

AUTOMATIC MINING OF HUMAN ACTIVITY AND ITS RELATIONSHIPS FROM CGM

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Abstract: The goal of this paper is to describe a method to automatically extract *all* basic attributes namely *actor*, *action*, *object*, *time* and *location* which belong to an activity, and the relationships (*transition* and *cause*) between activities in each sentence retrieved from Japanese CGM (consumer generated media). Previous work had some limitations, such as high setup cost, inability of extracting all attributes, limitation on the types of sentences that can be handled, insufficient consideration of interdependency among attributes, and inability of extracting causes between activities. To resolve these problems, this paper proposes a novel approach that treats the activity extraction as a sequence labeling problem, and automatically makes its own training data. This approach has advantages such as *domain-independence*, *scalability*, and *unnecessary hand-tagged data*. Since it is unnecessary to fix the positions and the number of the attributes in activity sentences, this approach can extract *all* attributes and relationships between activities by making *only a single pass* over its corpus. Additionally, by *converting to simpler sentences*, removing stop words, utilizing html tags, google map api, and wikipedia, the proposed approach can deal with complex sentences retrieved from Japanese CGM.

1 INTRODUCTION

The ability of computers to provide the most suitable information based on users' behaviors is now an important issue in context-aware computing (Matsuo et al., 2007), ubiquitous computing (Poslad, 2009) and social computing (Ozok and Zaphiris, 2009; Phithakkitnukoon and Dantu, 2009). For example, a service delivers shop information based on the users' next destination (NTTDocomo, 2009), a service delivers advertisements based on the users' context information (Jung et al., 2009). To identify the users' behaviors, it is necessary to understand *how to collect activity data*, *how to express or define each activity and its relationships*. It is not practical to define each activity and its relationships in advance, because it not only takes enormous cost, but also cannot deal with unpredictable behaviors.

Today, CGM is increasingly generated by users posting their activities to Twitter, Facebook, their weblogs or other social media. Thus, it is not difficult to collect activity sentences (that describe activities) of different users from CGM. However, sentences retrieved from CGM often have various structures, are complex, are syntactically incorrect. Thus, there are

lots of challenges to extract all activity attributes and relationships between activities in these sentences. Few previous works have tried to extract attributes in each sentence retrieved from CGM. These works have some limitations, such as high setup costs because of requiring ontology for each domain (Kawamura et al., 2009). Due to the difficulty of creating suitable patterns, these works are unable to extract all attributes (Perkowitz et al., 2004; Kawamura et al., 2009), limited on the types of sentences that can be handled (Perkowitz et al., 2004; Kurashima et al., 2009; The et al., 2010), insufficiently consider interdependency among attributes (Perkowitz et al., 2004; Kurashima et al., 2009), and are unable to extract causes between activities (Perkowitz et al., 2004; Kurashima et al., 2009; Kawamura et al., 2009).

Since each attribute has interdependent relationships with the other attributes in every activity sentence, we can treat attribute extraction as an *open relation extraction* (Banko et al., 2007). In other words, we extract an action and other word phrases that have relationships with this action and describe their activity. In this paper, we propose a novel approach based on the idea of O-CRF (Banko and Etzioni, 2008) that applies self-supervised learning (Self-SL) and uses

conditional random fields (CRFs) to the open relation extraction. O-CRF is the state-of-the-art of the open relation extraction from English web pages. Our approach focuses on Japanese CGM, and treats activity extraction as a sequence labeling problem. This approach automatically makes its own training data, and uses CRFs as a learning model. Our proposed architecture consists of two modules: Self-Supervised Learner and Activity Extractor. Given some activity sentences retrieved from the “people” category of Wikipedia, the Learner extracts all attributes and relationships between activities, by using deep linguistic parser and some syntax patterns as a heuristics. And then, it combines extracted results to automatically makes training data. Finally, it uses CRFs and template file to make the feature model of these training data. Based on this feature model, the Extractor automatically extracts all attributes and relationships between activities in each sentence retrieved from Japanese CGM.

The main contributions of our approach are summarized as follows:

- It has *domain-independence*, without requiring any hand-tagged data.
- It can extract *all attributes and relationships* between activities by making only a *single pass over its corpus*.
- It can handle *all* of the standard sentences in Japanese, and achieves high precision on these sentences.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we indicate challenges of extracting attributes in more detail. Section 3 explains how our approach makes its own training data, and extracts activity in each sentence retrieved from Japanese CGM. Section 4 reports our experimental results, and discuss how our approach addresses each of the challenges to extract activity attributes. Section 5 considers related work. Section 6 consists of conclusions and some discussions of future work.

2 CHALLENGES

2.1 Activity Attributes Definition

The key elements of an activity are actor, action, and object. To provide suitable information to users, it is important to know *where and when activity happens*. Therefore, we define an activity by five basic attributes: *actor, action, object, time, and location*. We label these attributes as *Who, Action, What,*

When and *Where* respectively. In this paper, we focus on the *transitions* and *causes* between activities, and label these relationships as *Next* and *BecauseOf* respectively. For example, Figure 1 shows the attributes and the relationships between activities derived from a Japanese sentence.

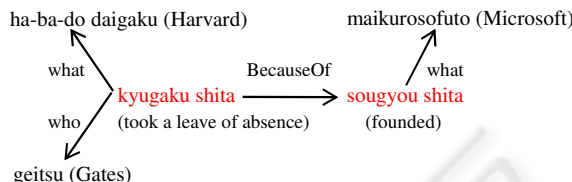


Figure 1: The attributes and the relationship between the activities derived from the activity sentence “*maikurosofuto wo sougyou suru tame ni, geitsu ha ha-ba-do daigaku wo kyugaku shita*” (To found Microsoft, Gates took a leave of absence from Harvard.).

2.2 Challenges of Extracting Activity Attributes

Extracting activity attributes in sentences retrieved from CGM has many challenges, especially in Japanese. Below, we explain some of them:

1. As shown in Figure 2, O-CRF extracts binary relations in English, and these relations must occur between entity’s names within the same sentence (Banko and Etzioni, 2008). Additionally, O-CRF determines entities before extracting, so it deal with a single variable (relation). But Japanese sentences do not follow the S-V-O rule, they have many types of structures and flexible. Moreover in this paper, we need deal with multi-variables (five attributes, transition, and cause). Therefore, we can not directly apply O-CRF for extracting activities in Japanese.

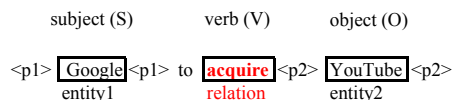


Figure 2: Limitation of O-CRF: relations must occur between entity names.

2. Since number and position of attributes are changing in different sentences, it is difficult to create instances or patterns to extract all attributes and relationships between activities. Additionally, sentences retrieved from CGM are often diversified, complex, syntactically wrong, and have emoticons.

3. It is not practical to deploy deep linguistic parsers, because of the diversity and the size of the Web corpus (Banko and Etzioni, 2008).
4. If extraction method is domain-dependent, then when shifting to a new domain it will require a new specified training examples. And, the extraction process has to be run, and re-run for each domain.
5. In Japanese, there are not word spaces, and word boundaries are not clear. However, previous works in CRFs assume that observation sequence (word) boundaries were fixed. Therefore, a straightforward application of CRFs is impossible.

3 HUMAN ACTIVITY MINING USING CRFS AND SELF-SUPERVISED LEARNING

3.1 Activity Extraction with CRFs

CRFs (Lafferty et al., 2001) are undirected graphical models for predicting a label sequence to an observed sequence. The idea is to define a conditional probability distribution over label sequences given an observed sequence, rather than a joint distribution over both label and observed sequences. CRFs offers several advantages over hidden Markov models and stochastic grammars, including the ability of relaxing strong independence assumptions made in those models. Additionally, CRFs also avoids the label bias problem, which is a weakness exhibited by maximum entropy Markov models (MEMMs) and other conditional Markov models based on directed graphical models. CRFs achieves high precision on many tasks including text chunking (Sha and Pereira, 2003), named entity recognition (McCallum and Li, 2003), Japanese morphological analysis (Kudo et al., 2004).

By making a first-order Markov assumption that has dependencies between output variables, and arranging variables sequentially in a linear-chain, activity extraction can be treated as a sequence labeling problem. Figure 3 shows an example where activity extraction is treated as a sequence labeling problem. Tokens in the surrounding context are labeled using the IOB2 format. B-X means “begin a phrase of type X”, I-X means “inside a phrase of type X” and O means “not in a phrase”. IOB2 format is widely-used for natural language tasks (CoNLL, 2000). In this paper, we use CRF++¹ to implement this linear-chain

¹ Available at <http://crfpp.sourceforge.net/>

CRF.

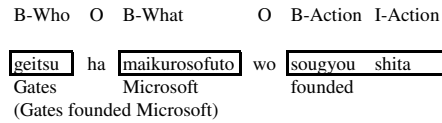


Figure 3: Activity extraction as sequence labeling.

3.2 Proposed Architecture

As shown in Figure 4, the architecture consists of two modules: *Self-Supervised Learner* (I in Figure 4) and *Activity Extractor* (II in Figure 4). Sentences retrieved from the “people” category of Wikipedia (Wikipedia, 2009b) are often syntax correct, activity describable, and easy to parse. Therefore, we parse these sentences to get activity sentences, and then send these activity sentences as sample data to the Learner. The Learner deploys deep linguistic parser to analyze the dependencies between word phrases. Based on the prepared list of Japanese syntax, it selects trustworthy attributes to make training data, and the feature model of these data. The Extractor does *not* deploy deep parser, it bases on this feature model to automatically extract all attributes, and relationships between activities in sentences retrieved from Japanese CGM. Below, we describe each module in more detail.

3.2.1 Self-supervised Learner Module

We will use the example sentence “geitsu ha maikurosofuto wo sougyou shita” (Gates founded Microsoft) to explain how the Learner works and makes its own training data. As shown in Figure 4, the Learner consists of nine key tasks:

1. By using Mecab², it parses the sample data to get words and their POS tags in each sentence (I.1 in Figure 4).
2. By using Cabocha³, it analyzes the interdependency among word phrases in each sentence (I.2 in Figure 4). Up to this step, the Learner can detect verb phrase (VP), noun phrase (NP), POS tags, named entity, and the interdependency among word phrases in each sentence.
3. In addition to the above analytical result, based on the Japanese regular time-expressions such as VP-taato, VP-maeni, toki...etc, the Learner extracts the time of activity and labels it as *When* (I.3 in Figure 4).

² Available at <http://mecab.sourceforge.net/>.

³ Available at <http://chasen.org/taku/software/cabocha/>.

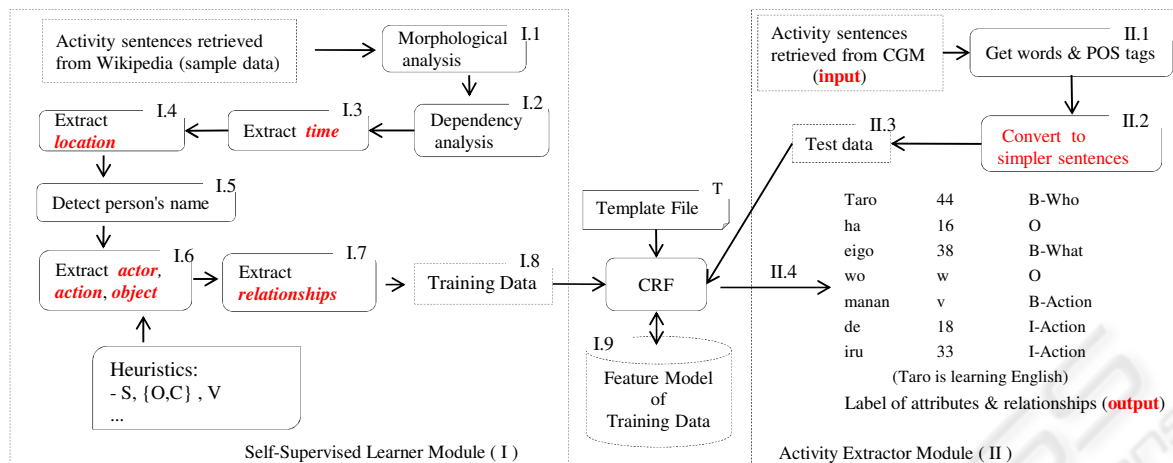


Figure 4: Proposed Architecture: by using deep linguistic parser and a heuristics, the Learner makes its own training data.

4. To improve precision of location extraction, in addition to the above analytical result, the Learner uses the google map api (Google, 2009) to extract the location of activity and labels it as *Where* (I.4 in Figure 4).
5. Japanese natural language processing (NLP) tools often have errors when analyzing foreign person name. In this case, the Learner utilizes the “human names” category of Wikipedia (Wikipedia, 2009a) to improve precision of person name detection (I.5 in Figure 4).
6. To select trustworthy activity sentences, we prepare the list of nine Japanese syntax patterns as,
 - {O, C}, {wo, ni, he}, V
 - S, {O, C}, {wo, ni, he}, V
 - {O, C}, {wo, ni, he}, V, S
 - S ga V ha {O, C}
 - S ga V {C} ha {O}
 - S ha N ga V
 - wo N
 - N ga (ha) V
 - N wo N ni
 where O means object, C means complement, V means verb, N means noun, “ha/ga/wo/ni/he” are postpositional particles in Japanese. Actor, action, object correspond to S, V, O respectively. Based on these syntax patterns, the Learner extracts actor, action, object, and then labels them as *Who*, *Action*, *What* respectively (I.6 in Figure 4).
7. Based on Japanese syntax patterns such as V-taato, V-mae, V-node...etc, the Learner extracts the relationships between activities, and labels as *Next* or *BecauseOf* (I.7 in Figure 4).

8. As shown in Figure 5, training data are automatically created by combining the above results (I.8 in Figure 4).

B-Who	O	B-What	O	B-Action	I-Action
43	16	45	w	v	25
geitsu	ha	maikurosofuto	wo	sougyou	shita
Gates		Microsoft		founded	

(Gates founded Microsoft)

Figure 5: Training data of the example sentence.

9. The Learner uses CRF and template file to automatically generate a set of feature functions (f 1, f 2, ..., f n) as illustrated in Figure 6. The feature model of these training data is created from this set of feature functions (I.9 in Figure 4).

3.2.2 Activity Extractor Module

We parse Japanese CGM pages to receive activity sentences, and then remove emoticons, and stop words in these sentences. In this case, stop words are the words which do not contain important significance to be used in activity extraction. After this pre-processing, we send activity sentences to the Extractor. As shown in Figure 4, the Extractor consists of four key tasks:

1. The Extractor uses Mecab to get words and their POS tags (II.1 in Figure 4). As shown in Figure 7, in addition to analytical result by Mecab, the Ex-

```
f 1 = if (label = "B-Who" and POS="43") return 1 else return 0
f 2 = if (label = "O" and POS="16") return 1 else return 0
....
f n = if (label = "B-Action" and POS="v") return 1 else return 0
```

Figure 6: Feature functions.

tractor utilizes html tags to detect a long or complex noun phrases.

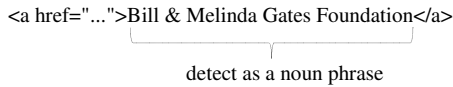


Figure 7: Using html tags to detect a noun phrase.

- To avoid error when testing, the Extractor converts complex sentences to simpler sentences by simplifying noun phrases and verb phrases (II.2 in Figure 4). When converting, we must keep the POS tags of these word phrases. Figure 8 shows the example of converting the complex sentence to the simpler sentence.

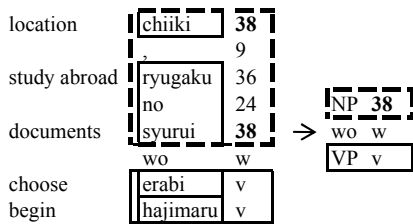


Figure 8: Convert “chiiki, ryugaku no syurui wo erabi-hajimaru” (Begin choosing region, documents for study abroad) to the simpler sentence.

- The Extractor makes test data by combining the above results (II.3 in Figure 4). As shown in Figure 9, unlike training data, test data does not have label row. This label row is predicted when testing.

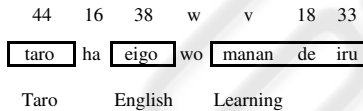


Figure 9: Test data for the example sentence “taro ha eigo wo manan de iru” (Taro is learning English).

- Based on the feature model, the Extractor automatically extracts all attributes and relationships between activities in each sentence of the test data (II.4 in Figure 4).

3.2.3 Template File

We use the feature template file to describe features that are used in training and testing (T in Figure 4). The set of features includes words, verbs, part-of-speech (POS) tags and postpositional particles in Japanese. To model long-distance relationships, this paper uses a window of size 7.

4 EVALUATION

4.1 Experimental Results

To evaluate the benefits of our approach, we used the set of 533 activity sentences⁴ retrieved from Japanese CGM. There are 356 sentences that describe one activity, 177 sentences that describe two activities in this experimental data. Figure 10 shows two sentences which are used for this experiment.

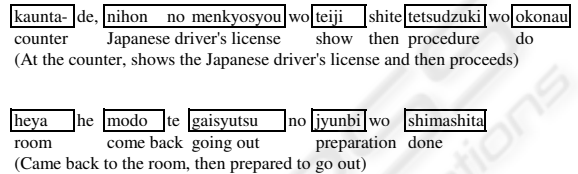


Figure 10: Two activity sentences in our experimental data.

In this experiment, we say an activity extraction is correct when all attributes of this activity are correctly extracted. The precision of each attribute is defined as the number of correctly extracted attributes divided by the total number. Using one PC (CPU: 3.2GHz, RAM: 3.5GB), the Extractor module makes only a single pass over the entire experimental data set, and gets the results⁵ as shown in Table 1. This process took only 0.27s.

Table 1: Experimental results.

@	Should be extracted	Correct	Precision (%)
Activity	710	631	88.87
Actor	196	182	92.86
Action	710	693	97.61
Object	509	479	94.11
Time	173	165	95.38
Location	130	120	92.31
Transition	26	22	84.62
Cause	42	36	85.71

4.2 Consideration

The experimental results have shown that our approach can automatically extract all attributes and relationships between activities in each sentences by making only a single pass with high precision. Additionally, our method took only 0.27s, while a widely known deep parser such as Cabocha took over 46.45s for parsing the experimental data (our approach outperforms over 172 times). Below, we describe how our approach resolves the limitations of the previous

⁴http://docs.google.com/View?id=dfc9r33_1077g63vrjc5

⁵http://docs.google.com/View?id=dfc9r33_1078cr9hd3mt

works, and addresses the challenges indicated in section 2.

- It is domain-independent, and automatically creates training data. So that, our approach does not take high setup costs.
- By treating activity extraction as a sequence labeling problem, our approach can express all attributes of any activity. Additionally, by using the heuristics (the list of Japanese syntax patterns), our approach does not need to fix the position and number of attributes. These are reasons for which our approach is able to extract all attributes in any activity sentence.
- Based on the list of the nine Japanese syntax patterns, it makes training data for all typical sentences. Additionally, it removes stop words, simplifies complex sentences before testing, utilizes html tags, google map api, and wikipedia. These are reasons for which the Extractor could deal with many type of sentences.
- The feature model contains features of interdependencies among attributes in each sentence of training data. Based on these features, the Extractor can consider interdependencies among attributes in each sentence of testing data.
- It uses Mecab and html tags to get word phrases in each sentence.

However, our approach also has some limitations. Firstly, it only extracts activities that are explicitly described in the sentences. Secondly, it has not yet extracted relationships between activities in document-level. Finally, to handle more complex or incorrect syntax sentences, we need improve our architecture.

4.3 Applying to other Languages

Our proposed architecture focus on Japanese, but it could also be applied to other languages by changing suitable syntax patterns for the Learner. We should also re-design the template file to utilize special features of the applied language.

5 RELATED WORK

There are two fields related to our research: human activity extraction and relation extraction (RE) from the Web corpus. Below, we discuss the previous researches of each field.

5.1 Human Activity Extraction

Previous works on this field are Perkowitz (Perkowitz et al., 2004), Kawamura (Kawamura et al., 2009), Kurashima (Kurashima et al., 2009), and Minh (The et al., 2010). Perkowitz's approach is a simple keyword matching, so it can only be applied for cases of recipe web pages (such as making tea or coffee). Kawamura's approach requires a product ontology and an action ontology for each domain. So, the precision of this approach depends on these ontologies.

Kurashima used JTAG (Fuchi and Takagi, 1998) to deploy a deep linguistic parser to extract action and object. It can only handle a few types of sentences, and is not practical for the diversity and the size of the Web corpus. Additionally, because this approach gets date information from date of weblogs, so it is highly possible that extracted time might be not what activity sentences describe about.

In our previous paper (The et al., 2010), the proposed approaches could not handle complex sentences, and could not extract causes between activities yet.

5.2 Relation Extraction

The main researches of RE are DIPRE (Brin, 1998), SnowBall (Agichtein and Gravano, 2000), KnowItAll (Etzioni et al., 2004), Pasca (Pasca et al., 2006), TextRunner (Banko et al., 2007), O-CRF (Banko and Etzioni, 2008).

DIPRE, SnowBall, KnowItAll, and Pasca use bootstrapping techniques applied for unary or binary RE. Bootstrapping techniques often require a small set of hand-tagged seed instances or a few hand-crafted extraction patterns for each domain. In addition, when creating a new instance or pattern, they could possibly extract unwanted patterns around the instance to be extracted, which would lead to extract unwanted instance from the unwanted patterns. Moreover, it is difficult to create suitable instances or patterns for extracting the attributes and relationships between activities appeared in sentences retrieved from the Web.

TextRunner is the first Open RE system, it uses self-supervised learning and a Naive Bayes classifier to extract binary relation. Because this classifier predict the label of a single variable, it is difficult to apply TextRunner to extract all of the basic attributes.

O-CRF is the upgraded version of TextRunner. Because of the differences in tasks (activity, binary relation) and languages (Japanese, English), it is difficult to compare our approach with O-CRF. We try to compare them according to the some criteria as shown

in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison with O-CRF.

	O-CRF	Our Approach
Language	English	Japanese
Target data	Binary Relation	Human Activity
Type of sentences can be handled	S-V-O	{O, C}, V S, {O, C}, V ... all typical syntax
Relation must occur between entities	yes	no
Requirement of determining entities before extracting	yes	no

6 CONCLUSIONS

This paper proposed a novel approach that uses CRFs and Self-SL to automatically extract all attributes and relationships between activities derived from sentences in Japanese CGM. Without requiring any hand-tagged data, it achieved high precision by making only a single pass over its corpus. This paper also explains how our approach resolves the limitations of previous works, and addresses each of the challenges to activity extraction.

We are improving the architecture to handle more complex or incorrect syntax sentences. Based on links between web pages, we will try to extract relationships between activities at the document-level. In the next step, we will use a large data set to evaluate our approach. We are also planning to build a large human activity semantic network based on mining human experiences from the entire CGM corpus.

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