Effects of an Algorithm with a Recommendation Tree for Indirect Speech Acts

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Abstract—For context-based recommendation systems, it is important to determine intentions from indirect speech acts. An algorithm of deriving intentions from indirect speech acts has been proposed, but the algorithm included unclear portions and there were no important experimental results for kinds of speech acts. Therefore, this paper proposes an improved algorithm and two experimental observations are discussed for accuracies and kinds of answers in indirect speech acts.

In kinds of expressions of these intentions, there are direct speech acts and indirect speech acts. The direct speech acts represent these intentions by the following two approaches for a recommendation “How about having a cake today?”: the first is fixed phrases such as “Yes, I have.” and “No, thank you.” without “cakes”. The second is sentences representing acceptance and rejection intentions such as “I like cakes.” and “I don’t want to have cakes.” with “cakes”, respectively.

In the indirect speech acts, there are two patterns for the recommendation: the first is the affirmative answers that select other cakes excluding chocolate cakes such as “I don’t want to have chocolate cakes.”. The second is the negative answers that select other foods excluding cakes such as “I want to have Japanese noodles”.

In order to determine intentions from sentences, there are two methods: the first uses machine learning [10]-[16] the second uses meaning of words and grammars [17]-[19]. Methods using machine learning have the advantage that classification models are constructed automatically, but they expend considerable efforts to collect a large learning data. Methods using meaning of words and grammars have the merit that their rules have broad utilities for sentences of many domains, but they can not classify answers of indirect speech acts.

Previously, we defined a recommendation tree and proposed an algorithm of deriving intentions for indirect speech acts [20]. From experimental results, it was verified that the algorithm is superior to the traditional one. However, the algorithm is very complex and there are no important experimental results for kinds of speech acts.

Therefore, this paper proposes an improved algorithm and two experimental observations are discussed for accuracies and kinds of answers in each speech act.

INDEX TERMS—Recommendation system, indirect speech acts, affirmative intention, negative intention.

I. INTRODUCTION

Context-based recommendation systems [1]-[9] support users to take items such as products, services, and information from a large choice of them by dialogues. In order to decide recommendation items, affirmative and negative intentions in answers are important for these systems [6]-[9].

In kinds of expressions of these intentions, there are direct speech acts and indirect speech acts. The direct speech acts represent these intentions by the following two approaches for a recommendation “How about having a cake today?”: the first is fixed phrases such as “Yes, I have.” and “No, thank you.” without “cakes”. The second is sentences representing acceptance and rejection intentions such as “I like cakes.” and “I don’t want to have cakes.” with “cakes”, respectively.

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II. A RECOMMENDATION TREE AND AN ALGORITHM

First of all, this paper defines recommendation conditions (RC) and recommendations. In RCs, there are three kinds; R_RC, S_RC, and NS_RC. R_RC is the required RC. In a recommendation, “How about having a cake today?””, there are R_RCs, “you”, “have”, “cake”, and “today”. S_RC is the selectable RC. In the recommendation, there are S_RCs of kinds of cakes such as “chocolate cake”, “short cake”, and “Mont Blanc”. NS_RC is the non-selectable RC such as “tomorrow”, “Japanese noodle” for the recommendation. Recommendations are constructed by four necessary concepts of RC: “WHO”, “WHEN”, “WHAT”, and “VERB”. These concepts have RCs related to persons such as “you” and “he”, schedules such as “today” and “tomorrow”, objects such as “cake” and “curry”, and actions such as “go” and “have”, respectively.

A recommendation tree has root node “REC” which indicates the recommendation. The root node has four child nodes corresponding to concepts (concept nodes): “WHO”, “WHEN”, “WHAT”, and “VERB”. These nodes have child nodes of RCs (RC nodes). For example, concept node “WHO” has RC nodes “you” and “he”. There are three kinds of edges (R_edges, S_edges, and NS_edges) for R_RC, S_RC, and NS_RC, respectively. The root node and concept nodes are connected by R_edges. Concept nodes and RC nodes are connected by S_edges. These kinds of edges are changed by each recommendation. For the recommendation “How about having a cake today?””, edges of nodes “you”, “today”, “cake”, and “have” are modified to R_edges and other edges of nodes are set to NS_edges as shown in Fig. 1. In Fig. 1, the node labeled by x corresponding to string x.

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The recommendation tree can be extended by expanding terminal nodes. Considering an example in Fig. 1, RC node “cake” constructs the subtree as the root node. RC node “cake” has RC nodes “taste” and “kind” with R_edges as child nodes. RC node “taste” has RC node “sweet” with a R_edge as a child node. RC node “kind” has RC nodes “Mont Blanc”, “short cake”, and “chocolate cake” with S_edges as child nodes.

An algorithm determines intentions of answers to derive the recommendation tree [20]. The algorithm is modified more compact and logical formulas are rewritten to if-else statements in this study. Before proposing the algorithm, the following definitions are prepared.

**Definition**

Suppose that NODE[x] is a node for string x. PARENT(NODE[x]) represents the parent node of NODE[x]. AS_SIBLING(NODE[x]) returns the set of sibling nodes of NODE[x] with S_edges. Let EDGE[NODE[x],NODE[y]] be the kind of edges (R-edge, S_edge, and NS_edge) between NODE[x] and NODE[y]. Let P_EDGE[NODE[x]] be EDGE[NODE[x],PARENT(NODE[x])]. Let INTENTION[NODE[x]] be the intention of NODE[x] which has one of three kinds intentions: acceptance, rejection, and no_information in this algorithm. No_information means that a node doesn’t have any intentions. All intentions of nodes are initialized to no_information.

**An algorithm of deriving intentions**

**Input:** ANSWER_NODE[] and ANSWER_INTENTION[]

ANSWER_NODE[] is a list of strings for nodes accepted or rejected by answers. ANSWER_INTENTION[] is a list of intentions for elements in ANSWER_NODE[]. Indexes of ANSWER_INTENTION[] are elements in ANSWER_NODE[]. For the answer “I like curries”, ANSWER_NODE[] is {“curry”} and ANSWER_INTENTION[“curry”] is {“acceptance”}, respectively.

**Output:** INTENTION[NODE[“REC”]]

**Method:**

for i=1 to n do /*n is the number of elements in ANSWER_NODE[] */

INTENTION[NODE[ANSWER_NODE[i]]] = ANSWER_INTENTION[ANSWER_NODE[i]]

target_node = NODE[ANSWER_NODE[i]]

while target_node NODE[“REC”] do

if P_EDGE[NODE[target_node]] is R_edge then

INTENTION[PARENT(NODE[target_node])] = INTENTION[NODE[target_node]]

else if P_EDGE[NODE[target_node]] is S_edge then

if INTENTION[AS_SIBLING[NODE(target_node)]] = rejection then

INTENTION[PARENT(NODE[target_node])] = rejection

else

INTENTION[PARENT(NODE[target_node])] = acceptance

end

end

if INTENTION[NODE[“REJECT”]] is rejection then

INTENTION[NODE[“REJECT”]] = negative

break

else if INTENTION[NODE[“REJECT”]] is acceptance then

INTENTION[NODE[“REJECT”]] = affirmative

endif

endfor

End of Algorithm

To compare with the previous algorithm, the total number of conditions in logical functions and the algorithm are reduced from 24 to 8.

In case of a recommendation “How about having a cake today?”, examples of derivations from answers “I like something sweet.” and “I dislike chocolate cakes” are as follows:

**Example 3.1**

For an answer “I like something sweet.”, INTENTION[NODE[“sweet”]] is acceptance. From Fig. 1., P_EDGE[NODE[“sweet”]] is R_edge. Therefore, INTENTION[NODE[“taste”]] is acceptance. Similarly, intentions of NODE[“cake”], NODE[“WHAT”], NODE[“REJECT”] are acceptance.

From these results, the intention of the answer is affirmative.

**Example 3.2**

For an answer “I dislike chocolate cakes”, INTENTION[NODE[“chocolate cake”]] is rejection. From Fig. 1., P_EDGE[NODE[“chocolate cake”]] is S_edge. AS_SIBLING[NODE[“chocolate cake”]] isn’t rejection. Therefore, INTENTION[NODE[“kind”]] is acceptance.
INTENTION[NODE[“kind”]] is acceptance because P_EDGE[NODE[“kind”]] is R_edge. Similarly, NODE[“cake”], NODE[“WHAT”], NODE[“REC”] are acceptance.

From these results, the intention of the answer is affirmative.

III. EXPERIMENTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Knowledge for Experiments

It is general to recommend foods including cakes and Japanese noodles, and movies on a daily basis. In this experiment, the following three recommendations are assumed, where “Resident Evil” is a title of a movie:

Recommendation “cake”: “How about having a cake today?”
Recommendation “Resident Evil”: “How about going to the movie, Resident Evil?”

In order to determine intentions from answers to them, a recommendation tree is constructed from closed corpora, and they make answers to each recommendation without restriction of responses. The traditional method proposed by Yoshie et al. [19] is used as a comparative method. Table II shows correct rates for each recommendation of the proposed method and the comparative method, respectively. Correct rates mean percentages of correctly classified sentences in total sentences.

From these results, it is verified that the proposed method is much better than the traditional method to determine intentions.

B. Experimental Results

1) Experimental results for each recommendation

In order to evaluate the accuracy of the proposed method, open tests are carried out. Open tests uses corpora with 120 answers for each recommendation. These corpora are collected by eleven students who don’t accumulate closed corpora, and they make answers to each recommendation without restriction of responses. The traditional method proposed by Yoshie et al. [19] is used as a comparative method. Table III shows correct rates for each recommendation.

2) Correct rates of each speech act

From experimental results, accuracies of methods in direct speech acts and indirect speech acts are found out. Table III shows correct rates of each speech act.

From Table III, accuracies of the proposed method in speech acts are higher than the traditional method. Especially the difference in correct rates of indirect speech acts is 48.2 points.

This result shows that the proposed method is more effective than the traditional method to determine intentions from indirect speech acts.

3) Rates of indirect speech acts

In order to bring out kinds of answers which often include indirect speech acts, 360 answers of open tests are classified into kinds of their targets of intentions, recommendation, who, when, what, and V. Table IV shows that rates of indirect speech acts per targets of answers.

### Table I: Examples of RC Nodes with Concept Nodes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept nodes</th>
<th>RC nodes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>Father, Mother, You, She</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEN</td>
<td>Morning, Today, this week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT</td>
<td>Cake, Japanese noodle, Resident Evil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERB</td>
<td>Eat, need, watch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table II: Examples of Descendant Nodes of Nodes “cake”, “Japanese noodle”, and “Resident Evil”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Grandchild</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cake</td>
<td>Genre[R]</td>
<td>Sweets[R], Dessert[R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste[R]</td>
<td>Sweet[R]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind[R]</td>
<td>Short cake[S], chocolate cake[S]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingredient[R]</td>
<td>Flour[R], Sugar[R]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUTTER[S], Apple[S]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese noodle</td>
<td>Genre[R]</td>
<td>Noodles[R], Food[R]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste[R]</td>
<td>Spicy[S], Salty[S]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingredient[R]</td>
<td>Flour[R]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic[S], Bean sprouts[S]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident Evil</td>
<td>Screen type[R]</td>
<td>Caption[S], Dub[S], 3D[S]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre of films[R]</td>
<td>Horror[R], Action[R]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(R and S means required and selectable)
Table IV shows that indirect speech acts are often included in answers of “when” and “what”. In these answers, correct rates of the proposed method and the traditional method are compared. Table V shows correct rates of methods in these answers.

From Table V, correct rates of the proposed method are 37.7 points and 53.8 points higher than the traditional method in answers “when” and “what”, respectively. To compare kinds of answers, the correct rate of “what” is 39.2 points higher than the one of “when” in the proposed method. The reason of this result is that concept node “what” has more detailed child nodes than node “when”.

From these results, it is verified that the proposed method with the detailed recommendation tree is more effective to determine intentions from indirect speech acts than the traditional one.

### TABLE IV: RATES OF INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS PER TARGETS OF ANSWERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rates of indirect speech acts (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE V: CORRECT RATES OF METHODS IN ANSWERS OF “WHEN” AND “WHAT”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proposed method (%)</th>
<th>Traditional method (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has proposed an improved algorithm, and two experimental observations have been discussed for accuracies and kinds of answers in each speech act.

Logical formulas are rewritten to if-else statements and the algorithm. From experimental results, it is verified that the correct rate of the proposed method is 48.2 points higher than the one of the traditional method in indirect speech acts. Answers of “what” most include indirect speech acts and the accuracy of the proposed method is 53.8 points higher than the traditional one in them.

### REFERENCES


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