Co-occurrence Graph Based Iterative Bilingual Lexicon Extraction From Comparable Corpora

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Abstract

This paper presents an iterative algorithm for bilingual lexicon extraction from comparable corpora. It is based on a bag-of-words model generated at the level of sentences. We present our results of experimentation on corpora of multiple degrees of comparability derived from the FIRE 2010 dataset. Evaluation results on 100 nouns shows that this method outperforms the standard context-vector based approaches.

1 Introduction

Bilingual dictionaries play a pivotal role in a number of Natural Language Processing tasks like Machine Translation and Cross Lingual Information Retrieval (CLIR). Machine Translation systems often use bilingual dictionaries in order to augment word and phrase alignment (Och and Ney, 2003). CLIR systems use bilingual dictionaries in the query translation step (Grefenstette, 1998). However, high coverage electronic bilingual dictionaries are not available for all language pairs. So a major research area in Machine Translation and CLIR is bilingual dictionary extraction. The most common approach for extracting bilingual dictionary is applying some statistical alignment algorithm on a parallel corpus. However, parallel corpora are not readily available for most language pairs. Also, it takes a lot of effort to actually get the accurate translations of sentences. Hence, constructing parallel corpora involves a lot of effort and time. So in recent years, extracting bilingual dictionaries from comparable corpora has become an important area of research. Comparable corpora consist of documents on similar topics in different languages. Unlike parallel corpora, they are not sentence aligned. In fact, the sentences in one language do not have to be the exact translations of the sentence in the other language. However, the two corpora must be on the same domain or topic. Comparable corpora can be obtained more easily than parallel corpora. For example, a collection of news articles from the same time period but in different languages can form a comparable corpora. But after careful study of news articles in English and Hindi published on same days at the same city, we have observed that along with articles on similar topics, the corpora also contain a lot of articles which have no topical similarity. Thus, the corpora are quite noisy, which makes it unsuitable for lexicon extraction. Thus another important factor in comparable corpora construction is the degree of similarity of the corpora.

Approaches for lexicon extraction from comparable corpora have been proposed that use the bag-of-words model to find words that occur in similar lexical contexts (Rapp, 1995). There have been approaches proposed which improve upon this model by using some linguistic information (Yuu and Tsujii, 2009). However, these require some linguistic tool like dependency parsers which are not commonly obtainable for resource-poor languages. For example, in case of Indian languages like Hindi and Bengali, we still do not have good enough dependency parsers. In this paper, we propose a word co-occurrence based approach for lexicon extraction from comparable corpora using English and Hindi as the source and target languages respectively. We do not use any language-
specific resource in our approach.
We did experiments with 100 words in En-
glish, and show that our approach performs signif-
ically better than the the Context Heterogeneity
approach (Fung, 1995). We show the results over
corpora with varying degrees of comparability.
The outline of the paper is as follows. In section
2, we analyze the different approaches for lexicon
extraction from comparable corpora. In section 3,
we present our algorithm and the experimental re-
sults. In section 4, we present an analysis of the
results followed by the conclusion and future re-
search directions in section 5.

2 Previous Work

One of the first works in the area of comparable
corpora mining was based on word co-occurrence
based approach (Rapp, 1995). The basic assump-
tion behind this approach was two words are likely
to occur together in the same context if their joint
probability of occurrence in a corpus exceeds the
probability that the words occur randomly. In his
paper, Rapp made use of a similarity matrix and
using a joint probability estimate determined the
word maps. However, this approach did not yield
significantly good results.
The “Context Heterogeneity” approach was one
of the pioneering works in this area. It uses a 2-
dimensional context vector for each word based
on the right and left context. The context vector
depended on how many distinct words occur in the
particular context and also the unigram frequency
of the word to be translated. Euclidean distance
between context vectors was used as a similarity
measure.

Another approach used Distributed Clustering of
Translational Equivalents for word sense acqui-
sition from bilingual comparable corpora (Kaji,
2003). However, the major drawback of this paper
is the assumption that translation equivalents usu-
almente represent only one sense of the target word.
This may not be the case for languages having
similar origin, for example, Hindi and Bengali.
Approaches using context information for extract-
ing lexical translations from comparable corpora
have also been proposed (Fung and Yee, 1998;
Rapp, 1999). But they resulted in very poor cov-
erage. These approaches were improved upon
by extracting phrasal alignments from comparable
corpora using joint probability SMT model (Ku-
mano et al., 2007).

Another proposed method uses dependency pars-
ing and Dependency Heterogeneity for extracting
bilingual lexicon (Yuu and Tsujii, 2009). This
approach was similar to that of Fung, except they
used a dependency parser to get the tags for each
word and depending on the frequency of each tag
they defined a vector to represent each word in
question. Here too, Euclidean similarity was used
to compute the similarity between two words us-
ing their context vectors. However, this method is
dependent on availability of a dependency parser
for the languages and is not feasible for languages
for which resources are scarce.

3 Bilingual Dictionary Extraction Using
Co-occurrence Information

3.1 Motivation

The Context Heterogeneity and Dependency Het-
rogeneity approaches suffer from one major
drawback. They do not use any kind of informa-
tion about how individual words combine in a
particular context to form a meaningful sentence.
They only use some statistics about the number of
words that co-occur in a particular context or the
number of times a word receives a particular tag
in dependency parsing. So, we wished to study if
the quality of dictionary extracted would improve
if we consider how individual words co-occur in
text and store that information in the form of a
vector, with one dimension representing one word
in the corpus. One important point to note here
is that the function words in a language are usu-
ally very small in number. If we need to construct
a dictionary of function words in two languages,
that can be done without much effort manually.
Also, the function words do not play an impor-
tant role in CLIR applications, as they are usually
stripped off.

Our algorithm is based on the intuition that words
having similar semantic connotations occur to-
gether. For example, the words “bread” is more
likely to occur with “eat” than with “play”. Our
algorithm uses this distribution of co-occurrence
frequency along with a small initial seed dictio-
nary to extract words that are translations of one another. We define a co-occurrence vector of words in both the languages, and also record the number of times two words co-occur. To find the translation for word $W_x$, we check for the words co-occurring with $W_x$ such that this word already has a map in the other language, and compute a scoring function using all such words co-occurring with $W_x$. In short, we use the already existing information to find new translations and add them to the existing lexicon to grow it. Below is a snapshot of a part of the data from one of our experiments using the FIRE 2010\textsuperscript{1} corpus. For each word in English and Hindi, the co-occurrence data is expressed as a list of tuples. Each tuple has the form (word, co-occurrence frequency). For the Hindi words, the English meaning has been provided in parenthesis. For the seed lexicon and final lexicon, the format is (source word, target word, strength).

English:
1. teacher: { (training,49), (colleges,138), (man,22) }
2. car: { (drive,238), (place,21) }
3. drive: { (car,238), (steer,125), (city,12), (road,123) }

Hindi:
1. ghar(home): { (khidki(window),133), (makAn(house),172), (r AstA(road),6) }
2. gAdi(car): { (rAsta,92), (chAlak(driver),121), (signal,17) }
3. shikshaka(teacher): { (vidyalaya(school),312), (makAn(house),6) }

Seed lexicon:
1. (colleges,vidyalaya,0.4)
2. (colleges,mahavidyalaya(college),0.6)
3. (car,gAdi,1.0)

The following is a snapshot from the final results given by the algorithm:

1. (car,gAdi,1.0)
2. (teacher,shikshak,0.62)
3. (teacher,vidyalaya,0.19)
4. (road,rAsta,0.55)

3.2 The Algorithm

For extracting bilingual lexicon, we have not considered the function words of the two languages. In order to filter out the function words, we have made use of the assumption that content words usually have low frequency in the corpus, whereas function words have very high frequency. First, we define some quantities:

Let the languages be $E$ and $H$.
$W_e = \text{Set of words in } E = \{e_1, e_2, ..., e_N\}$
$W_h = \text{Set of words in } H = \{h_1, h_2, ..., h_M\}$
$|W_e| = N$
$|W_h| = M$

$MAP = \text{Initial map given}$
$= \{(e_i, h_j, w_{ij})| w_{ij} = wt(e_i, h_j), e_i \in W_e, h_j \in W_h\}$

$E_M = \text{Set of words in } E \text{ which are included in entries of } MAP$

$H_M = \text{Set of words in } H \text{ which are included in entries of } MAP$

$Co_{occ}(x) = \text{Set of words which co-occur with word } x$
$Co_{occ}(x) = \begin{cases} 
Co_{occ}(x) \cap E_M & \text{if } x \in W_e \\
Co_{occ}(x) \cap H_M & \text{if } x \in W_h 
\end{cases}$

$W_{t_e}(x) = \{W_{e,y}| y \in W_e \text{ and } y \in Co_{occ}(x)\}$
$W_{t_h}(x) = \{W_{h,y}| y \in W_h \text{ and } y \in Co_{occ}(x)\}$

Given a comparable corpus, we follow the following steps of processing:

1. A sentence segmentation code is run to segment the corpus into sentences.
2. The sentence-segmented corpus is cleaned of all punctuation marks and special symbols by replacing them with spaces.

\textsuperscript{1}Forum For Information Retrieval
http://www.isical.ac.in/~clia/index.html
Algorithm 1 Algorithm to Extract Bilingual Dictionary by using word Co-occurrence Information

\begin{algorithm}
\caption{Algorithm to Extract Bilingual Dictionary by using word Co-occurrence Information}
\begin{algorithmic}
\Repeat
\For{$e_i \in W_e$}
\For{$h_j \in W_h$}
\If{$(e_i, h_j, 0) \in MAP$}
\State $wt(e_i, h_j) = \frac{\sum_{e \in Co_occ^{'}(e_i)} \sum_{h \in Co_occ^{'}(h_j)} (W_{ee}, W_{ee}, W_{hh})}{\sum_{e \in Co_occ^{'}(e_i)} \sum_{h \in Co_occ^{'}(h_j)} (W_{ee}, W_{eh})}$
\EndIf
\EndFor
\EndFor
Select the pair with highest value of $wt(e_i, b_j)$ and add it to the existing map and normalize
\Until{termination}
\end{algorithmic}
\end{algorithm}

3. The collection frequency of all the terms are computed and based on a threshold, the function words are filtered out.

4. The co-occurrence information is computed at sentence-level for the remaining terms. In a sentence, if words $w_i$ and $w_j$ both occur, then $w_i \in Co_occ(w_j)$ and vice versa.

5. Since we can visualize the co-occurrence information in the form of a graph, we next cluster the graph into $C$ clusters.

6. From each cluster $C_i$, we choose some fixed number number of words and manually find out their translation in the target language. This constitutes the initial map.

7. Next we apply Algorithm 1 to compute the word maps.

The time complexity of the algorithm is $O(IM^2N^2)$, where $I$ is the number of iterations of the algorithm.

3.3 Corpus Construction

The corpora used for evaluating our algorithm were derived from the FIRE 2010 English and Hindi corpora for the ad-hoc retrieval task. These corpora contained news articles spanning over a time period of three years from two Indian newspapers, “The Dainik Jagaran” in Hindi and “The Telegraph” in English. However, due to the extreme level of variation of the topics in these corpora, we applied a filtering algorithm to select a subset of the corpora.

Our approach to make the text similar involved reducing the corpora based on matching Named Entities. Named Entities of English and Hindi corpus were listed using LingPipe\(^2\) and a Hindi NER system built at IIT Kharagpur(Saha et al., 1999). The listed Named Entities of the two corpora were compared to find the matching Named Entities. Named Entities in Hindi Unicode were converted to iTRANS\(^3\) format and matched with English Named Entities using edit distance. Unit cost was defined for each insert and delete operation. Similar sounding characters like ‘s’, ‘c’, ‘a’, ‘e’ etc were assigned a replacement cost of 1 and other characters were assigned a replacement cost of 2. Two Named Entities were adjudged matching if:

\[
\frac{(2 \times Cost)}{(WL_h + WL_e)} < 0.5
\]

where,

$WL_h =$ Length of Hindi word

$WL_e =$ Length of English word

Using this matching scheme, accuracy of matching of Hindi and English Named Entities was found to be $> 95\%$. It was observed that there are large number of Named Entities with small frequency and few Named Entities with large frequency. So a matching list was prepared which contained only those Named Entities which had frequency larger than $\sqrt{MaxFreq}$. This ensured that matching list had words with high frequency in both corpus. So English words with frequency larger than 368 and Hindi words with frequency larger than 223 were considered for matching. Based on this matching list, the two

\(^2\)http://alias-i.com/lingpipe/

\(^3\)http://www.aczoom.com/itrans/
Table 1: Statistics of the main corpora used for extraction

| Language | Total NE | Unique NE | NE with freq larger than $\sqrt{MaxFreq}$ | NE Matched | Total No of docs | According to Zipf’s Law | In the actual corpus |
|----------|----------|-----------|-------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Hindi    | 1195474  | 37606     | 686                                       | 360        | 54271           | 63.0%                   | 74.3%               |
| English  | 5723292  | 137252    | 2258                                      | 360        | 87387           | 65.2%                   | 71.0%               |

Table 2: Criteria used for thresholding in the two corpora

| Corpus | Max Word | Max Freq | $\sqrt{MaxFreq}$ |
|--------|----------|----------|------------------|
| Hindi  | bharat   | 50072    | 223              |
| English| calcutta  | 135780   | 368              |

Table 3: Statistics of extracted corpora

| Matching % of NE per document | Total documents in corpora |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Hindi                         | 34694                       |
| English                       | 16950                       |
| > 10%                         | 14872                       |
| > 20%                         | 4927                        |
| > 30%                         | 2938                        |
|                                | 1650                        |

corpora were reduced by including only those files each of which contained more than a certain fixed percentage of total matching Named Entities. The corpus statistics are provided in tables 1, 2 and 3. We assume that distribution of Named Entities follows Zipf’s law (Zipf, 1949). And analysis shows that Named Entities with frequency greater than the chosen threshold lead to high coverage both theoretically and in practice (Table 1). Hence, the threshold was chosen as $\sqrt{MaxFreq}$. The differences in the theoretical and actual values can be attributed to the poor performance of the NER systems, especially the Hindi NER system, whose output contained a number of false positives.

3.4 Experimental Setup

The languages we used for our experiments were English and Hindi. English was the source language and Hindi was chosen as the target. For our experiments, we used a collection frequency threshold of 400 to filter out the function words. The words having a collection frequency more than 400 were discarded. This threshold was obtained manually by “Trial and Error” method in order to perform an effective function word filtering. For each corpora, we extracted the co-occurrence information and then clustered the co-occurrence graph into 20 clusters. From each cluster we chose 15 words, thus giving us an overall initial seed dictionary size of 300. We ran the algorithm for 3000 iterations.

For graph clustering, we used the Graclus system (Dhillon et al., 2007) which uses a weighted kernel k-means clustering algorithm at various levels of coarseness of the input graph.

3.5 Evaluation Method and Results

For evaluation, we have used the Accuracy and MMR measure (Voorhees, 1999). The measures are defined as follows:

\[
Accuracy = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} t_i
\]

where, $t_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if correct translation in top } n \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$

\[
MMR = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} \frac{1}{\text{rank}_i}
\]

where, $\text{rank}_i = \begin{cases} \text{r}_i & \text{if } \text{r}_i \leq n \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$

$n$ means top $n$ evaluation

$r_i$ means rank of correct translation in top $n$ ranking

$N$ means total number of words used for evaluation

For our experiments, we have used:
Table 4: Comparison of performance between Context Heterogeneity and Co-occurrence Approach for manual evaluation

| Corpus | Context Heterogeneity | Co-occurrence |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------|
|        | Acc       | MMR    | Acc       | MMR    |
| > 10%  | 0.14      | 0.112  | 0.16      | 0.135  |
| > 20%  | 0.21      | 0.205  | 0.27      | 0.265  |
| > 30%  | 0.31      | 0.285  | 0.35      | 0.333  |

Table 5: Degree of improvement shown by Co-occurrence approach over Context Heterogeneity for manual evaluation

| Corpus | Accuracy | MMR    |
|--------|----------|--------|
| > 10%  | ↑ 14.28% | ↑ 20.53% |
| > 20%  | ↑ 28.57% | ↑ 29.27% |
| > 30%  | ↑ 12.9%  | ↑ 16.84% |

Table 6: Comparison of performance between Context Heterogeneity and Co-occurrence Approach for auto-evaluation

| Corpus | Context Heterogeneity | Co-occurrence |
|--------|-----------------------|---------------|
|        | Acc       | MMR    | Acc       | MMR    |
| > 10%  | 0.05      | 0.08   | 0.05      | 0.08   |
| > 20%  | 0.06      | 0.11   | 0.11      | 0.10   |
| > 30%  | 0.13      | 0.11   | 0.15      | 0.13   |

Table 7: Degree of improvement shown by Co-occurrence approach over Context Heterogeneity for auto-evaluation

| Corpus | Accuracy | MMR    |
|--------|----------|--------|
| > 10%  | 0.0%     | 0.0%   |
| > 20%  | ↑ 83.33% | ↑ 66.67% |
| > 30%  | ↑ 15.38% | ↑ 18.18% |

As a reference measure, we have used Fung’s method of Context Heterogeneity with a context window size of 4. The results are tabulated in Tables 4 and 6. We can see that our proposed algorithm shows a significant improvement over the Context Heterogeneity method. The degree of improvement over the Context Heterogeneity is summarized in Tables 5 and 7. For auto evaluation, We see that the proposed approach shows the maximum improvement (83.33% in Accuracy and 66.67% in MMR) in performance when the corpus size is medium. For very large (too general) corpora, both the approaches give identical result while for very small (too specific) corpora, the proposed approach gives slightly better results than the reference. The trends are similar for manual evaluation. Once again, the maximum improvement is observed for the medium sized corpus (> 20%). However, in this evaluation system, the proposed approach performs much better than the reference even for the large (more general) corpora.
4 Discussion

The co-occurrence based approach used in this paper is quite a simple approach in the sense that it does not make use of any kind of linguistic information. From the aforementioned results we can see that a model based on simple word co-occurrence highly outperforms the “Context Heterogeneity” model in almost all the cases. One possible reason behind this is the amount of information captured by our model is more than that captured by the “Context Heterogeneity” model. “Context Heterogeneity” does not model actual word-word interactions. Each word is represented by a function of the number of different contexts it can occur in. However, we represent the word by a co-occurrence vector. This captures all possible contexts of the word. Also, we can actually determine which are the words which co-occur with any other word. So our model captures more semantics of the word in question than the “Context Heterogeneity” model, thereby leading to better results. Another possible factor is the nature in which we compute the translation scores. Due to the iterative nature of the algorithm and since we normalize after each iteration, some of the word pairs that received unduly high score in an earlier iteration end up having a substantially low score. However, since the “Context Heterogeneity” does only a single pass over the set of words, it fails to tackle this problem.

The seed dictionary plays an important role in our algorithm. A good seed dictionary gives us some initial information to work with. However, since “Context Heterogeneity” does not use a seed dictionary, it loses out on the amount of information initially available to it. Since the seed dictionary size for our approach is quite small, it can be easily constructed manually. However, how the seed dictionary size varies with corpus size is an issue that remains to be seen.

Another important factor in our algorithm is the way in which we have defined the co-occurrence vectors. This is not the same as the context vector that we define in case of Context Heterogeneity. In a windowed context vector, we fail to capture a lot of dependencies that might be captured using a sentence-level co-occurrence. This problem is especially more visible in case of free-word-order languages like the Indo-European group of languages. For these languages, a windowed context vector is also likely to introduce many spurious dependencies. Since Hindi is a language of this family, our algorithm captures many more correct semantic dependencies than Context Heterogeneity algorithm, resulting in better performance.

Another strong point of our proposed approach is the closeness of the values of Accuracy and MMR. This shows that the translation candidates extracted by our algorithm are not only correct, but also the best translation candidate gets the highest score with high probability. This is a very important factor in Machine Translation systems, where a more accurate dictionary would give us an improved performance.

A noticeable point about the evaluation scores is the difference in scores given by the automated system and the manual system. This can be attributed to synonymy and spelling errors. In the target language Hindi, synonymy plays a very important part. It is not expected that all synonyms of a particular word may be present in an online dictionary. In such cases, the manual evaluator marks a translation pair as True, whereas the automated system marks it as False. Instances of spelling errors have also been found. For example, for the word "neighbors", the top translation provided by the system was "paDosana" (female neighbor). If we consider root form of words, this is correct. But the actual translation should be "paDosiyAn" (neighbors, may refer to both male and female). Thus the auto evaluation system tags it as False, whereas the manual evaluator tags it as True. There are many more such occurrences throughout.

Apart from that, the manual evaluation process has been quite relaxed. Even if the properties like tense, number of words does not match, as long as the root forms match the manual evaluator has marked it as True. But this is not the case for the automated evaluator. Although stemming has been done, but problems still persist which can be only solved by lemmatization, because Hindi is a highly inflected language.
5 Conclusion and Future Work

In this paper we present a completely new approach for extracting bilingual lexicon from comparable corpora. We show the results of experimentation on corpora of different levels of comparability. The basic feature of this approach is that it is language independent and needs no additional resource. We could not compare its performance with the Dependency Heterogeneity algorithm due to the lack of resources for Hindi. So this can be taken up as a future work. Also, the algorithm is quite inefficient. Another direction of research can be in trying to explore ways to reduce the complexity of this algorithm. We can also try to incorporate more linguistic information into this model instead of just word co-occurrence. It remains to be seen how these factors affect the performance of the algorithm. Another important question is what should be the size of the seed dictionary for optimum performance of the algorithm. This too can be taken up as a future research direction.

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