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Seventeenth Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning

Proceedings of the Shared Task

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Introduction

This volume contains papers describing the CoNLL-2013 Shared Task and the participating systems. This year, we continue the tradition of the Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning (CoNLL) of having a high profile shared task in natural language processing, centered on automatic grammatical error correction of English essays. This task has gained popularity recently with the organization of the HOO (Helping Our Own) shared tasks in 2011 and 2012. The grammatical error correction task is impactful since it is estimated that hundreds of millions of people in the world are learning English as a second language, and they benefit directly from an automated grammar checker.

In the recent HOO shared task in 2012, only two error types, i.e., determiner and preposition, are considered. In contrast, the CoNLL-2013 shared task has included a more comprehensive list of error types, including noun number, verb form, and subject-verb agreement errors in addition to determiner and preposition errors. Extending into more error types introduces the possibility of correcting multiple interacting errors.

For this shared task, we have only one track in which shared task participants are provided with an annotated training corpus, but are allowed to use additional resources as long as they are publicly available. The training corpus, NUCLE (NUS Corpus of Learner English), is a large collection of English essays written by students at the National University of Singapore (NUS) who are non-native speakers of English. The essays were annotated by professional English instructors at the NUS. As in other shared tasks, we provide a common test set with gold-standard annotations, and a scorer to evaluate the submitted system output.

A total of 17 participating teams submitted system output and 16 of them submitted system description papers. Many different approaches were adopted to perform grammatical error correction. We hope that these approaches help to advance the state of the art in grammatical error correction, and that the test set and scorer, which are freely available after the shared task, can be useful resources for those interested in grammatical error correction.

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Organizers of the CoNLL-2013 Shared Task
June 2013

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