

Using Large Monolingual and Bilingual Corpora to Improve Coordination Disambiguation

Shane Bergsma, David Yarowsky, Kenneth Church

Department of Computer Science and Human Language Technology Center of Excellence
Johns Hopkins University

sbergsma@jhu.edu, yarowsky@cs.jhu.edu, kenneth.church@jhu.edu

Abstract

Resolving coordination ambiguity is a classic hard problem. This paper looks at coordination disambiguation in complex noun phrases (NPs). Parsers trained on the Penn Treebank are reporting impressive numbers these days, but they don't do very well on this problem (79%). We explore systems trained using three types of corpora: (1) annotated (e.g. the Penn Treebank), (2) bitexts (e.g. Europarl), and (3) unannotated monolingual (e.g. Google N-grams). Size matters: (1) is a million words, (2) is potentially billions of words and (3) is potentially trillions of words. The unannotated monolingual data is helpful when the ambiguity can be resolved through associations among the lexical items. The bilingual data is helpful when the ambiguity can be resolved by the order of words in the translation. We train separate classifiers with monolingual and bilingual features and iteratively improve them via co-training. The co-trained classifier achieves close to 96% accuracy on Treebank data and makes 20% fewer errors than a supervised system trained with Treebank annotations.

1 Introduction

Determining which words are being linked by a coordinating conjunction is a classic hard problem. Consider the pair:

+**ellipsis** rocket\(w_1 and mortar\(w_2 attacks\(h

–**ellipsis** asbestos\(w_1 and polyvinyl\(w_2 chloride\(h

+ellipsis is about both *rocket attacks* and *mortar attacks*, unlike –ellipsis which is not about *asbestos*

chloride. We use h to refer to the head of the phrase, and w_1 and w_2 to refer to the other two lexical items.

Natural Language Processing applications need to recognize NP ellipsis in order to make sense of new sentences. For example, if an Internet search engine is given the phrase *rocket attacks* as a query, it should rank documents containing *rocket and mortar attacks* highly, even though *rocket* and *attacks* are not contiguous in the document. Furthermore, NPs with ellipsis often require a distinct type of re-ordering when translated into a foreign language. Since coordination is both complex and productive, parsers and machine translation (MT) systems cannot simply memorize the analysis of coordinate phrases from training text. We propose an approach to recognizing ellipsis that could benefit both MT and other NLP technology that relies on shallow or deep syntactic analysis.

While the general case of coordination is quite complicated, we focus on the special case of complex NPs. Errors in NP coordination typically account for the majority of parser coordination errors (Hogan, 2007). The information needed to resolve coordinate NP ambiguity cannot be derived from hand-annotated data, and we follow previous work in looking for new information sources to apply to this problem (Resnik, 1999; Nakov and Hearst, 2005; Rus et al., 2007; Pitler et al., 2010).

We first resolve coordinate NP ambiguity in a word-aligned parallel corpus. In bitexts, both monolingual and bilingual information can indicate NP structure. We create separate classifiers using monolingual and bilingual feature views. We train the two classifiers using co-training, iteratively improving the accuracy of one classifier by learning from the predictions of the other. Starting from only two

initial labeled examples, we are able to train a highly accurate classifier using only monolingual features. The monolingual classifier can then be used both within and beyond the aligned bitext. In particular, it achieves close to 96% accuracy on both bitext data and on out-of-domain examples in the Treebank.

2 Problem Definition and Related Tasks

Our system operates over a part-of-speech tagged input corpus. We attempt to resolve the ambiguity in all tag sequences matching the expression:

[DT|PRP\$] (N.*|J.*) and [DT|PRP\$] (N.*|J.*) N.*
 e.g. [the] rocket\ w_1 and [the] mortar\ w_2 attacks\ h

Each example ends with a noun, h . Preceding h are a pair of possibly-conjoined words, w_1 and w_2 , either nouns (*rocket* and *mortar*), adjectives, or a mix of the two. We allow determiners or possessive pronouns before w_1 and/or w_2 . This pattern is very common. Depending on the domain, we find it in roughly one of every 10 to 20 sentences. We merge identical matches in our corpus into a single example for labeling. Roughly 38% of w_1, w_2 pairs are both adjectives, 26% are nouns, and 36% are mixed.

The task is to determine whether w_1 and w_2 are conjoined or not. When they are not conjoined, there are two cases: 1) w_1 is actually conjoined with w_2 h as a whole (e.g. *asbestos and polyvinyl chloride*), or 2) The conjunction links something higher up in the parse tree, as in, “farmers are getting older\ w_1 and younger\ w_2 people\ h are reluctant to take up farming.” Here, *and* links two separate clauses.

Our task is both narrower and broader than previous work. It is broader than previous approaches that have focused only on conjoined nouns (Resnik, 1999; Nakov and Hearst, 2005). Although pairs of adjectives are usually conjoined (and mixed tags are usually not), this is not always true, as in *older/younger* above. For comparison, we also state accuracy on the noun-only examples (§ 8).

Our task is more narrow than the task tackled by full-sentence parsers, but most parsers do not bracket NP-internal structure at all, since such structure is absent from the primary training corpus for statistical parsers, the Penn Treebank (Marcus et al., 1993). We confirm that standard broad-coverage parsers perform poorly on our task (§ 7).

Vadas and Curran (2007a) manually annotated NP structure in the Penn Treebank, and a few custom NP parsers have recently been developed using this data (Vadas and Curran, 2007b; Pitler et al., 2010). Our task is more narrow than the task handled by these parsers since we do not handle other, less-frequent and sometimes more complex constructions (e.g. *robot arms and legs*). However, such constructions are clearly amenable to our algorithm. In addition, these parsers have only evaluated coordination resolution *within base NPs*, simplifying the task and rendering the aforementioned *older/younger* problem moot. Finally, these custom parsers have only used simple count features; for example, they have not used the paraphrases we describe below.

3 Supervised Coordination Resolution

We adopt a discriminative approach to resolving coordinate NP ambiguity. For each unique coordinate NP in our corpus, we encode relevant information in a feature vector, \bar{x} . A classifier scores these vectors with a set of learned weights, \bar{w} . We assume N labeled examples $\{(y^1, \bar{x}^1), \dots, (y^N, \bar{x}^N)\}$ are available to train the classifier. We use ‘ $y = 1$ ’ as the class label for NPs with ellipsis and ‘ $y = 0$ ’ for NPs without. Since our particular task requires a binary decision, any standard learning algorithm can be used to learn the feature weights on the training data. We use (regularized) logistic regression (a.k.a. maximum entropy) since it has been shown to perform well on a range of NLP tasks, and also because its probabilistic interpretation is useful for co-training (§ 4). In binary logistic regression, the probability of a positive class takes the form of the logistic function:

$$\Pr(y = 1) = \frac{\exp(\bar{w} \cdot \bar{x})}{1 + \exp(\bar{w} \cdot \bar{x})}$$

Ellipsis is predicted if $\Pr(y = 1) > 0.5$ (equivalently, $\bar{w} \cdot \bar{x} > 0$), otherwise we predict no ellipsis.

Supervised classifiers easily incorporate a range of interdependent information into a learned decision function. The cost for this flexibility is typically the need for labeled training data. The more features we use, the more labeled data we need, since for linear classifiers, the number of examples needed to reach optimum performance is at most linear in the

Phrase	Evidence	Pattern
dairy and meat production (ellipsis)	English: ... <i>production of dairy and meat...</i>	h of w_1 and w_2
	English: ... <i>dairy production and meat production...</i>	$w_1 h$ and $w_2 h$
	English: ... <i>meat and dairy production...</i>	w_2 and $w_1 h$
	Spanish: ... <i>producción láctea y cárnica...</i> → <i>production dairy and meat</i>	$h w_1 \dots w_2$
	Finnish: ... <i>maidon- ja lihantuotantoon...</i> → <i>dairy- and meatproduction</i>	w_1- ... w_2h
	French: ... <i>production de produits laitiers et de viande...</i> → <i>production of products dairy and of meat</i>	$h \dots w_1 \dots w_2$
asbestos and polyvinyl chloride (no ellipsis)	English: ... <i>polyvinyl chloride and asbestos...</i>	$w_2 h$ and w_1
	English: ... <i>asbestos , and polyvinyl chloride...</i>	w_1 , and $w_2 h$
	English: ... <i>asbestos and chloride...</i>	w_1 and h
	Portuguese: ... <i>o amianto e o cloreto de polivinilo...</i> → <i>the asbestos and the chloride of polyvinyl</i>	$w_1 \dots h \dots w_2$
	Italian: ... <i>l' asbesto e il polivinilcloruro...</i> → <i>the asbestos and the polyvinylchloride</i>	$w_1 \dots w_2h$

Table 1: Monolingual and bilingual evidence for ellipsis or lack-of-ellipsis in coordination of $[w_1 \text{ and } w_2 h]$ phrases.

number of features (Vapnik, 1998). In § 4, we propose a way to circumvent the need for labeled data.

We now describe the particular monolingual and bilingual information we use for this problem. We refer to Table 1 for canonical examples of the two classes and also to provide intuition for the features.

3.1 Monolingual Features

Count features These real-valued features encode the frequency, in a large auxiliary corpus, of relevant word sequences. Co-occurrence frequencies have long been used to resolve linguistic ambiguities (Dagan and Itai, 1990; Hindle and Rooth, 1993; Lauer, 1995). With the massive volumes of raw text now available, we can look for very specific and indicative word sequences. Consider the phrase *dairy and meat production* (Table 1). A high count in raw text for the paraphrase “*production of dairy and meat*” implies ellipsis in the original example. In the third column of Table 1, we suggest a pattern that generalizes the particular piece of evidence. It is these patterns and other English paraphrases that we encode in our count features (Table 2). We also use (but do not list) count features for the four paraphrases proposed in Nakov and Hearst (2005, § 3.2.3). Such specific paraphrases are more common than one might think. In our experiments, at least 20% of examples have non-zero counts for a

5-gram pattern, while over 70% of examples have counts for a 4-gram pattern.

Our features also include counts for subsequences of the full phrase. High counts for “*dairy production*” alone or just “*dairy and meat*” also indicate ellipsis. On the other hand, like Pitler et al. (2010), we have a feature for the count of “*dairy and production.*” Frequent conjoining of w_1 and h is evidence that there is no ellipsis, that w_1 and h are compatible and heads of two separate and conjoined NPs.

Many of our patterns are novel in that they include commas or determiners. The presence of these often indicate that there are two separate NPs. E.g. seeing *asbestos , and polyvinyl chloride* or *the asbestos and the polyvinyl chloride* suggests no ellipsis. We also propose patterns that include left-and-right context around the NP. These aim to capture salient information about the NP’s distribution as an entire unit. Finally, patterns involving prepositions look for explicit paraphrasing of the nominal relations; the presence of “ h PREP w_1 and w_2 ” in a corpus would suggest ellipsis in the original NP.

In total, we have 48 separate count features, requiring counts for 315 distinct N-grams for each example. We use **log-counts** as the feature value, and use a separate binary feature to indicate if a particular count is zero. We efficiently acquire the counts using custom tools for managing web-scale N-gram

Real-valued count features. $C(p) \rightarrow$ count of p		
$C(w_1)$	$C(w_2)$	$C(h)$
$C(w_1 \text{ CC } w_2)$	$C(w_1 h)$	$C(w_2 h)$
$C(w_2 \text{ CC } w_1)$	$C(w_1 \text{ CC } h)$	$C(h \text{ CC } w_1)$
$C(\text{DT } w_1 \text{ CC } w_2)$		$C(w_1, \text{ CC } w_2)$
$C(\text{DT } w_2 \text{ CC } w_1)$		$C(w_2, \text{ CC } w_1)$
$C(\text{DT } w_1 \text{ CC } h)$		$C(w_1 \text{ CC } w_2, \cdot)$
$C(\text{DT } h \text{ CC } w_1)$		$C(w_2 \text{ CC } w_1, \cdot)$
$C(\text{DT } w_1 \text{ and DT } w_2)$		$C(w_1 \text{ CC DT } w_2)$
$C(\text{DT } w_2 \text{ and DT } w_1)$		$C(w_2 \text{ CC DT } w_1)$
$C(\text{DT } h \text{ and DT } w_1)$		$C(w_1 \text{ CC DT } h)$
$C(\text{DT } h \text{ and DT } w_2)$		$C(h \text{ CC DT } w_1)$
$C(\langle \text{L-CTXT}_i \rangle w_1 \text{ and } w_2 h)$		$C(w_1 \text{ CC } w_2 h)$
$C(w_1 \text{ and } w_2 h \langle \text{R-CTXT}_i \rangle)$		$C(h \text{ PREP } w_1)$
$C(h \text{ PREP } w_1 \text{ CC } w_2)$		$C(h \text{ PREP } w_2)$
Count feature filler sets		
DT = { <i>the, a, an, its, his</i> }		CC = { <i>and, or, ', '</i> }
PREP = { <i>of, for, in, at, on, from, with, about</i> }		
Binary features and feature templates $\rightarrow \{0, 1\}$		
$\text{wr}_{d_1} = \langle \text{wr}_{d_1}(w_1) \rangle$		$\text{tag}_{d_1} = \langle \text{tag}_{d_1}(w_1) \rangle$
$\text{wr}_{d_2} = \langle \text{wr}_{d_2}(w_2) \rangle$		$\text{tag}_{d_2} = \langle \text{tag}_{d_2}(w_2) \rangle$
$\text{wr}_{d_h} = \langle \text{wr}_{d_h}(h) \rangle$		$\text{tag}_{d_h} = \langle \text{tag}_{d_h}(h) \rangle$
$\text{wr}_{d_{12}} = \langle \text{wr}_{d_{12}}(w_1), \text{wr}_{d_{12}}(w_2) \rangle$		$\text{wr}_{d_{12}} = \langle \text{wr}_{d_{12}}(w_1) \rangle$
$\text{tag}_{d_{12}} = \langle \text{tag}_{d_{12}}(w_1), \text{tag}_{d_{12}}(w_2) \rangle$		$\text{tag}_{d_{12}} = \langle \text{tag}_{d_{12}}(w_2) \rangle$
$\text{tag}_{d_{12h}} = \langle \text{tag}_{d_{12h}}(w_1), \text{tag}_{d_{12h}}(w_2), \text{tag}_{d_{12h}}(h) \rangle$		

Table 2: Monolingual features. For counts using the filler sets CC, DT and PREP, counts are *summed* across all filler combinations. In contrast, feature templates are denoted with $\langle \cdot \rangle$, where the feature label depends on the \langle bracketed argument \rangle . E.g., we have separate count feature for each item in the L/R context sets, where $\{\text{L-CTXT}\} = \{\textit{with, and, as, including, on, is, are, \&}\}$, $\{\text{R-CTXT}\} = \{\textit{and, have, of, on, said, to, were, \&}\}$

data (§ 5). Previous approaches have used search engine page counts as substitutes for co-occurrence information (Nakov and Hearst, 2005; Rus et al., 2007). These approaches clearly cannot scale to use the wide range of information used in our system.

Binary features Table 2 gives the binary features and feature templates. These are templates in the sense that every unique word or tag fills the template and corresponds to a unique feature. We can thus learn if particular words or tags are associated with ellipsis. We also include binary features to flag the presence of any optional determiners before w_1 or w_2 . We also have binary features for the context words that precede and follow the tag sequence in the source corpus. These context features are analogous to the L/R-CTXT features that were counted in the auxiliary corpus. Our classifier learns, for exam-

Monolingual: \bar{x}_m	Bilingual: \bar{x}_b
$C(w_1):14.4$	$C(\text{detl}=h * w_1 * w_2), \text{Dutch}:1$
$C(w_2):15.4$	$C(\text{detl}=h * * w_1 * * w_2), \text{Fr.}:1$
$C(h):17.2$	$C(\text{detl}=h w_1 h * w_2), \text{Greek}:1$
$C(w_1 \text{ CC } w_2):9.0$	$C(\text{detl}=h w_1 * w_2), \text{Spanish}:1$
$C(w_1 h):9.8$	$C(\text{detl}=w_1 - * w_2 h), \text{Swedish}:1$
$C(w_2 h):10.2$	$C(\text{simp}=h w_1 w_2), \text{Dutch}:1$
$C(w_2 \text{ CC } w_1):10.5$	$C(\text{simp}=h w_1 w_2), \text{French}:1$
$C(w_1 \text{ CC } h):3.5$	$C(\text{simp}=h w_1 h w_2), \text{Greek}:1$
$C(h \text{ CC } w_1):6.8$	$C(\text{simp}=h w_1 w_2), \text{Spanish}:1$
$C(\text{DT } w_2 \text{ CC } w_1):7.8$	$C(\text{simp}=w_1 w_2 h), \text{Swedish}:1$
$C(w_1 \text{ and } w_2 h \text{ and}):2.4$	$C(\text{span}=5), \text{Dutch}:1$
$C(h \text{ PREP } w_1 \text{ CC } w_2):2.6$	$C(\text{span}=7), \text{French}:1$
$\text{wr}_{d_1}=\textit{dairy}:1$	$C(\text{span}=5), \text{Greek}:1$
$\text{wr}_{d_2}=\textit{meat}:1$	$C(\text{span}=4), \text{Spanish}:1$
$\text{wr}_{d_h}=\textit{production}:1$	$C(\text{span}=3), \text{Swedish}:1$
$\text{tag}_{d_1}=\textit{NN}:1$	$C(\text{ord}=h w_1 w_2), \text{Dutch}:1$
$\text{tag}_{d_2}=\textit{NN}:1$	$C(\text{ord}=h w_1 w_2), \text{French}:1$
$\text{tag}_{d_h}=\textit{NN}:1$	$C(\text{ord}=h w_1 h w_2), \text{Greek}:1$
$\text{wr}_{d_{12}}=\textit{dairy, meat}:1$	$C(\text{ord}=h w_1 w_2), \text{Spanish}:1$
$\text{tag}_{d_{12}}=\textit{NN, NN}:1$	$C(\text{ord}=w_1 w_2 h), \text{Swedish}:1$
$\text{tag}_{d_{12h}}=\textit{tag}(w_2):1$	$C(\text{ord}=h w_1 w_2):4$
$\text{tag}_{d_{12h}}=\textit{NN, NN, NN}:1$	$C(\text{ord}=w_1 w_2 h):1$

Table 3: Example of actual instantiated feature vectors for *dairy and meat production* (in label:value format). Monolingual feature vector, \bar{x}_m , on the left (both count and binary features, see Table 2), Bilingual feature vector, \bar{x}_b , on the right (see Table 4).

ple, that instances preceded by the words *its* and *in* are likely to have ellipsis: these words tend to precede single NPs as opposed to conjoined NP pairs.

Example Table 3 provides part of the actual instantiated monolingual feature vector for *dairy and meat production*. Note the count features have logarithmic values, while only the non-zero binary features are included.

A later stage of processing extracts a list of feature labels from the training data. This list is then used to map feature labels to integers, yielding the standard (sparse) format used by most machine learning software (e.g., 1:14.4 2:15.4 3:17.2 ... 7149:1 24208:1).

3.2 Bilingual Features

The above features represent the best of the information available to a coordinate NP classifier when operating on an arbitrary text. In some domains, however, we have additional information to inform our decisions. We consider the case where we seek to predict coordinate structure in parallel text: i.e., English text with a corresponding translation in one

or more target languages. A variety of mature NLP tools exists in this domain, allowing us to robustly align the parallel text first at the sentence and then at the word level. Given a word-aligned parallel corpus, we can see how the different types of coordinate NPs are translated in the target languages.

In Romance languages, examples with ellipsis, such as *dairy and meat production* (Table 1), tend to correspond to translations with the head in the first position, e.g. “producción láctea y cárnica” in Spanish (examples taken from Europarl (Koehn, 2005)). When there is no ellipsis, the head-first syntax leads to the “ w_1 and h w_2 ” ordering, e.g. *amiante e o cloreto de polivinilo* in Portuguese. Another clue for ellipsis is the presence of a dangling hyphen, as in the Finnish *maidon- ja lihantuotantoon*. We find such hyphens especially common in Germanic languages like Dutch. In addition to language-specific clues, a translation may resolve an ambiguity by paraphrasing the example in the same way it may be paraphrased in English. E.g., we see *hard and soft drugs* translated into Spanish as *drogas blandas y drogas duras* with the head, *drogas*, repeated (akin to *soft drugs and hard drugs* in English).

One could imagine manually defining the relationship between English NP coordination and the patterns in each language, but this would need to be repeated for each language pair, and would likely miss many useful patterns. In contrast, by representing the translation patterns as features in a classifier, we can instead automatically learn the coordination-translation correspondences, in any language pair.

For each occurrence of a coordinate NP in a word-aligned bitext, we inspect the alignments and determine the mapping of w_1 , w_2 and h . Recall that each of our examples represents all the occurrences of a unique coordinate NP in a corpus. We therefore aggregate translation information over all the occurrences. Since the alignments in automatically-aligned parallel text are noisy, the more occurrences we have, the more translations we have, and the more likely we are to make a correct decision. For some common instances in Europarl, like *Agriculture and Rural Development*, we have thousands of translations in several languages.

Table 4 provides the bilingual feature templates. The notation indicates that, for a given coordinate NP, we count the frequency of each transla-

$C\langle detl(w_1, w_2, h) \rangle, \langle \text{LANG} \rangle$
$C\langle simp(w_1, w_2, h) \rangle, \langle \text{LANG} \rangle$
$C\langle span(w_1, w_2, h) \rangle, \langle \text{LANG} \rangle$
$C\langle ord(w_1, w_2, h) \rangle, \langle \text{LANG} \rangle$
$C\langle ord(w_1, w_2, h) \rangle$

Table 4: Real-valued bilingual feature templates. The shorthand is *detl*=“detailed pattern,” *simp*=“simple pattern,” *span*=“span of pattern,” *ord*=“order of words.” The notation $C\langle p \rangle, \langle \text{LANG} \rangle$ means the number of times we see the pattern (or span) $\langle p \rangle$ as the aligned translation of the coordinate NP in the target language $\langle \text{LANG} \rangle$.

tion pattern in each target language, and generate real-valued features for these counts. The feature counts are indexed to the particular pattern and language. We also have one language-independent feature, $C\langle ord(w_1, w_2, h) \rangle$, which gives the frequency of each ordering across all languages. The *span* is the number of tokens collectively spanned by the translations of w_1 , w_2 and h . The “*detailed pattern*” represents the translation using wildcards for all other foreign words, but maintains punctuation. Letting ‘*’ stand for the wildcard, the detailed patterns for the translations of *dairy and meat production* in Table 1 would be [h w_1 * w_2] (Spanish), [w_1 - * w_2 h] (Finnish) and [h * * w_1 * * w_2] (French). Four or more consecutive wildcards are converted to ‘...’. For the “*simple pattern*,” we remove the wildcards and punctuation. Note that our aligner allows the English word to map to multiple target words. The simple pattern differs from the *ordering* in that it denotes how many tokens each of w_1 , w_2 and h span.

Example Table 3 also provides part of the actual instantiated bilingual feature vector for *dairy and meat production*.

4 Bilingual Co-training

We exploit the orthogonality of the monolingual and bilingual features using semi-supervised learning. These features are orthogonal in the sense that they look at different sources of information for each example. If we had enough training data, a good classifier could be trained using either monolingual or bilingual features on their own. With classifiers trained on even a little labeled data, it’s feasible that for a particular example, the monolingual classifier might be confident when the bilingual classifier is

Algorithm 1 The bilingual co-training algorithm: subscript m corresponds to monolingual, b to bilingual

Given: • a set L of labeled training examples in the bitext, $\{(\bar{x}^i, y^i)\}$
• a set U of unlabeled examples in the bitext, $\{\bar{x}^j\}$
• hyperparams: k (num. iterations), u_m and u_b (size smaller unlabeled pools), n_m and n_b (num. new labeled examples each iteration), C : regularization param. for classifier training

Create $L_m \leftarrow L$
Create $L_b \leftarrow L$
Create a pool U_m by choosing u_m examples randomly from U .
Create a pool U_b by choosing u_b examples randomly from U .
for $i = 0$ to k **do**
 Use L_m to train a classifier h_m using only \bar{x}_m , the monolingual features of \bar{x}
 Use L_b to train a classifier h_b using only \bar{x}_b , the bilingual features of \bar{x}
 Use h_m to label U_m , move the n_m most-confident examples to L_b
 Use h_b to label U_b , move the n_b most-confident examples to L_m
 Replenish U_m and U_b randomly from U with n_m and n_b new examples
end for

uncertain, and vice versa. This suggests using a co-training approach (Yarowsky, 1995; Blum and Mitchell, 1998). We train separate classifiers on the labeled data. We use the predictions of one classifier to label new examples for training the orthogonal classifier. We iterate this training and labeling.

We outline how this procedure can be applied to bitext data in **Algorithm 1** (above). We follow prior work in drawing predictions from smaller pools, U_m and U_b , rather than from U itself, to ensure the labeled examples “are more representative of the underlying distribution” (Blum and Mitchell, 1998). We use a logistic regression classifier for h_m and h_b . Like Blum and Mitchell (1998), we also create a *combined* classifier by making predictions according to $\arg\max_{y=1,0} Pr(y|x_m)Pr(y|x_b)$.

The hyperparameters of the algorithm are 1) k , the number of iterations, 2) u_m and u_b , the size of the smaller unlabeled pools, 3) n_m and n_b , the number of new labeled examples to include at each iteration, and 4) the regularization parameter of the logistic regression classifier. All such parameters can be tuned on a development set. Like Blum and Mitchell (1998), we ensure that we maintain roughly the true class balance in the labeled examples added at each iteration; we also estimate this balance using development data.

There are some differences between our approach and the co-training algorithm presented in Blum and Mitchell (1998, Table 1). One of our key goals is to

produce an accurate classifier that uses only monolingual features, since only this classifier can be applied to arbitrary monolingual text. We thus break the symmetry in the original algorithm and allow h_b to label more examples for h_m than vice versa, so that h_m will improve faster. This is desirable because we don’t have unlimited unlabeled examples to draw from, only those found in our parallel text.

5 Data

Web-scale text data is used for monolingual feature counts, parallel text is used for classifier co-training, and labeled data is used for training and evaluation.

Web-scale N-gram Data We extract our counts from *Google V2*: a new N-gram corpus (with N-grams of length one-to-five) created from the same one-trillion-word snapshot of the web as the Google 5-gram Corpus (Brants and Franz, 2006), but with enhanced filtering and processing of the source text (Lin et al., 2010, Section 5). We get counts using the suffix array tools described in (Lin et al., 2010). We add one to all counts for smoothing.

Parallel Data We use the Danish, German, Greek, Spanish, Finnish, French, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, and Swedish portions of Europarl (Koehn, 2005). We also use the Czech, German, Spanish and French news commentary data from WMT

2010.¹ Word-aligned English-Foreign bitexts are created using the Berkeley aligner.² We run 5 iterations of joint IBM Model 1 training, followed by 3-to-5 iterations of joint HMM training, and align with the competitive-thresholding heuristic. The English portions of all bitexts are part-of-speech tagged with CRFTagger (Phan, 2006). 94K unique coordinate NPs and their translations are then extracted.

Labeled Data For experiments within the parallel text, we manually labeled 1320 of the 94K coordinate NP examples. We use 605 examples to set development parameters, 607 examples as held-out test data, and 2, 10 or 100 examples for training.

For experiments on the WSJ portion of the Penn Treebank, we merge the original Treebank annotations with the NP annotations provided by Vadas and Curran (2007a). We collect all coordinate NP sequences matching our pattern and collapse them into a single example. We label these instances by determining whether the annotations have w_1 and w_2 conjoined. In only one case did the same coordinate NP have different labels in different occurrences; this was clearly an error and resolved accordingly. We collected 1777 coordinate NPs in total, and divided them into 777 examples for training, 500 for development and 500 as a final held-out test set.

6 Evaluation and Settings

We evaluate using *accuracy*: the percentage of examples classified correctly in held-out test data. We compare our systems to a baseline referred to as the **Tag-Triple classifier**. This classifier has a single feature: the tag(w_1), tag(w_2), tag(h) triple. Tag-Triple is therefore essentially a discriminative, *unlexicalized* parser for our coordinate NPs.

All classifiers use L2-regularized logistic regression training via LIBLINEAR (Fan et al., 2008). For co-training, we fix regularization at $C = 0.1$. For all other classifiers, we optimize the C parameter on the development data. At each iteration, i , classifier h_m annotates 50 new examples for training h_b , from a pool of 750 examples, while h_b annotates $50 * i$ new examples for h_m , from a pool of $750 * i$ examples. This ensures h_m gets the majority of automatically-labeled examples.

¹www.statmt.org/wmt10/translation-task.html

²nlp.cs.berkeley.edu/pages/wordaligner.html

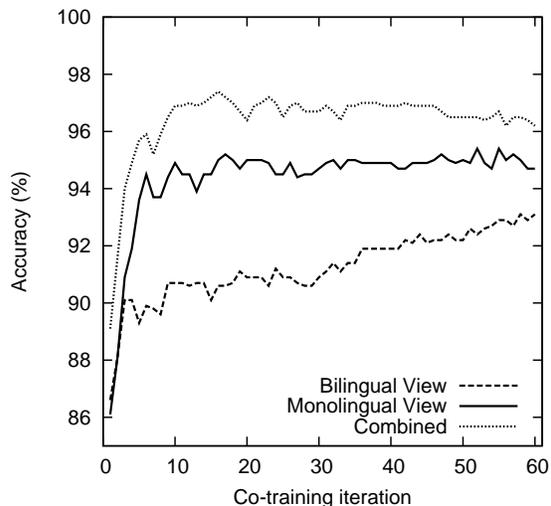


Figure 1: Accuracy on **Bitext** development data over the course of co-training (from 10 initial seed examples).

We also set k , the number of co-training iterations. The monolingual, bilingual, and combined classifiers reach their optimum levels of performance after different numbers of iterations (Figure 1). We therefore set k separately for each, stopping around 16 iterations for the combined, 51 for the monolingual, and 57 for the bilingual classifier.

7 Bitext Experiments

We evaluate our systems on our held-out bitext data. The majority class is ellipsis, in 55.8% of examples. For comparison, we ran two publicly-available broad-coverage parsers and analyzed whether they correctly predicted ellipsis. The parsers were the C&C parser (Curran et al., 2007) and Minipar (Lin, 1998). They achieved 78.6% and 77.6%.³

Table 5 shows that co-training results in much more accurate classifiers than supervised training alone, regardless of the features or amount of initial training data. The Tag-Triple system is the weakest system in all cases. This shows that better monolingual features are very important, but semi-supervised training can also make a big difference.

³We provided the parsers full sentences containing the NPs. We directly extracted the labels from the C&C bracketing, while for Minipar we checked whether w_1 was the head of w_2 . Of course, the parsers performed very poorly on ellipsis involving two nouns (partly because NP structure is absent from their training corpora (see § 2 and also Vadas and Curran (2008)), but neither exceeded 88% on adjective or mixed pairs either.

System	# of Examples		
	2	10	100
Tag-Triple classifier	67.4	79.1	82.9
Monolingual classifier	69.9	90.8	91.6
Co-trained Mono. classifier	96.4	95.9	96.0
<i>Relative error reduction via co-training</i>	88%	62%	52%
Bilingual classifier	76.8	85.5	92.1
Co-trained Bili. classifier	93.2	93.2	93.9
<i>Relative error reduction via co-training</i>	71%	53%	23%
Mono.+Bili. classifier	69.9	91.4	94.9
Co-trained Combo classifier	96.7	96.7	96.7
<i>Relative error reduction via co-training</i>	89%	62%	35%

Table 5: Co-training improves accuracy (%) over standard supervised learning on **Bitext** test data for different feature types and number of training examples.

System	Accuracy	Δ
Monolingual alone	91.6	-
+ Bilingual	94.9	39%
+ Co-training	96.0	54%
+ Bilingual & Co-training	96.7	61%

Table 6: Net benefits of bilingual features and co-training on **Bitext** data, 100-training-example setting. Δ = relative error reduction over Monolingual alone.

Table 6 shows the net benefit of our main contributions. Bilingual features clearly help on this task, but not as much as co-training. With bilingual features and co-training together, we achieve 96.7% accuracy. This combined system could be used to very accurately resolve coordinate ambiguity in parallel data prior to training an MT system.

8 WSJ Experiments

While we can now accurately resolve coordinate NP ambiguity in parallel text, it would be even better if this accuracy carried over to new domains, where bilingual features are not available. We test the robustness of our co-trained monolingual classifier by evaluating it on our labeled WSJ data.

The Penn Treebank and the annotations added by Vadas and Curran (2007a) comprise a very special corpus; such data is clearly not available in every domain. We can take advantage of the plentiful labeled examples to also test how our co-trained system compares to supervised systems trained with in-

System	Training		WSJ Acc.	
	Set	#	Nouns	All
Nakov & Hearst	-	-	79.2	84.8
Tag-Triple	WSJ	777	76.1	82.4
Pitler et al.	WSJ	777	92.3	92.8
MonoWSJ	WSJ	777	92.3	94.4
Co-trained	Bitext	2	93.8	95.6

Table 7: Coordinate resolution accuracy (%) on **WSJ**.

domain labeled examples, and also other systems, like Nakov and Hearst (2005), which although unsupervised, are tuned on WSJ data.

We reimplemented Nakov and Hearst (2005)⁴ and Pitler et al. (2010)⁵ and trained the latter on WSJ annotations. We compare these systems to Tag-Triple and also to a supervised system trained on the WSJ using only our monolingual features (MonoWSJ). The (out-of-domain) bitext co-trained system is the best system on the WSJ data, both on just the examples where w_1 and w_2 are nouns (Nouns), and on all examples (All) (Table 7).⁶ It is statistically significantly better than the prior state-of-the-art Pitler et al. system (McNemar’s test, $p < 0.05$) and also exceeds the WSJ-trained system using monolingual features ($p < 0.2$). This domain robustness is less surprising given its key features are derived from web-scale N-gram data; such features are known to generalize well across domains (Bergsma et al., 2010). We tried co-training without the N-gram features, and performance was worse on the WSJ (85%) than supervised training on WSJ data alone (87%).

9 Related Work

Bilingual data has been used to resolve a range of ambiguities, from PP-attachment (Schwartz et al., 2003; Fossum and Knight, 2008), to distinguishing grammatical roles (Schwarck et al., 2010), to full dependency parsing (Huang et al., 2009). Related

⁴Nakov and Hearst (2005) use an unsupervised algorithm that predicts ellipsis on the basis of a majority vote over a number of pattern counts and established heuristics.

⁵Pitler et al. (2010) uses a supervised classifier to predict bracketings; their count and binary features are a strict subset of the features used in our Monolingual classifier.

⁶For co-training, we tuned k on the WSJ dev set but left other parameters the same. We start from 2 training instances; results were the same or slightly better with 10 or 100 instances.

work has also focused on projecting syntactic annotations from one language to another (Yarowsky and Ngai, 2001; Hwa et al., 2005), and jointly parsing the two sides of a bitext by leveraging the alignments during training and testing (Smith and Smith, 2004; Burkett and Klein, 2008) or just during training (Snyder et al., 2009). None of this work has focused on coordination, nor has it combined bitexts with web-scale monolingual information.

Most prior work has focused on leveraging the alignments between a single pair of languages. Dagan et al. (1991) first articulated the need for “a multilingual corpora based system, which exploits the differences between languages to automatically acquire knowledge about word senses.” Kuhn (2004) used alignments across several Europarl bitexts to devise rules for identifying parse constituents. Bannard and Callison-Burch (2005) used multiple bitexts as part of a system for extracting paraphrases.

Our co-training algorithm is well suited to using multiple bitexts because it automatically learns the value of alignment information in each language. In addition, our approach copes with noisy alignments both by aggregating information across languages (and repeated occurrences within a language), and by only selecting the most confident examples at each iteration. Burkett et al. (2010) also proposed exploiting monolingual-view and bilingual-view predictors. In their work, the bilingual view encodes the per-instance *agreement* between monolingual predictors in two languages, while our bilingual view encodes the alignment and target text together, across multiple instances and languages.

The other side of the coin is the use of syntax to perform better translation (Wu, 1997). This is a rich field of research with its own annual workshop (Syntax and Structure in Translation).

Our monolingual model is most similar to previous work using counts from web-scale text, both for resolving coordination ambiguity (Nakov and Hearst, 2005; Rus et al., 2007; Pitler et al., 2010), and for syntax and semantics in general (Lapata and Keller, 2005; Bergsma et al., 2010). We do not currently use semantic similarity (either taxonomic (Resnik, 1999) or distributional (Hogan, 2007)) which has previously been found useful for coordination. Our model can easily include such information as additional features. Adding new fea-

tures without adding new training data is often problematic, but is promising in our framework, since the bitexts provide so much indirect supervision.

10 Conclusion

Resolving coordination ambiguity is hard. Parsers are reporting impressive numbers these days, but coordination remains an area with room for improvement. We focused on a specific subcase, complex NPs, and introduced a new evaluation set. We achieved a huge performance improvement from 79% for state-of-the-art parsers to 96%.⁷

Size matters. Most parsers are trained on a mere million words of the Penn Treebank. In this work, we show how to take advantage of billions of words of bitexts and trillions of words of unlabeled monolingual text. Larger corpora make it possible to use associations among lexical items (compare *dairy production vs. asbestos chloride*) and precise paraphrases (*production of dairy and meat*). Bitexts are helpful when the ambiguity can be resolved by some feature in another language (such as word order).

The Treebank is convenient for supervised training because it has annotations. We show that even without such annotations, high-quality supervised models can be trained using co-training and features derived from huge volumes of unlabeled data.

References

- Colin Bannard and Chris Callison-Burch. 2005. Paraphrasing with bilingual parallel corpora. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 597–604.
- Shane Bergsma, Emily Pitler, and Dekang Lin. 2010. Creating robust supervised classifiers via web-scale n-gram data. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 865–874.
- Avrim Blum and Tom Mitchell. 1998. Combining labeled and unlabeled data with co-training. In *Proc. COLT*, pages 92–100.
- Thorsten Brants and Alex Franz. 2006. The Google Web 1T 5-gram Corpus Version 1.1. LDC2006T13.
- David Burkett and Dan Klein. 2008. Two languages are better than one (for syntactic parsing). In *Proc. EMNLP*, pages 877–886.
- David Burkett, Slav Petrov, John Blitzer, and Dan Klein. 2010. Learning better monolingual models with unannotated bilingual text. In *Proc. CoNLL*, pages 46–53.

⁷Evaluation scripts and data are available online: www.cis.jhu.edu/~sbergsma/coordNP.ACL11.zip

- James Curran, Stephen Clark, and Johan Bos. 2007. Linguistically motivated large-scale NLP with C&C and Boxer. In *Proc. ACL Demo and Poster Sessions*, pages 33–36.
- Ido Dagan and Alan Itai. 1990. Automatic processing of large corpora for the resolution of anaphora references. In *Proc. COLING*, pages 330–332.
- Ido Dagan, Alon Itai, and Ulrike Schwall. 1991. Two languages are more informative than one. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 130–137.
- Rong-En Fan, Kai-Wei Chang, Cho-Jui Hsieh, Xiang-Rui Wang, and Chih-Jen Lin. 2008. LIBLINEAR: A library for large linear classification. *JMLR*, 9:1871–1874.
- Victoria Fossum and Kevin Knight. 2008. Using bilingual Chinese-English word alignments to resolve PP-attachment ambiguity in English. In *Proc. AMTA Student Workshop*, pages 48–53.
- Donald Hindle and Mats Rooth. 1993. Structural ambiguity and lexical relations. *Computational Linguistics*, 19(1):103–120.
- Deirdre Hogan. 2007. Coordinate noun phrase disambiguation in a generative parsing model. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 680–687.
- Liang Huang, Wenbin Jiang, and Qun Liu. 2009. Bilingually-constrained (monolingual) shift-reduce parsing. In *Proc. EMNLP*, pages 1222–1231.
- Rebecca Hwa, Philip Resnik, Amy Weinberg, Clara Cabezas, and Okan Kolak. 2005. Bootstrapping parsers via syntactic projection across parallel texts. *Natural Language Engineering*, 11(3):311–325.
- Philipp Koehn. 2005. Europarl: A parallel corpus for statistical machine translation. In *Proc. MT Summit X*.
- Jonas Kuhn. 2004. Experiments in parallel-text based grammar induction. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 470–477.
- Mirella Lapata and Frank Keller. 2005. Web-based models for natural language processing. *ACM Trans. Speech and Language Processing*, 2(1):1–31.
- Mark Lauer. 1995. Corpus statistics meet the noun compound: Some empirical results. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 47–54.
- Dekang Lin, Kenneth Church, Heng Ji, Satoshi Sekine, David Yarowsky, Shane Bergsma, Kailash Patil, Emily Pitler, Rachel Lathbury, Vikram Rao, Kapil Dalwani, and Sushant Narsale. 2010. New tools for web-scale N-grams. In *Proc. LREC*.
- Dekang Lin. 1998. Dependency-based evaluation of MINIPAR. In *Proc. LREC Workshop on the Evaluation of Parsing Systems*.
- Mitchell P. Marcus, Beatrice Santorini, and Mary Marcinkiewicz. 1993. Building a large annotated corpus of English: The Penn Treebank. *Computational Linguistics*, 19(2):313–330.
- Preslav Nakov and Marti Hearst. 2005. Using the web as an implicit training set: application to structural ambiguity resolution. In *Proc. HLT-EMNLP*, pages 17–24.
- Xuan-Hieu Phan. 2006. CRFtagger: CRF English POS Tagger. `crftagger.sourceforge.net`.
- Emily Pitler, Shane Bergsma, Dekang Lin, and Kenneth Church. 2010. Using web-scale N-grams to improve base NP parsing performance. In *In Proc. COLING*, pages 886–894.
- Philip Resnik. 1999. Semantic similarity in a taxonomy: An information-based measure and its application to problems of ambiguity in natural language. *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research*, 11:95–130.
- Vasile Rus, Sireesha Ravi, Mihai C. Lintean, and Philip M. McCarthy. 2007. Unsupervised method for parsing coordinated base noun phrases. In *Proc. CILING*, pages 229–240.
- Florian Schwarck, Alexander Fraser, and Hinrich Schütze. 2010. Bitext-based resolution of German subject-object ambiguities. In *Proc. HLT-NAACL*, pages 737–740.
- Lee Schwartz, Takako Aikawa, and Chris Quirk. 2003. Disambiguation of English PP attachment using multilingual aligned data. In *Proc. MT Summit IX*, pages 330–337.
- David A. Smith and Noah A. Smith. 2004. Bilingual parsing with factored estimation: Using English to parse Korean. In *Proc. EMNLP*, pages 49–56.
- Benjamin Snyder, Tahira Naseem, and Regina Barzilay. 2009. Unsupervised multilingual grammar induction. In *Proc. ACL-IJCNLP*, pages 1041–1050.
- David Vadas and James R. Curran. 2007a. Adding noun phrase structure to the Penn Treebank. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 240–247.
- David Vadas and James R. Curran. 2007b. Large-scale supervised models for noun phrase bracketing. In *PA-CLING*, pages 104–112.
- David Vadas and James R. Curran. 2008. Parsing noun phrase structure with CCG. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 104–112.
- Vladimir N. Vapnik. 1998. *Statistical Learning Theory*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dekai Wu. 1997. Stochastic inversion transduction grammars and bilingual parsing of parallel corpora. *Computational Linguistics*, 23(3):377–403.
- David Yarowsky and Grace Ngai. 2001. Inducing multilingual POS taggers and NP bracketers via robust projection across aligned corpora. In *Proc. NAACL*, pages 1–8.
- David Yarowsky. 1995. Unsupervised word sense disambiguation rivaling supervised methods. In *Proc. ACL*, pages 189–196.