Sentence Generation by Analogy: Towards the Construction of A Quasi-parallel Corpus for Chinese-Japanese

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Abstract

Parallel corpora are indispensable resources in data-driven approaches to machine translation: statistical and example-based. The major problem inherent in developing a Chinese-Japanese machine translation system is the lack of bilingual parallel corpus. We have implemented several based on proportional analogy techniques to produce new quasi-parallel sentences using monolingual data, collected from Web. By investigating the performance of new parallel sentences generation, this paper describes the experiments and efforts we made towards building a Chinese-Japanese quasi-parallel corpus using analogical associations.

1 Introduction

The recent progress in statistical machine translation and example-based machine translation were driven by the availability of parallel corpora. However, still, acquiring large parallel bilingual corpora is a major bottleneck in developing such machine translation systems in new domains or languages, simply because producing data from scratch is expensive and time-consuming. One of the most important contribution to the development of statistical machine translation was the release of the Europarl Corpus1, which contained 11 official languages of the European Union in Release V3, now extended to 21 languages in Release v7. In contrast, almost no free or large parallel corpus for Chinese-Japanese is available. In consequence, there is an urgent need for bilingual Chinese-Japanese parallel corpora. Some researchers already addressed the issue and proposed to build such corpora by hand. This is expensive and time-consuming. There are also some automatic approaches to build such corpora.

Programming the release of the Europarl Corpus involves five steps (Koehn [4]): data collection (obtain the raw data from Web by crawlers), document alignment, sentence splitting, segmentation and tokenisation, finally sentence alignment. Following a recent trend, we propose to construct of a Chinese-Japanese parallel corpus entirely automatically. Attempts at mining parallel text from web using common
crawler (Resnik and Smith [8]; Smith et al. [10]) show the feasibility to extract parallel text from Web (dirt and cheap mining). In a variety of recent works, Aker and Gaizauskas [1], Munteanu et al. [7] or Tsunakawa et al. [11] have used comparable corpora to extract parallel sentences or phrases. Other researchers (Lepage and Denoual [6]; Fujita et al. [3]) show how to acquire large collections of paraphrases through generalization and instantiation. Yang et al. [12] investigate the task of acquiring quasi-parallel sentences according to similarities between seed sentences and similarities between analogical clusters. All mentioned works indicate a different solution to build Chinese-Japanese bilingual linguistic resources. By applying analogical techniques, it is more easier and simpler to acquire new quasi-parallel sentences without problems of copyright restriction.

This paper describes the methods and techniques used in our proposed approach to the acquisition of a quasi-parallel Chinese-Japanese corpus. Section 2 describes how to extract analogical clusters from language resources crawled from the Web. Then Section 3 present the core of our our proposed approach. Finally, Section 4 concludes a previous works on our results and draws on future works.

2 Analogical Learning

2.1 Proportional Analogy

Analogical techniques have been applied to several natural language processing tasks. A proportional analogy is a relationship between four objects, noted A : B :: C : D, which reads "A is to B as C is to D". A possible formalization (Lepage [5]) reduces to the counting of number of symbol occurrences and the computation of edit distances. It comes with an efficient algorithm to solve analogical equations between sentences.

\[
\begin{align*}
|A|_a - |B|_a &= |C|_a - |D|_a, \forall a \\
A : B &:: C : D \implies \\
\{ \\
&d(A, B) = d(C, D) \\
&d(A, C) = d(B, D)
\}
\end{align*}
\]

Here, |A|_a stands for the number of occurrences of character a in string A and d(A, B) stands for the edit distance...
between strings $A$ and $B$ with only insertion and deletion as edit operations. In this definition, $B$ and $C$ may be exchanged. In this paper, we will use proportional analogy to create rewriting models so as to produce new parallel sentences.

### 2.2 Creation of Analogical Clusters

We define analogical clusters as sets of pairs of sentences from which any two lines is a proportional analogy. The following cluster of three lines, stand for the following 3 proportional analogies:

\[
A : B :: C : D \\
A : B :: E : F \\
C : D :: E : F
\]

The following is an analogical cluster between sentences in Japanese which follows our definition:

紅茶が飲みた。ビールが飲みた。
紅茶が好きです。ビールが好きです。
紅茶は苦手です。ビールは苦手です。
紅茶を飲みます。ビールを飲みます。

It stands for 6 proportional analogies. In order to obtain analogical clusters, we collect short Japanese and Chinese sentences from the Web using an in-house Web-crawler. We then create all analogical clusters from these sentences in each languages. Table 1 gives the details about the sentences and the number of created analogical clusters. In the experiment, we eliminate sentences containing only numbers and symbols. In the experiment, we also eliminate meaningless clusters containing number substitutions or date substitutions. Table 2 shows the details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of sentences</th>
<th>collected</th>
<th>filtered</th>
<th>unique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>710,541</td>
<td>944,035</td>
<td>425,815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>737,727</td>
<td>446,953</td>
<td>325,815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Statistics about crawled short sentences. About half, or more, are kept after filtering.

In this way, we produce 16,246 Chinese-Japanese quasi-parallel sentence pairs as the test set for our experiments. Though there are copyright concerns, we only make use of the sentences we crawled as the seed sentences to feed our system. The new sentences that will be generated can be said to be out of the scope of copyright, and they can be released and made publicly available for this reason.

### 3.2 Analogical Generation

To generate new sentences based on analogical clusters, we follow Saussure [9] and consider analogical equations as a synchronic operation to produce new forms.

\[
\text{wolf} : \text{wolves} :: \text{leaf} : x \Rightarrow x : \text{leaves}
\]

Given two forms of a word and only one form of a second word, the fourth missing form is coined by proportional analogy. We apply the same principle to sentences. E.g.,

紅茶が飲みビールが飲み。
紅茶が好きです。ビールが好きです。
紅茶は苦手です。ビールは苦手です。
紅茶を飲みます。ビールを飲みます。

\[
\text{X} = \text{ビール} \text{が\mit{o}り} \text{き} \text{です。}
\]

The solution of this analogical equation in $X$ is:

\[
X = \text{ビール} \text{が\mit{o}り} \text{き} \text{です。}
\]

In this study, we generate new sentences using a set of analogical clusters $\mathcal{C}$. Given an analogical cluster $\mathcal{C}[i] = \{(X_j, Y_j) | j \in [0, 1, \ldots, J]\}$, $J$ denotes the number of sentence pairs in cluster $\mathcal{C}[i]$. We make use of analogical clusters as rewriting models to generate new sentences. A line $<X_j : Y_j >$ in $\mathcal{C}[i]$ ($\mathcal{C}[i] \in \mathcal{C}$), assume $[X_j : Y_j :: seed : X]$ has a solution, we can easily get the new sentence $X$. In the experiment, we underline generating new sentences using both $A : B :: C : X$ and $B : A :: C : X$.

New sentences generated from the same seed sentence will be stored in the same file. Since we have a parallel Chinese-Japanese corpus, i.e., a list of (source, target) sentence pairs at our disposal, we apply analogical generation to obtain new sentences using these parallel sentences as seed. By remembering the translation correspondence between seed sentences, we deduce the translation correspondence between generated sentences. Over hundred millions of new sentences are produced, but not all newly generated sentences are valid. We assessed the productivity of our sentences on a sample of 500 seed sentences.

### 3. Acquisition of New Sentences

#### 3.1 Test Set

We use bilingual texts crawled from a specific Japanese learning website\(^2\) and process data as explained above.

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\(^2\)http://jp.hjenglish.com
3.3 Filtering New Sentences

During generation of new sentences, a lot of semantically invalid and grammatically incorrect sentences are produced. The method we use to ensure fluency and adequacy of generated sentences is to eliminate any sentences that contains an N-sequence unseen in the initial corpus. This is conform to the trend of using N-sequences (Doddington [2]) in natural language processing tasks. Table 4 and Table 5 gives statistics on the filtered generated sentences. To assess correctness, we request bilingual speakers to judge the new sentences (see Table 3). The translation relationship correspondence between newly produced sentences depends on the similarity of analogical clusters across the languages. Figure 1 illustrates how different numbers of seed sentences usually generate similar number of new sentences. Each seed sentence can generate thousands of new sentences.

For a total of 16,246 pairs of seed parallel sentences, we obtained 31,330 translation candidate pairs coming from 6,420 pairs of seed sentences, using a filtering threshold of 5.

3.4 Sentence Alignment

Since the new sentences are constructed of seed sentence pairs and analogical clusters, we align the new sentences based on the similarity of seed sentences ($sim_i$) and the similarity of analogical clusters ($sim_c$) in both languages. It is possible to compute similarity using lexical weights based on a word-to-word dictionary. Given a sentence pair $<S,T>$, the target sentence $T$, the source sentence $S$ and a word alignment between the target word position $i = 0, 1, \ldots, I$ in sentence and the source word positions $j = 0, 1, \ldots, J$. Similarly to lexicon weights, the similarity between seed sentences, $sim_{seed}$, can be computed according to following formula:

$$sim_{seed}(T|S) = \prod_{i=1}^{n} \frac{1}{|\{j|(t,j) \in a\}|} \sum_{(t,j) \in a} p(t_i|s_j)$$

Where $p(t_i|s_j)$ is the probability of $s_j$ translates to $t_i$. We make use of similarity between analogical clusters as one of the weights to deduce the translation relation of newly generated sentence pairs. We also use the Longest Common Sequences (LCS) as Yang et al. [12] proposed to give the automatic scores as the similarity of clusters. In addition to these automatic scores, we asked bilingual speakers to give scores between clusters. Our guidelines are: 1.0 (same), 0.8 (very related), 0.5 (partially related) and 0 (no relation). Based on similarities, we implement the experiments. Table 6 indicates how many different sentences and clusters are found in sentences generation. Table 6 shows a more specific experiment result of sifting these newly obtained data. We select all new sentences ($sim_{cluster} \geq 0.5$) as the sentences to construct our quasi-parallel corpus for Chinese-Japanese. As a final result, 11,916 of new quasi-parallel sentences are obtained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of different sentences</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>different clusters</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generated sentence</td>
<td>31,330</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sifted sentence</td>
<td>11,916</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Statistics about sentences and clusters which are found in sentences generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of pairs</th>
<th>simcluster ≥ 0.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generated sentence</td>
<td>31,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cluster</td>
<td>2,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sifted sentence</td>
<td>11,916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Result of quasi-parallel sentences generation
4 Conclusions

This paper introduced a technique for the construction of an open-source Chinese-Japanese quasi-parallel corpus. It uses an expansion filtering technique. Expansion relies on generation by proportional analogy, filtering is done by checking the presence of N-grams in a reference corpus. Future work may focus on finding a way to measure the similarity between analogical clusters and break sentences into phrases to apply the proposed technique to smaller pieces. We have proposed to deduce translation relationship according to similarities between analogical clusters and seed sentences. In order to be able to recognize quasi-parallel sentences, to be able to identify corresponding cluster is a prerequisite. For this, better way of computing similarity between clusters is required.

References


