructions (Zhang et al., 2000; Zhou et al., 1999) in Chinese, as well as the parts of speech such as nouns and verbs (Krifka, 1995). More recently, Huang et al. (2009) have studied the lexical and functional categories, argument structure, and the verb phrase in Chinese. Moreover, they have discussed the more unique and challenging parts of syntax in Chinese: the passives, the *ba* construction, and the topic & relative constructions. Interestingly, they have also shed light on some advanced Chinese linguistic issues that have not been well studied in the past: questions, nominal expressions, and anaphora.

Even though there has been many interesting linguistics papers on various aspects of syntax in Chinese, the corresponding computational modeling work has been rather limited. One of the most popular computational tasks in Chinese NLP is word segmentation (Sproat and Emerson, 2003; Xue and Shen, 2003). where researchers have previously investigated sequential models such as hierarchical hidden Markov model (Zhang et al., 2003), maximum entropy Markov model (Xue and Shen,

2003), and conditional random fields (Zhao et al., 2006) for this task. In addition to tokenization and segmentation, standard structure prediction tasks such as named entity recognition (Wu et al., 2005; Xue and Shen, 2003), part-of-speech tagging (Jiang et al., 2008; Ng and Low, 2004), and constituency parsing (Wang et al., 2006; Wu, 1997) have also been studied in the language-specific setups. As mentioned in Section 1, Chinese dependency parsing was first introduced by Bikel and Chiang (2000), and then became popular after the CoNLL multilingual shared tasks (Buchholz and Marsi, 2006; Nilsson et al., 2007).

In the past decade, there have been growing number of publicly available Chinese language processing tools. ICTCLAS¹ is one of the most popular word segmentation tool in Chinese NLP. The Stanford Chinese NLP constituency parser (Levy and Manning, 2003), and the dependency parser (Chang et al., 2009) also provide insights for many Chinese NLP applications. More recently, more comprehensive and Chinese-optimized toolkits were also made available (Che et al., 2010; Qiu et al., 2013). To the best of my knowledge, even though systems such as Malt parser (Nivre et al., 2007) provides solutions to multilingual dependency parsing, but they are not optimized for Chinese, and the accuracy on Penn Chinese Treebank is typically around 70% and lower 80%, which falls behind languages like English and German.

3 Available Resources

4 Survey of Phenomena in Chinese Dependency Parsing

5 Initial Design

6 System Analysis on Corpus A

7 Lessons Learned and Revised Design

8 System Analysis on Corpus B

9 Final Revisions

10 Future Work

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¹<http://sewm.pku.edu.cn/QA/reference/ICTCLAS/FreeICTCLAS/English.html>

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