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Toward Grounded Dialogue

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Abstract

Dialogue in natural language is a natural way for humans to interact with systems. Many methods have been developed for various types of dialogue, from chitchat to task-oriented dialogue in specific domains. In open-domain dialogue, most methods focused on generating or retrieving a natural response to a user's utterance, with limited attention paid to the content of the response. In practice, to be useful, a system-generated response should provide the user with useful information, in addition to be natural. In this talk, we will describe several studies on grounded dialogue in which a response is generated or retrieved by considering the information provided in a document (document-grounded), the domain knowledge (knowledge-grounded), or the dialogue goal (goal-oriented). A special case is grounded question-answering, which aims at finding the right answer grounded in a document. These studies suggest that it is time to move toward dialogue systems capable of generating better grounded responses.

Biography

Jian-Yun Nie is a professor at the Department of Computer Science and Operations Research, University of Montreal, and head of the RALI lab on Applied Research on Computational Linguistics. His research is in the areas of information retrieval and natural language processing. He has worked on various information retrieval models, web search, cross-language information retrieval, recommendation systems and deep learning models for query suggestion and dialogue. Jian-Yun Nie has published over 200 papers in the main journals and conferences in IR and NLP. He is on editorial board of 5 international journals (e.g. Journal of information retrieval), has served as chair, PC chair or area chair of the major conferences in these areas (SIGIR, CIKM, ACL, WWW, ...). He received several best paper awards, including a Best paper award and a Test-of-Time honorable mention award from SIGIR.