







Spoken Language Understanding: Recent Advances and New Frontiers



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Outline

• Introduction

• New taxonomy

• New Frontiers

• Conclusion and Highlight

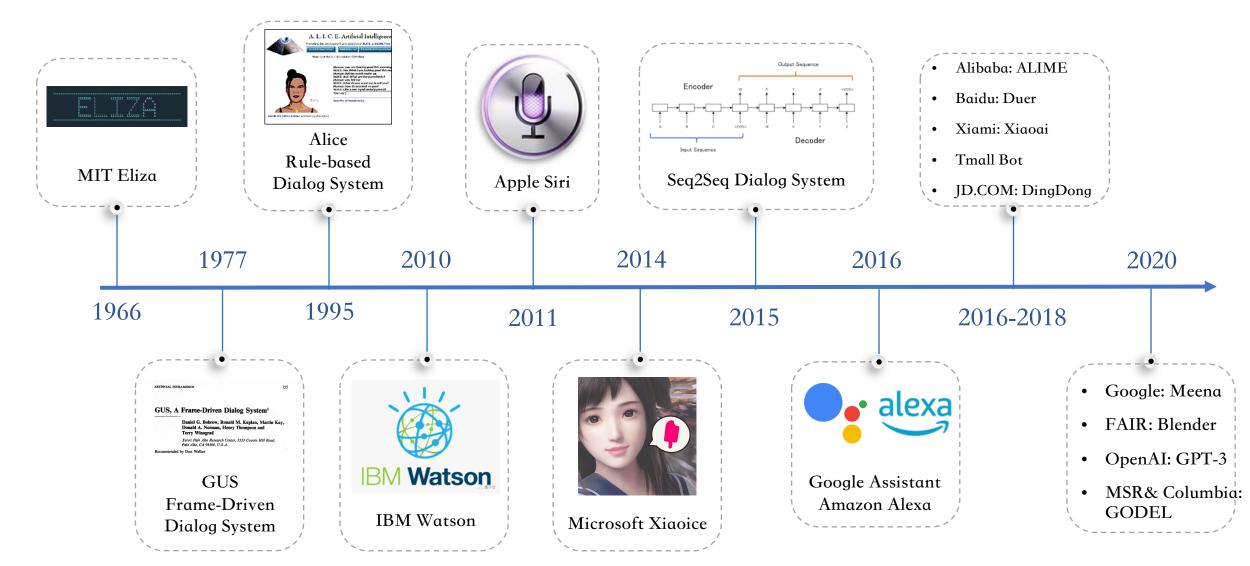
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Introduction



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History of Dialogue System



Application of Task-oriented Dialogue



Smart Home



In-car Assistant



Medical Diagnosis



Emotional Robot



Intelligent Teacher



Travel Service Robot



"I want to find a Chinese Restaurant"

"Where do you want to eat"



Figure: Example of Dialogue

How does a task-oriented dialogue conduct the communication?

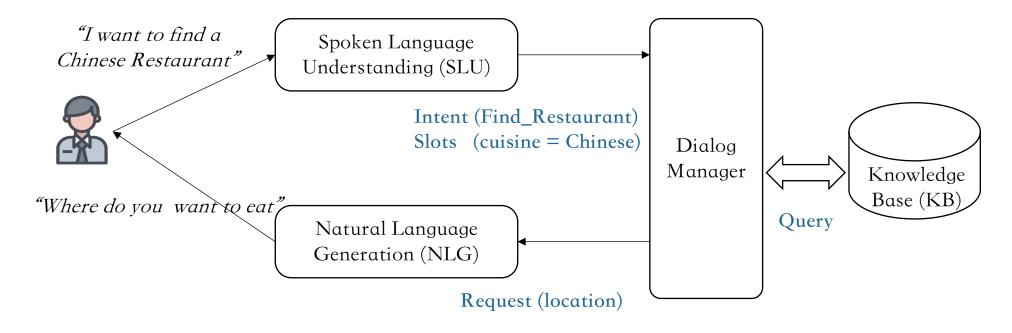
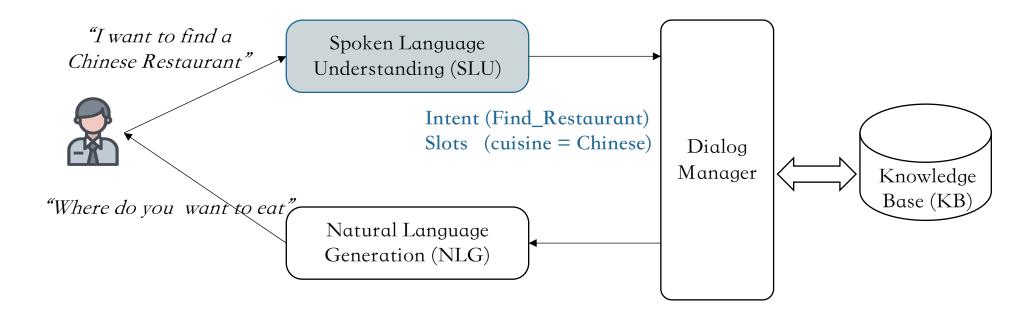


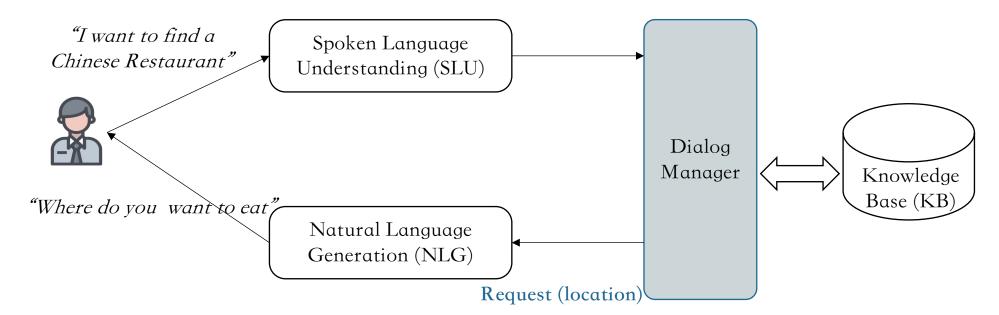
Figure: Pipeline Task-oriented Dialogue System

- Spoken Language Understanding (SLU)
 - Input: user utterance
 - Output: semantic frame (intents&slots)

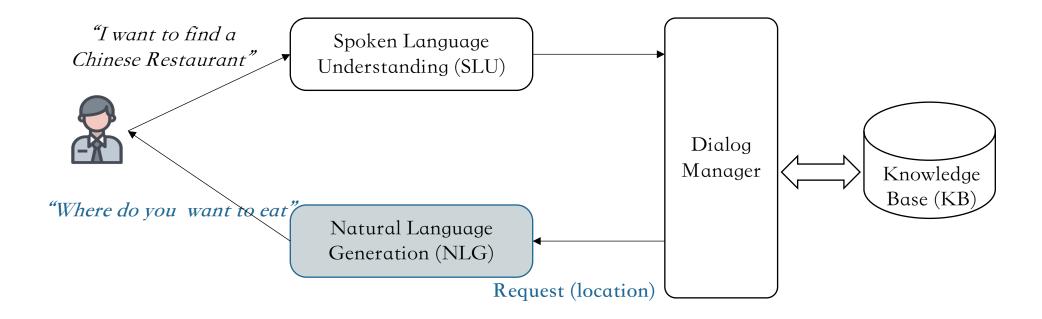


Dialog Manager

- Dialogue state tracking
 - Input: a dialogue / a turn with its previous state
 - Output: dialogue state at the current turn (e.g. slot-value pairs)
- Dialogue Policy
 - Input: dialogue state + KB results
 - Output: system action (speech-act + slot-value pairs)



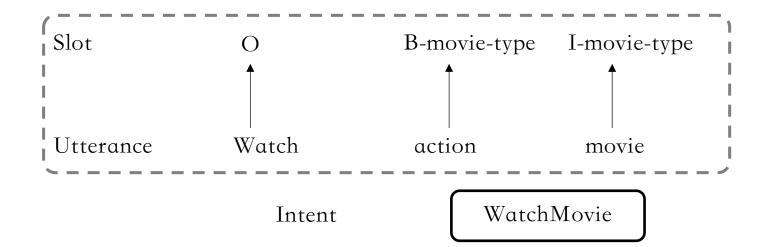
- Natural Language Generation (NLG)
 - Input: system action (speech-act + slot-value pairs)
 - Output: natural language response



Introduction

• SLU

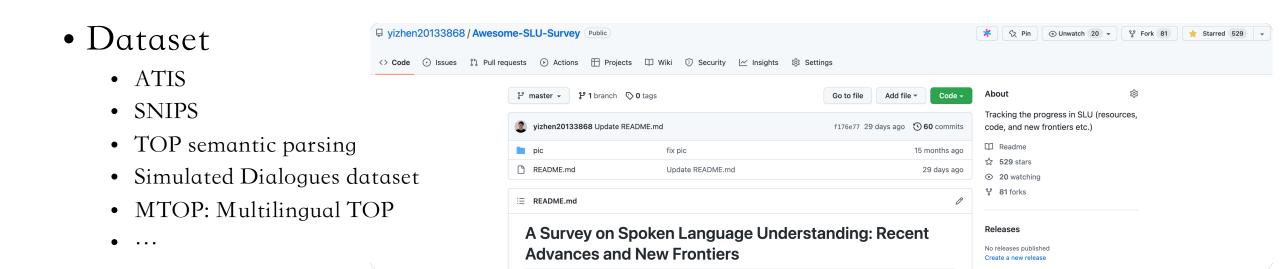
- Slot filling -> sequence labeling
 - Input: $\mathbf{X} = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$
 - Output: $S = \{s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n\}$
- Intent detection -> classification task
 - Input: $X = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n\}$
 - Output: I



Evaluation Metrics

- F1 scores for slot filling
 - F1 scores are adopted to evaluate the performance of **slot filling**, which is the harmonic mean score between precision and recall
- Intent accuracy for intent detection
 - Intent Accuracy is used for evaluating the performance of intent detection, calculating the ratio of sentences for which intent is predicted correctly
- Overall accuracy for SLU
 - Overall accuracy is adopted for calculating the ratio of sentences for which both intent and slot are predicted correctly in a sentence

Resources



Surveys

- Louvan et al. Recent Neural Methods on Slot Filling and Intent Classification for Task-Oriented Dialogue Systems: A Survey. COLING2020.
- Qin et al. A Survey on Spoken Language Understanding: Recent Advances and New Frontiers. IJCAI2021 Survey.

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SLU Models

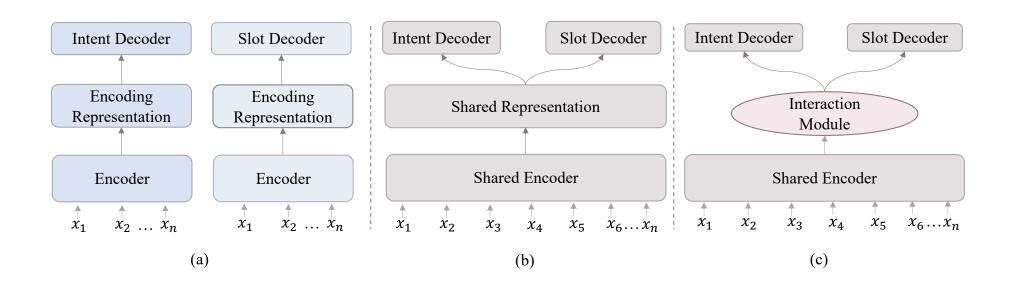


Dr. Wanxiang Che

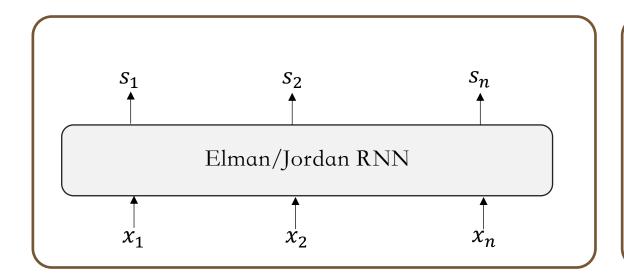
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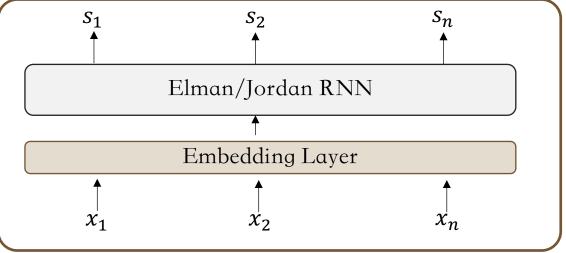
SLU Models

- Single Model
 - (a) Slot Filling and Intent Detection model
- Joint Model
 - (b) Implicit Joint Model and (c) Explicit Joint Model

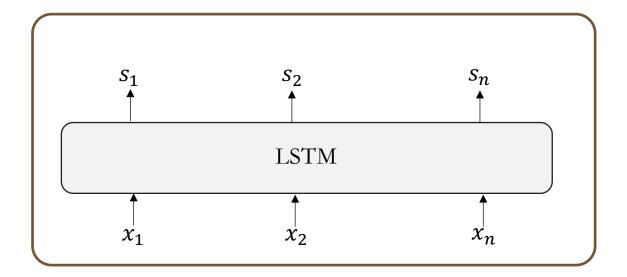


- Compare several RNN architectures, including the Elman-type and Jordan-type networks with their variants, for slot filling
- Explore the effectiveness of word embeddings for slot filling (word embedding boost the slot filling performance)

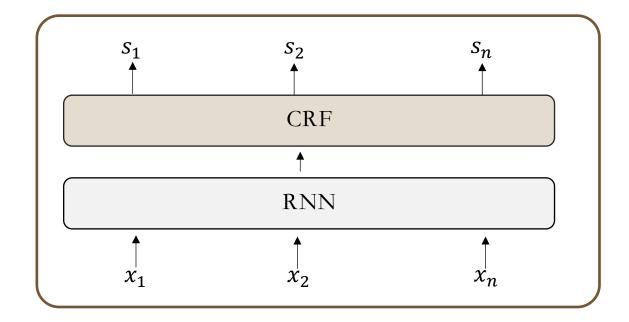




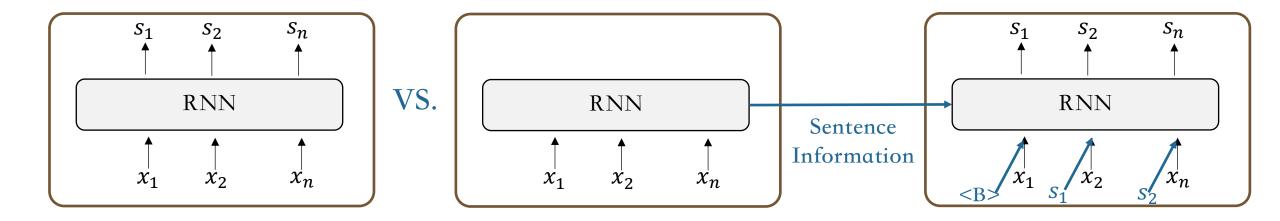
- An application of LSTMs to spoken language understanding.
- The LSTMs achieves state-of-the-art results on the ATIS data



- Apply CRF for RNN-based model
- Demonstrate that RNNs can be successfully merged with CRFs to do language understanding

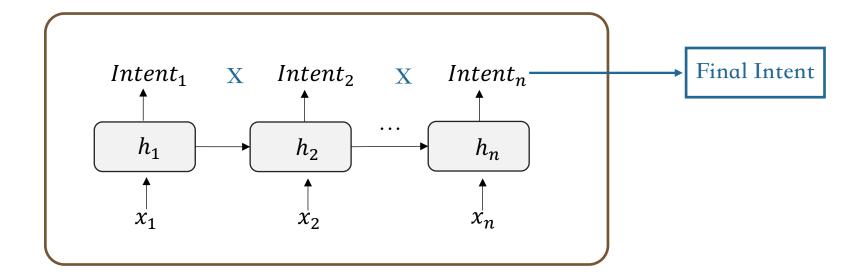


- An encoder-labeler LSTM that can conduct slot filling conditioned on the encoded sentence-level information
- Explicitly model label dependencies



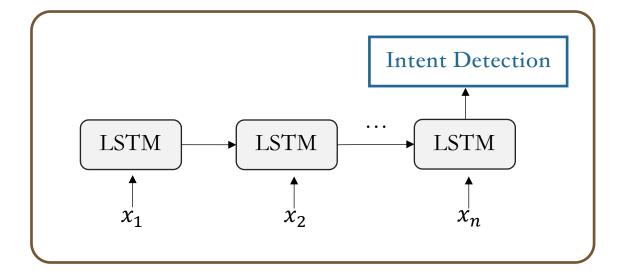
Single Model - Intent Detection

- RNN for intent detection
- The utterance intent is the product of the probability of the intent of each token



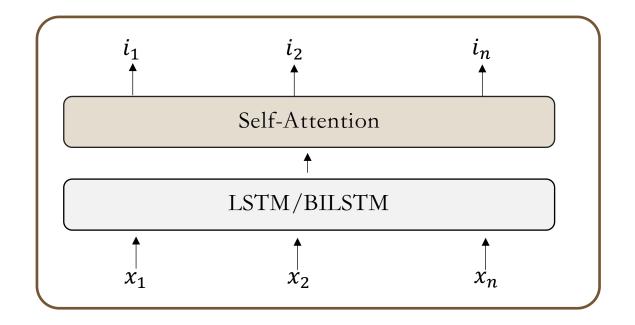
Single Model - Intent Detection

- LSTM for intent detection (leverage the final state for intent detection)
- Obtain better performance than RNN



Single Model - Intent Detection

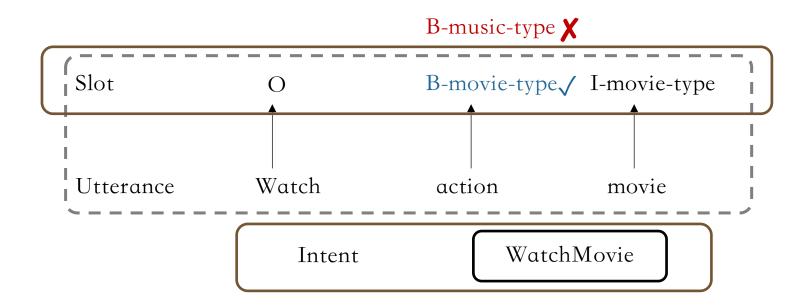
• Self-attention network for intent detection



$$\mathbf{C} = \operatorname{softmax}\left(\frac{\mathbf{Q}\mathbf{K}^{\top}}{\sqrt{d_k}}\right)\mathbf{V}$$

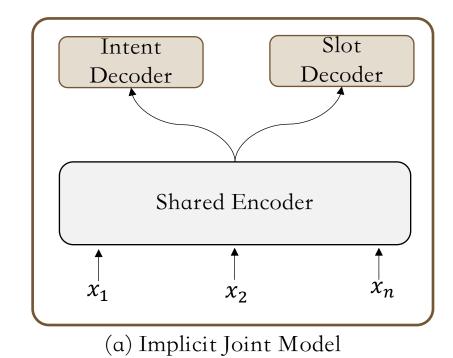
Joint Model

• Intent detection and slot filling is highly correlated.



Joint Model

- Implicit Joint Model
- Explicit Joint Model

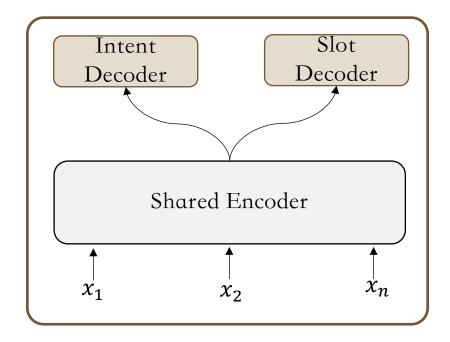


Intent Decoder

Interaction Module

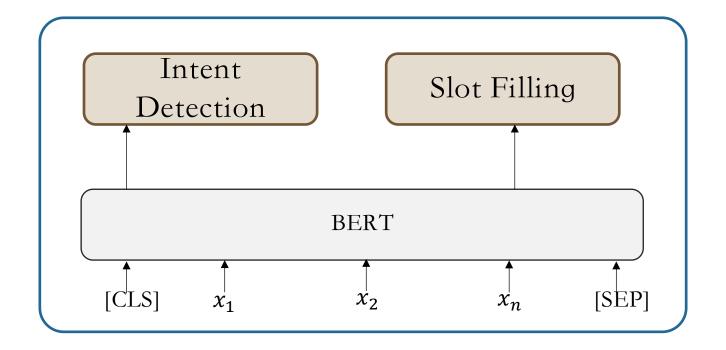
Shared Encoder x_1 x_2 x_n (b) Explicit Joint Model

• A joint model where a shared encoder and two separate decoders for slot filling and intent detection

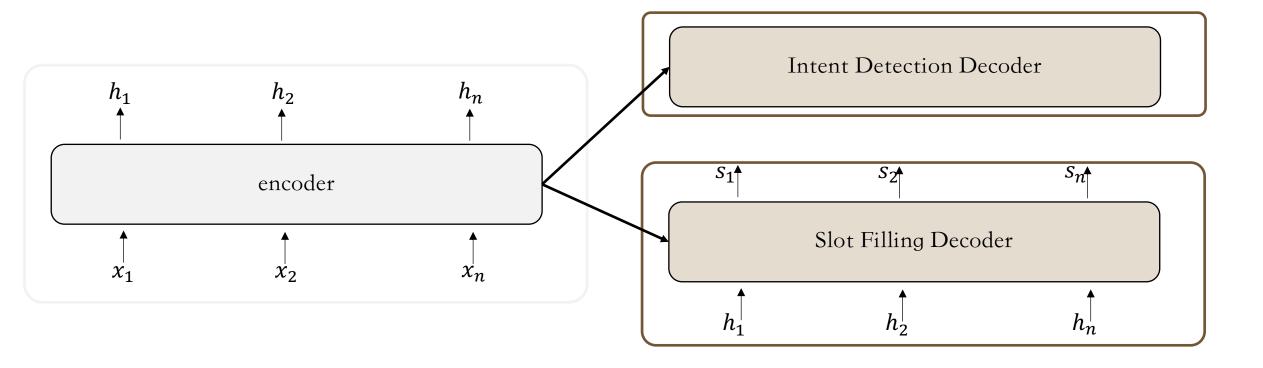


Joint Training with Pre-trained Model

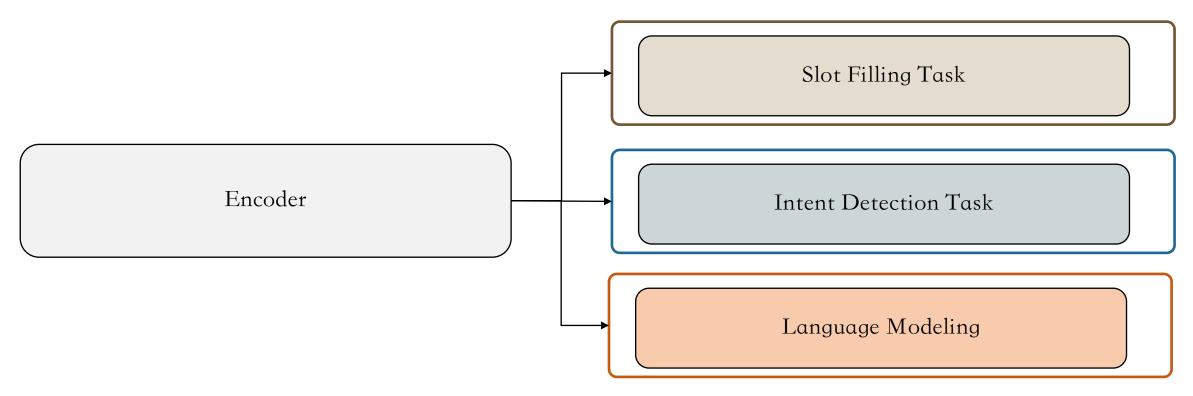
• The first joint work based on BERT (obtains 6%~17% improvement with non pre-trained model)



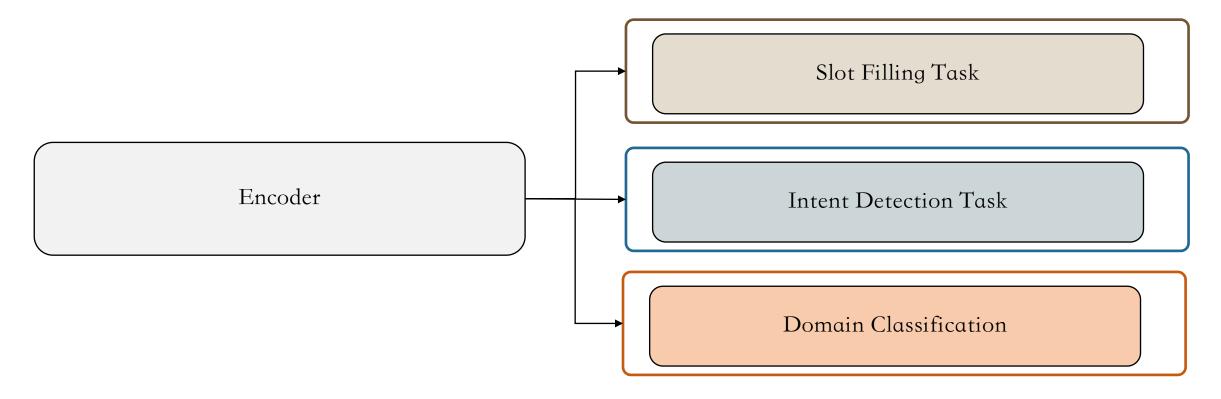
• An encoder-decoder neural network for slot filling and intent detection



- A conditional RNN model that can be used to jointly perform online spoken language understanding and language modeling
- SLU can benefit Language Modeling task

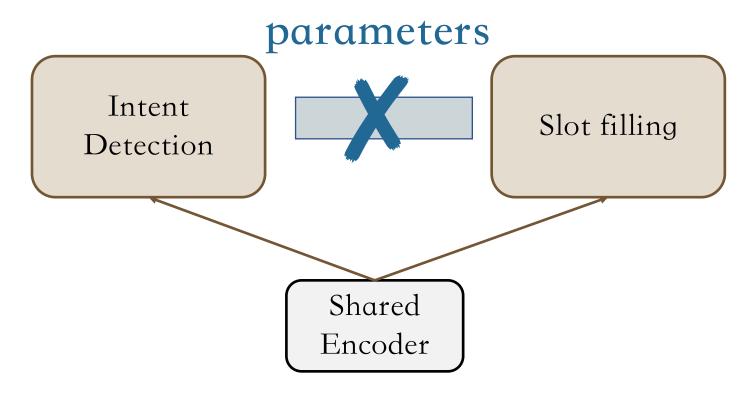


• A multi-domain, multi-task framework to jointly model the domain classification, intent detection and slot filling simultaneously

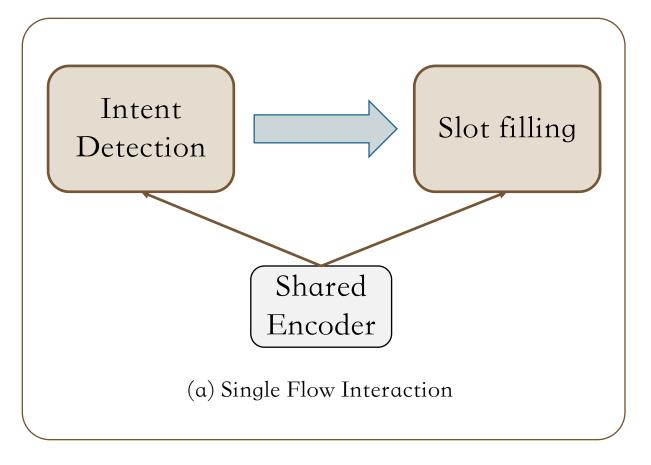


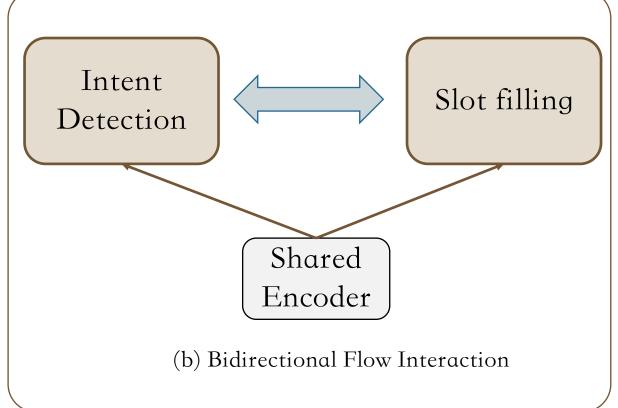
Drawback-Implicit Joint Modeling

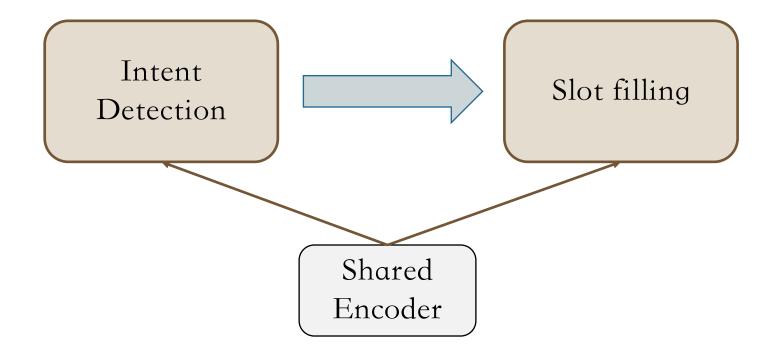
Rely on a set of shared



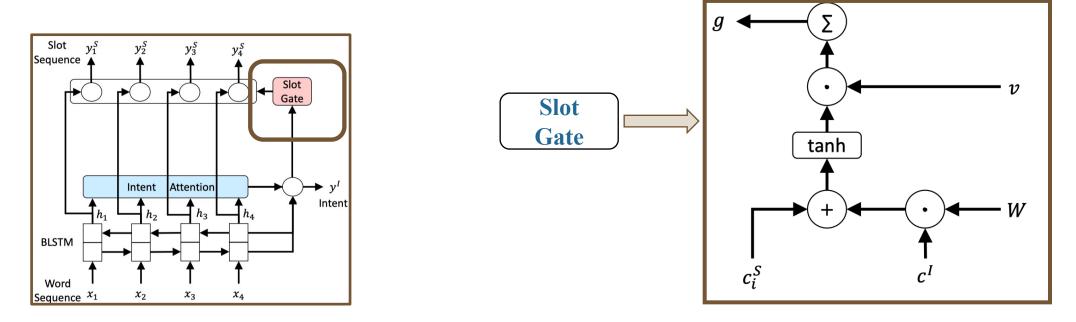
Explicit Joint Modeling





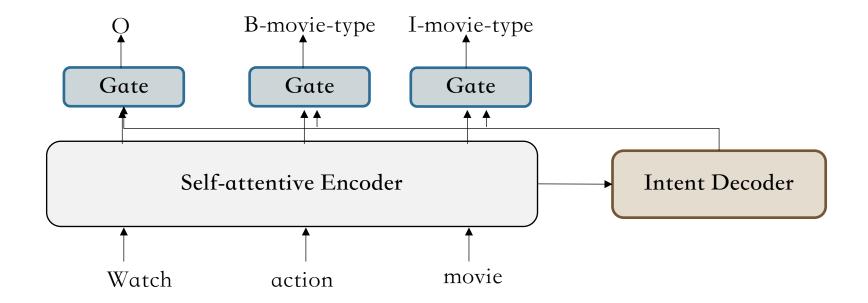


- Slot-gated mechanism to allow the slot filling can be conditioned on the intent information
- Information flow from intent to slot

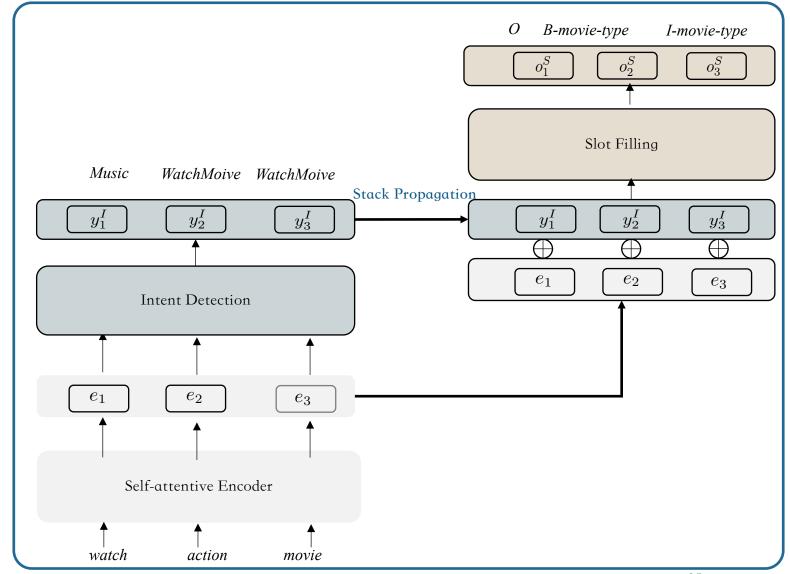


G will be larger if slot and intent are better related

- A novel self-attentive model with gate mechanism to inject intent information for slot filling
- Information flow from intent to slot

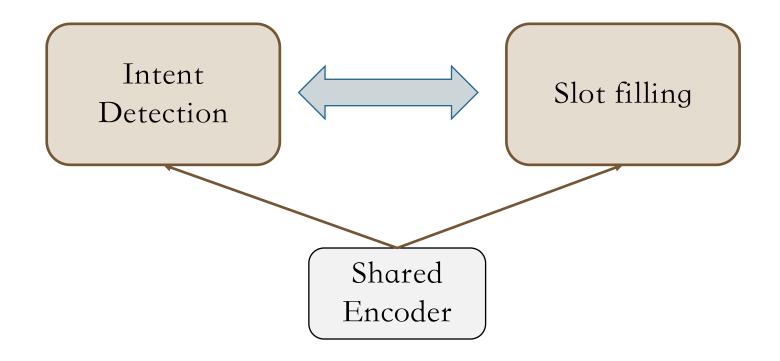


- Directly leverage the intent output result for slot filling
- Information flow from intent to slot

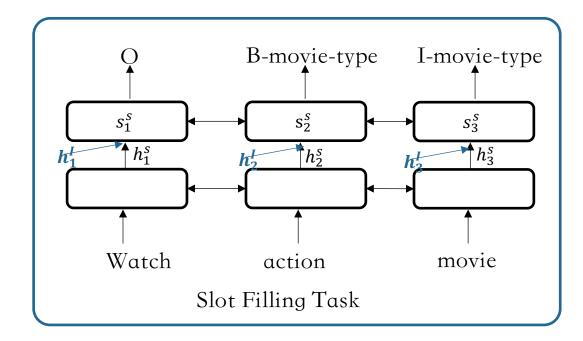


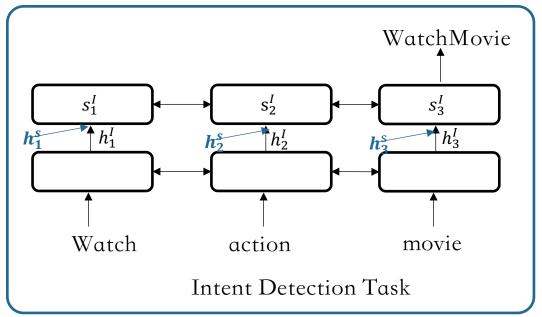
Joint Model - Bi-directional Flow Interaction

Build bi-directional interaction

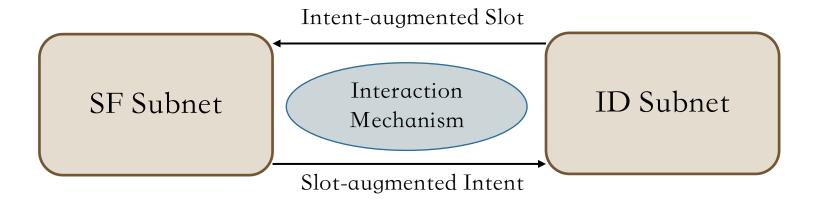


- A Bi-model based RNN structures to model cross-impact between two tasks
- Information flow from both intent to slot and slot to intent

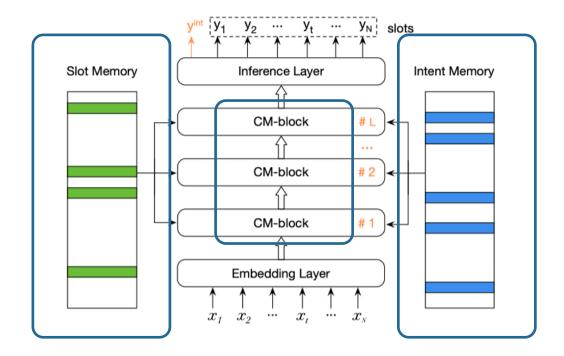




- A bi-directional extended version of gated mechanism [1] (slot-gate), including SF Subnet and ID Subnet
- Information flow from both intent to slot and slot to intent

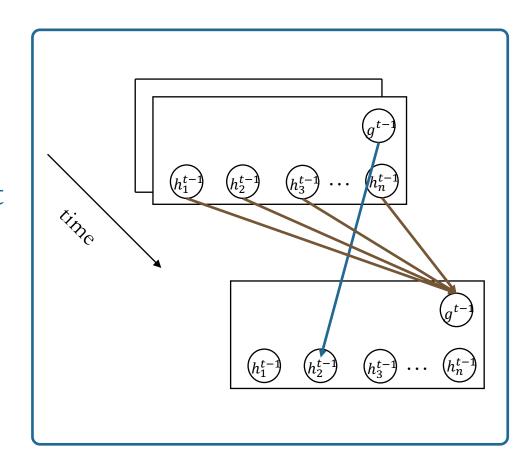


- Slot memory as well as intent memory and utilize CM-block to achieve the bi-directional of information flow
- Information flow from both intent to slot and slot to intent

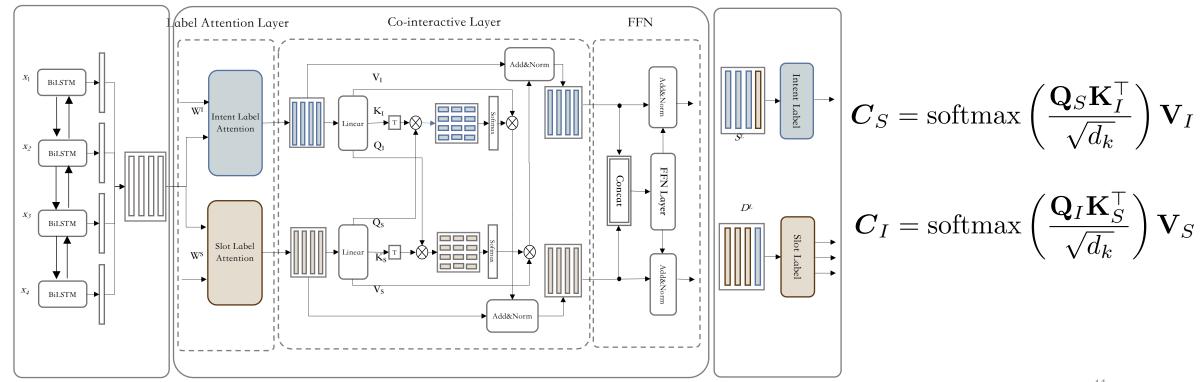


• The first work to explore graph LSTM to model the semantic correlation between intent and slot

 Information flow from both intent to slot and slot to intent

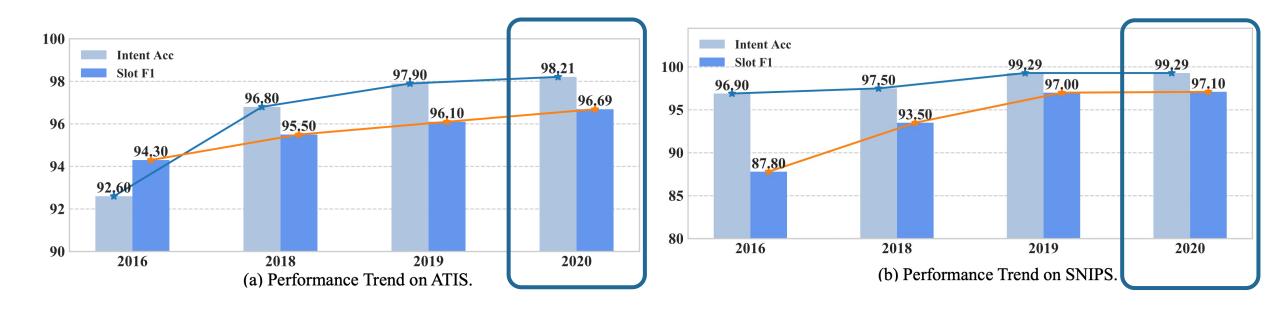


- Propose a co-interactive transformer for jointly modeling slot filling and intent detection
- Information flow from both intent to slot and slot to intent



Progress

- SLU direction has made significant progress in recent years
- However, the mainstream work mainly focus on the simple setting: single domain and single turn



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New frontiers



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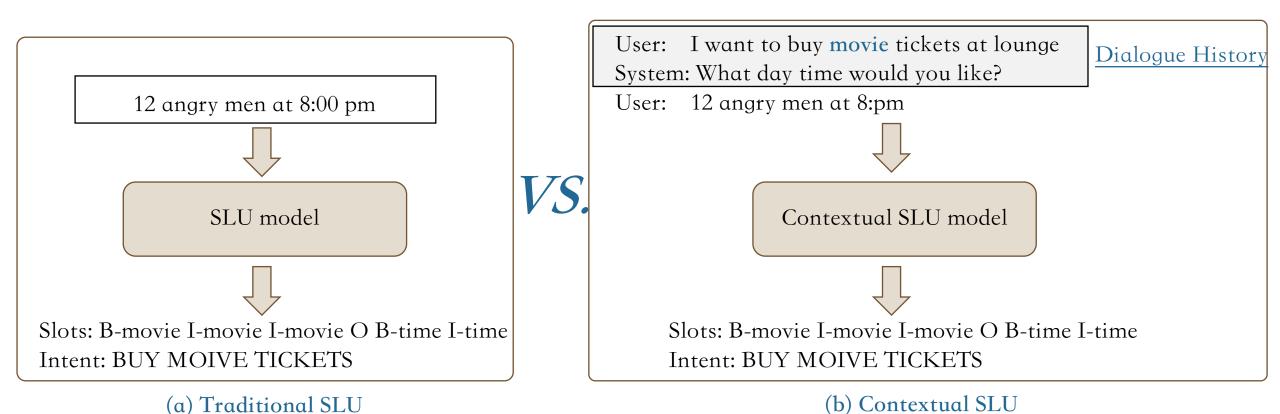
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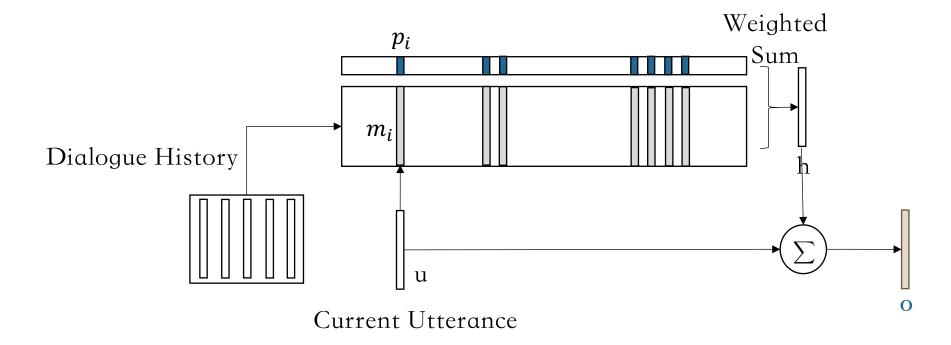
New frontiers

- ① Complex SLU
 - (i) Contextual SLU
 - (ii) Multi-Intent SLU
- ② Low-resource SLU
 - (i) Cross-domain SLU
 - (ii) Cross-lingual SLU
 - (iii) Few-shot SLU
 - (iv) Unsupervised SLU
- ③ Real-world SLU
 - (i) Profile-based SLU
 - (ii) Lifelong Learning
 - (iii) Robust SLU
 - (iv) Chinese SLU
- 4 Unified and Pre-training Paradigm
 - (i) Unified Model
 - (ii) Pre-training Paradigm

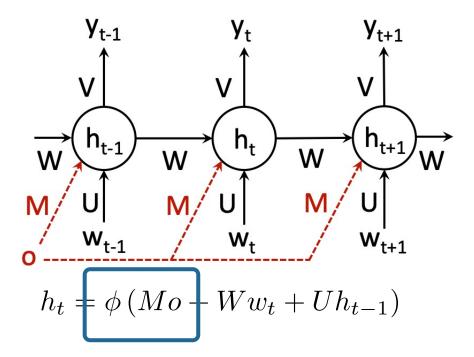


How to leverage relevant dialogue history to make the correct prediction?

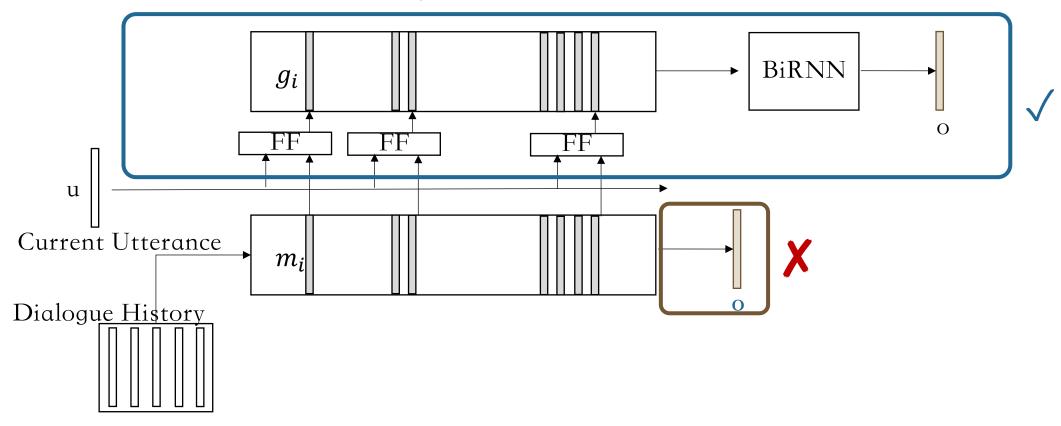
• A memory network is introduced to encode dialogue history



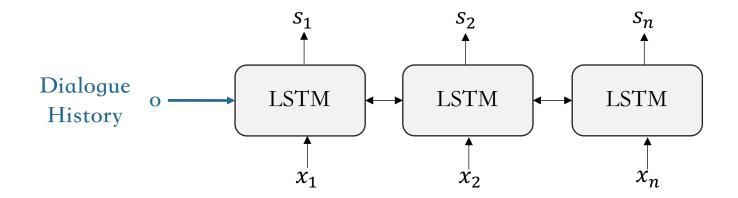
• Dialogue history representation is regarded as the input for the RNN slot tagger



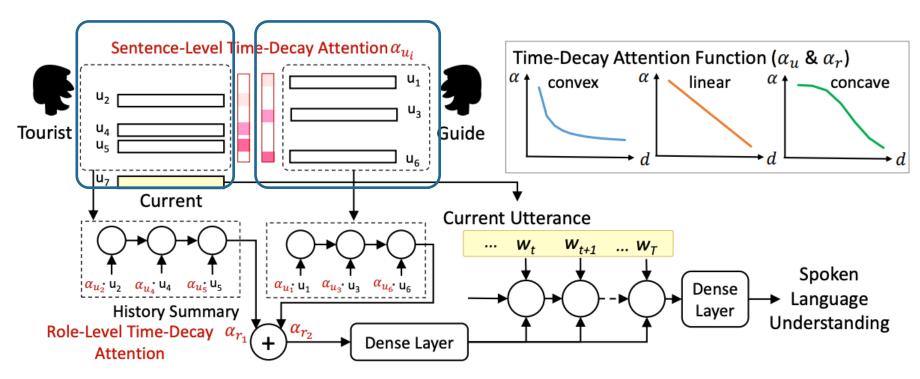
• Enhance the memory networks by considering temporal order of utterances in the memory.



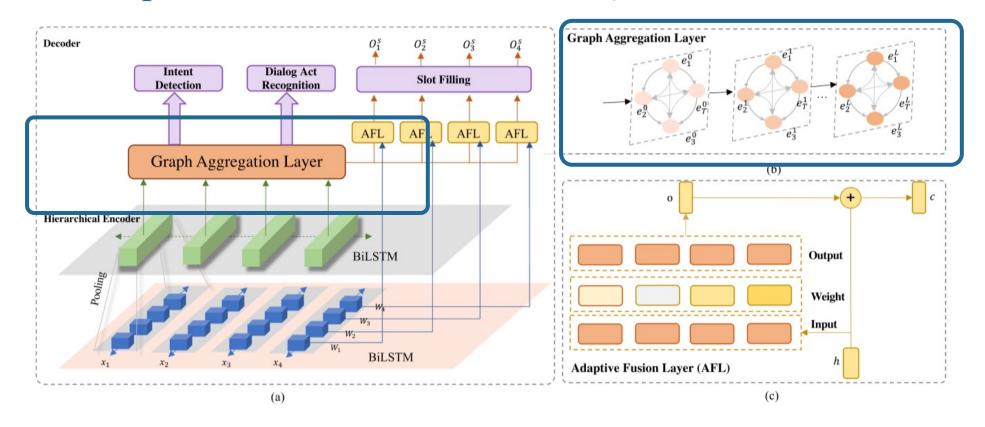
• Dialogue history encoding o is used as the initial states of both forward and backward LSTMs



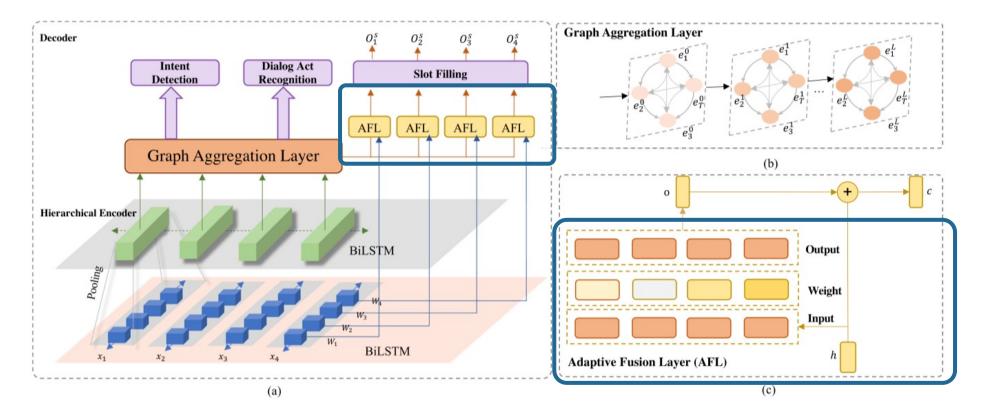
- Different time-decay attention mechanisms for leveraging contextual information.
- Convex; Linear; concave



• A context-aware graph convolutional network to automatically incorporate contextual information,



• An adaptive fusion layer to dynamically leverage the contextual information for each token, achieving a fine-grained contextual information integration for the token-level slot prediction.





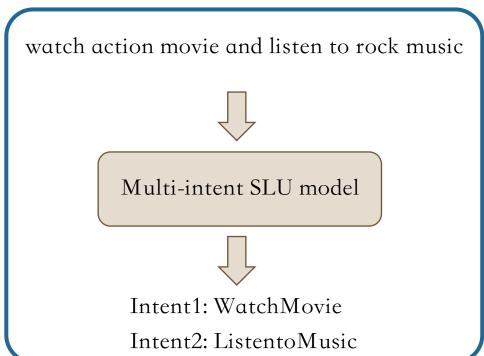
watch action movie

Single-intent SLU model

Intent: WatchMovie

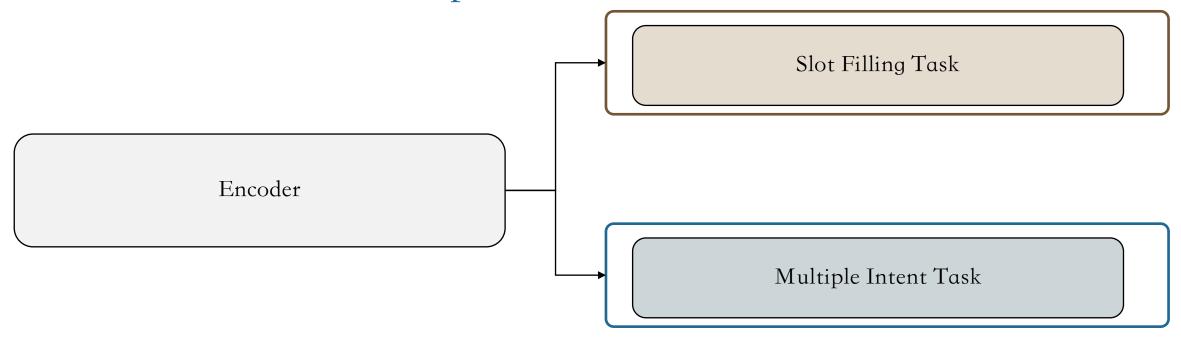




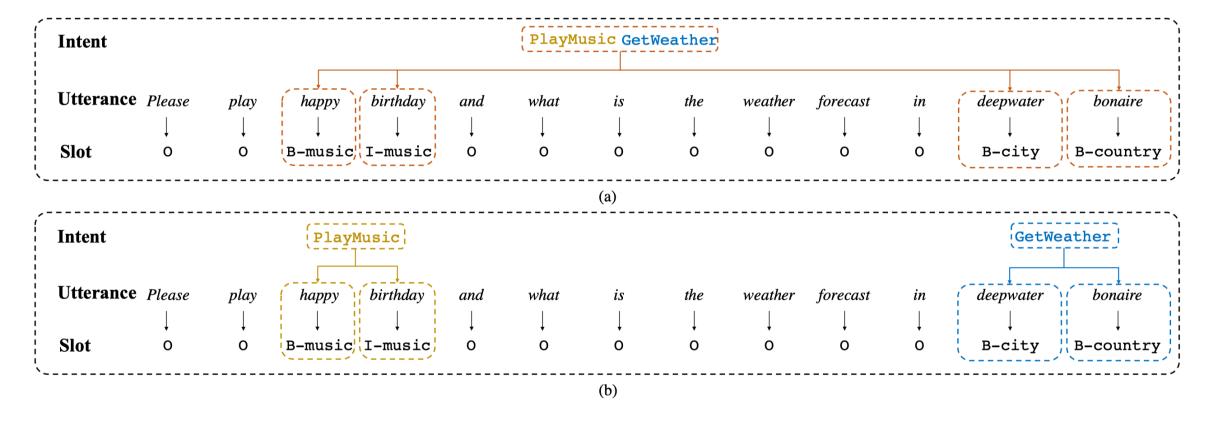


How to model the interaction between slots and multiple intents?

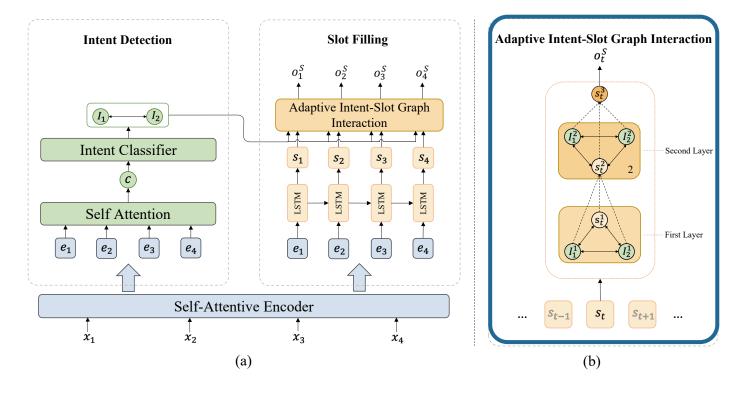
• This is the first joint work to jointly model slot filling and multiple intent detection, which achieves to implicitly model the relationship between slots and multiple intents.



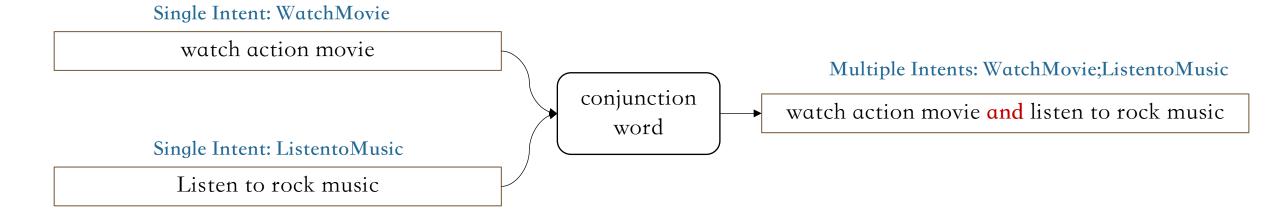
- (a) Prior model simply treat multiple intents as an overall intent information
- (b) Fine-grained multiple intents integration method

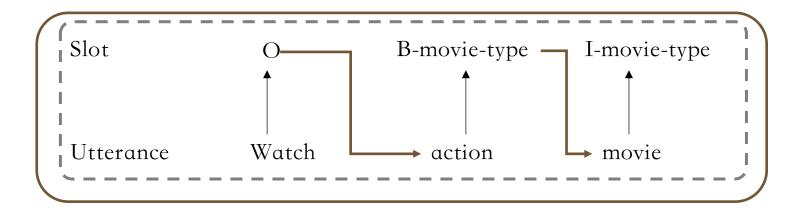


• Propose an Adaptive Graph Interactive Framework (AGIF) to achieve to explicitly integrate multiple intent information for token-level slot filling

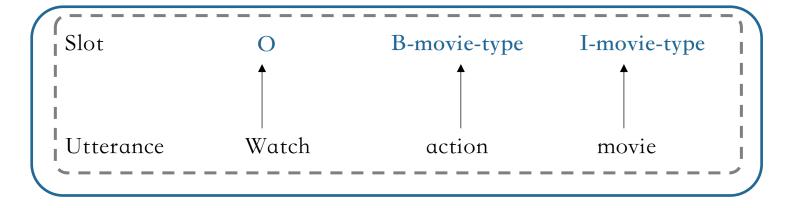


• In addition, this work construct two multiple intent SLU datasets by using conjunctions, e.g., "and", to connect single-intent sentences, which facilitate the research



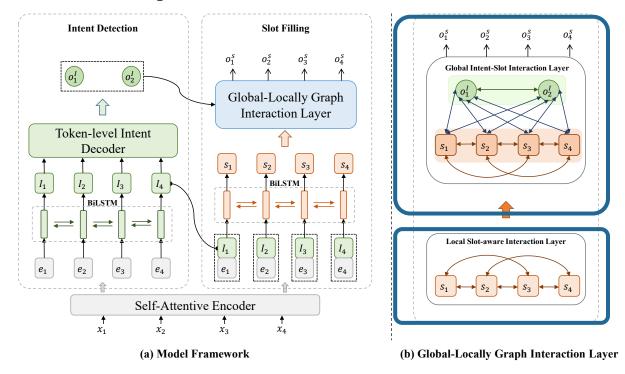


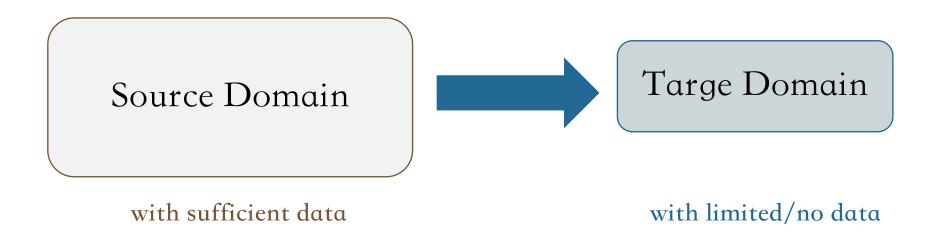
(a) autoregressive



(b) non-autoregressive

- A global-locally graph-interaction network
 - A local graph is used to handle uncoordinated slots problem
 - A global graph is introduced to model sequence-level intent-slot interaction to perform non-autoregressive slot sequence generation

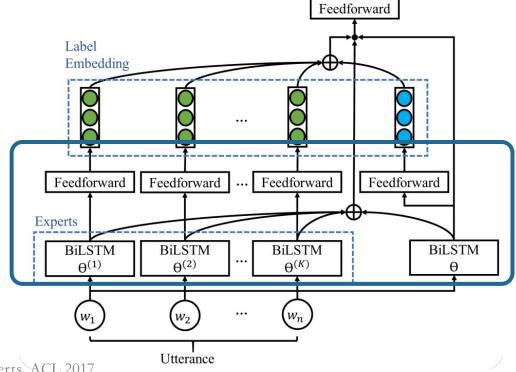




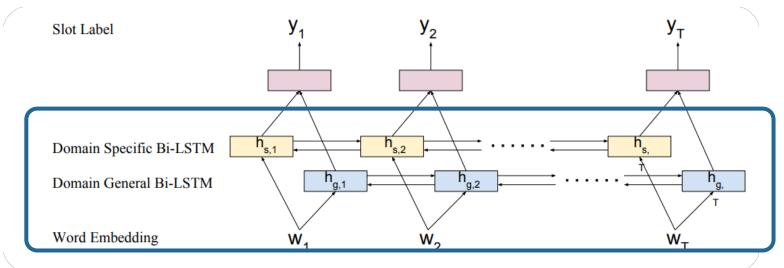
How to transfer knowledge from source domain to target domain?

• An attention mechanism to make full use of previous trained domain expert knowledge for new domain, which has the advantage of transferring domain knowledge without explicitly re-training on

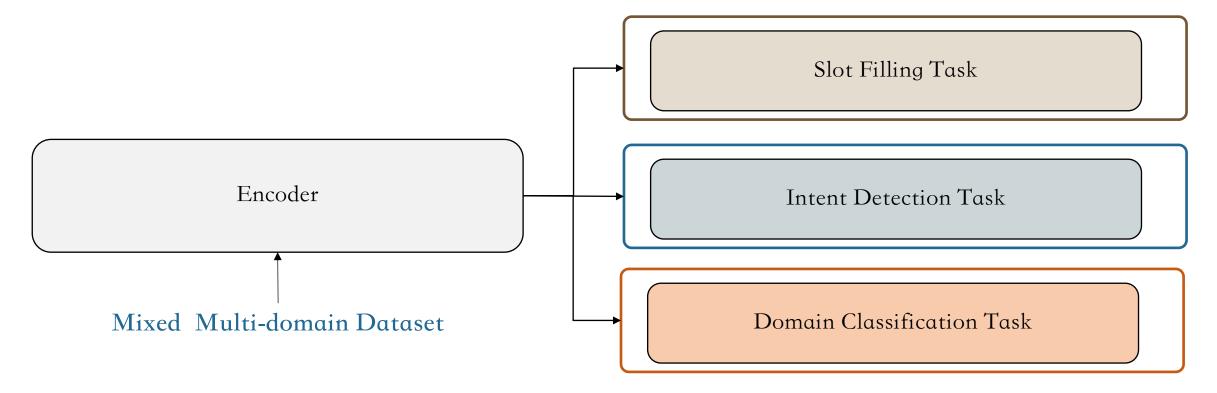
all domains together



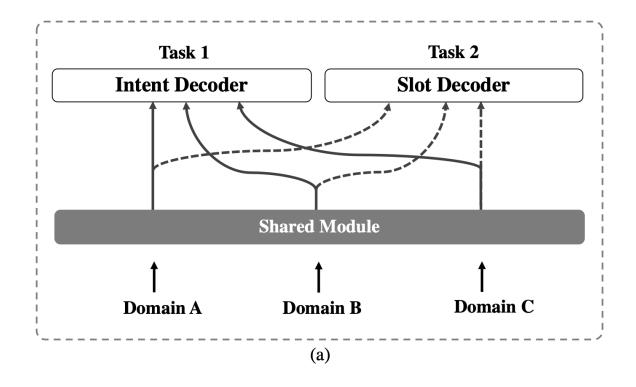
- Domain general Bi-LSTM to capture domain-shared knowledge
- Domain specific Bi-LSTM to incorporate domain-specific knowledge
- Combine domain-shared and domain-specific features for multi-domain slot filling

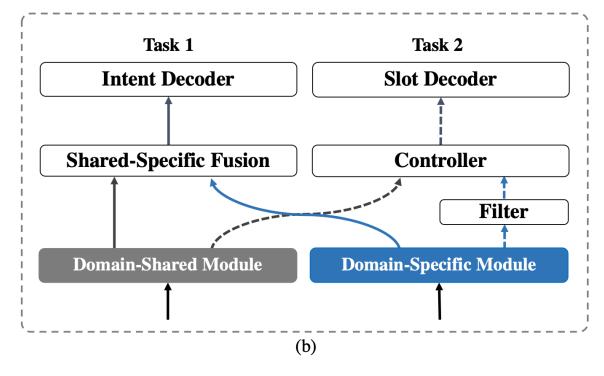


• One network to jointly model slot filling, intent detection and domain classification, implicitly learning the domain-shared information



- (a) Prior work trains a single model on a mixed dataset
- (b) The domain-aware and task-aware model



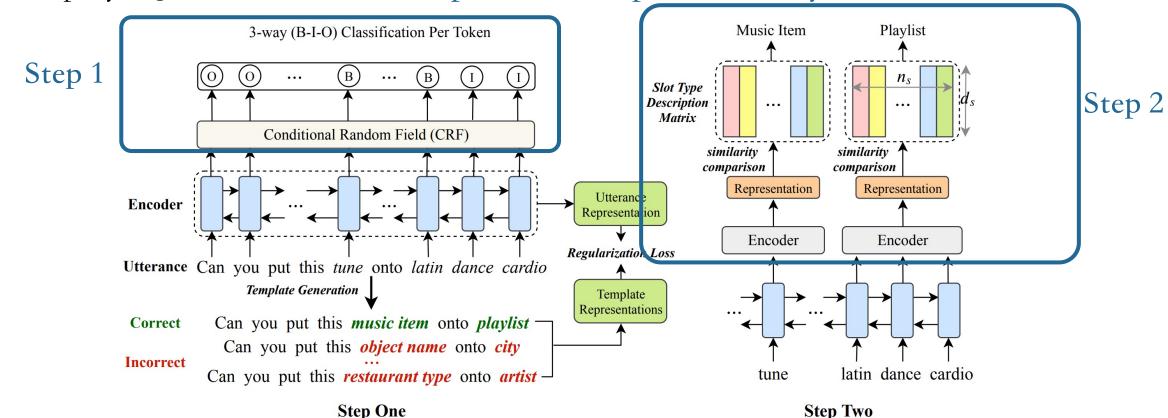


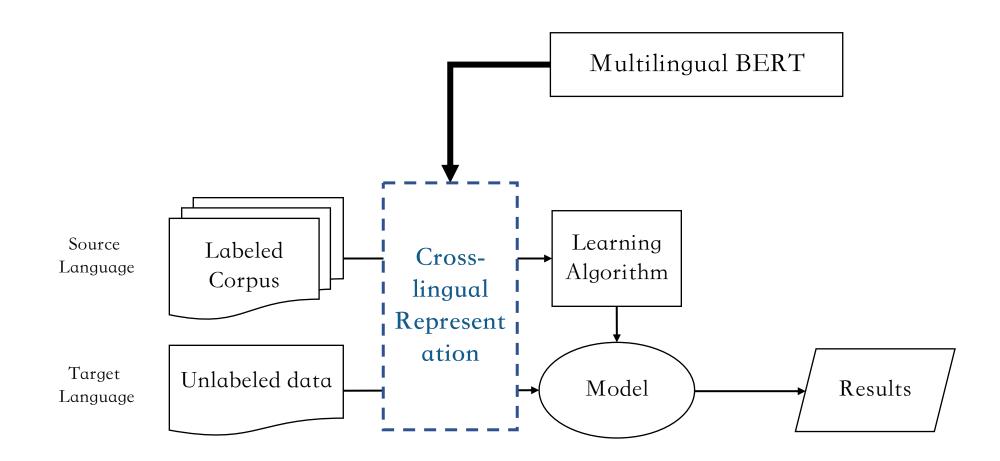
• A model with separate domain- and task-specific parameters, which enables model to capture the task-aware and domain-aware features for multi-domain SLU.

WatchMovie **Intent Decoder Slot Decoder Slot Controller** Domain-Shared Domain-Private **Slot Filter** Module Module Concat Syntax-Aw: re **GCN Layers** vntax-Aware Ei coder Encoder Self-Attentive Encoder Self-Attentive Encoder watch action movie watch action movie Task-awa e Layer

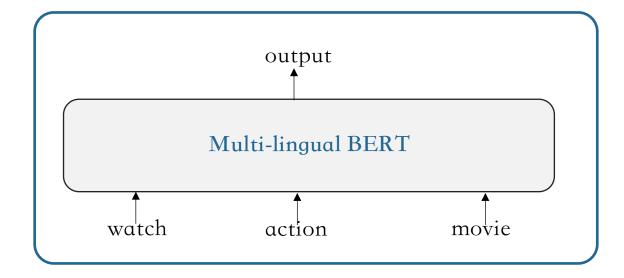
• Fist predict the entity type, and then predict slot type based on the similarity with the representation of each slot type description

• Employ regularization loss to improve the adaptation ability

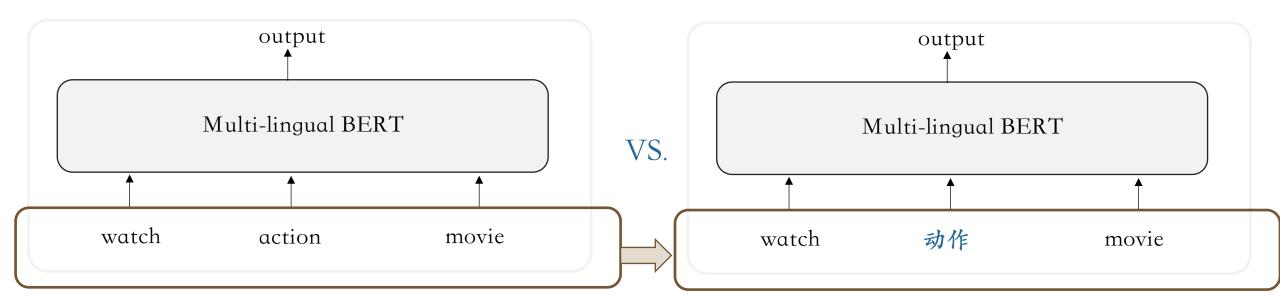




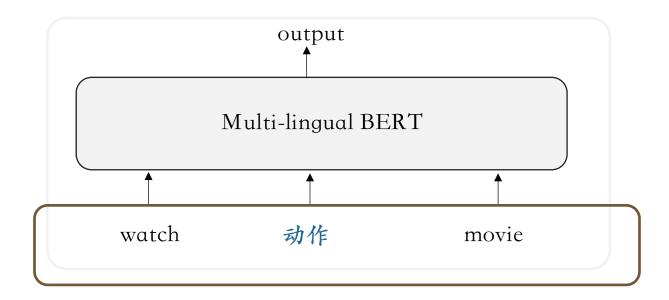
• Employ multi-lingual BERT for cross-lingual SLU



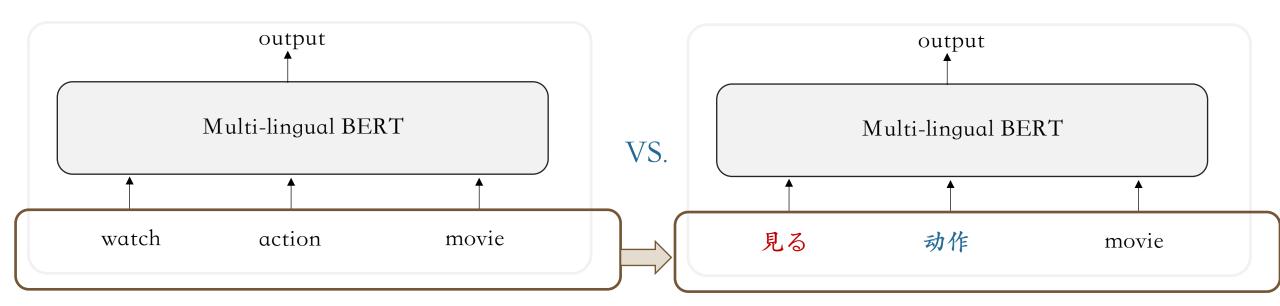
• Attention-informed mixed-language training (MLT) for crosslingual SLU by using code-switching sentences for fine-tuning, which can implicitly align representations between source language and target language



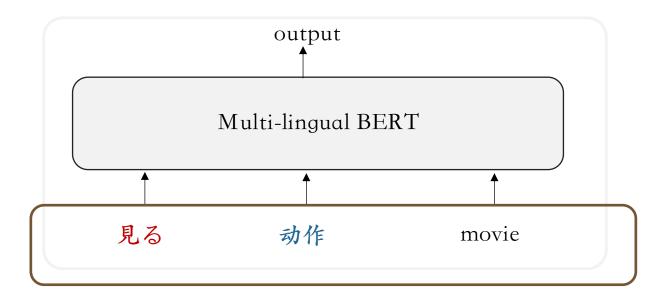
- How to choose the replaced word?
 - Attention method
- Only contain one target language



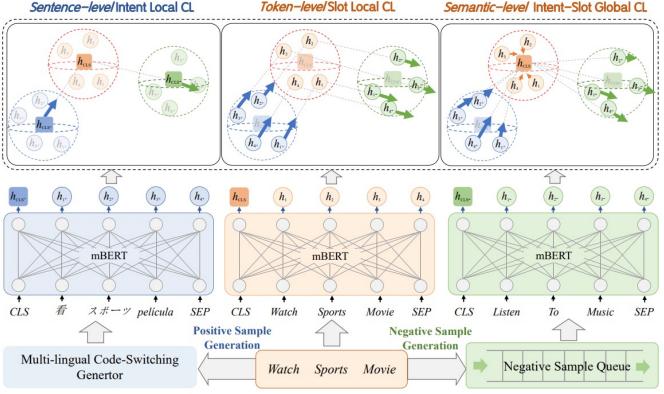
• An augmentation framework (CoSDA-ML) to generate multilingual code-switching data to fine-tune mBERT for aligning representations from source and multiple target languages.



- How to choose the replaced word?
 - Randomly select each word in a sentence
- Align representation across source language and multiple target languages at once



• A global – local contrastive learning (CL) framework (GL-CLeF) to explicitly align representations across languages for zero-shot cross-lingual SLU



- Positive Samples Generation
 - Employ code-switching technique to generate multi-lingual code-switched data, which is considered as the positive samples.

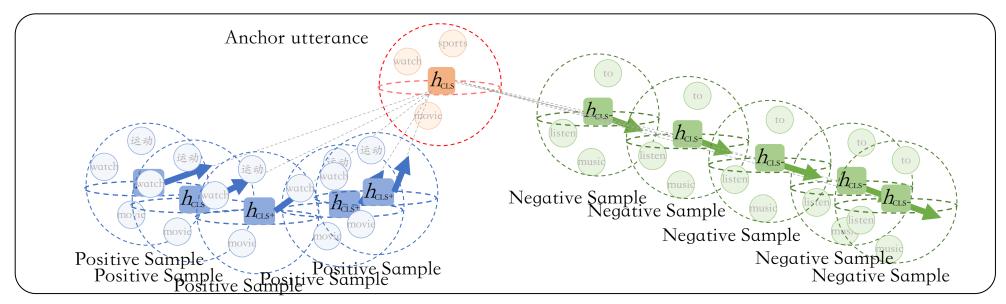


- Negatives Samples Generation
 - Other different queries in a batch can be considered as negative samples.



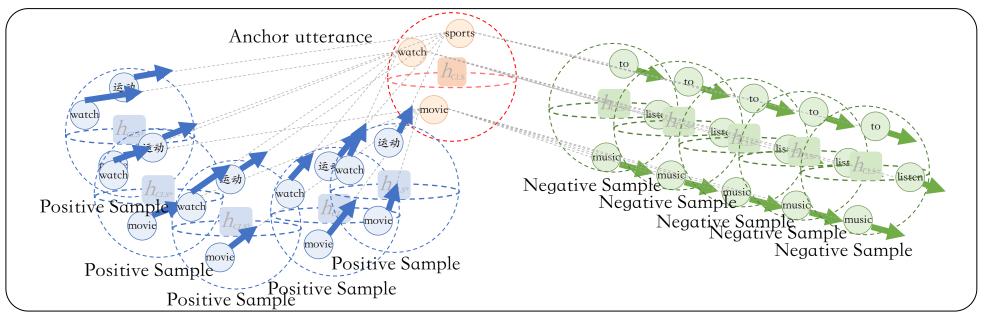
• A sentence-level local intent CL loss is introduced to explicitly encourage the model to align similar sentence representations into the same local space across languages for intent detection.

Sentence-level Intent Local CL



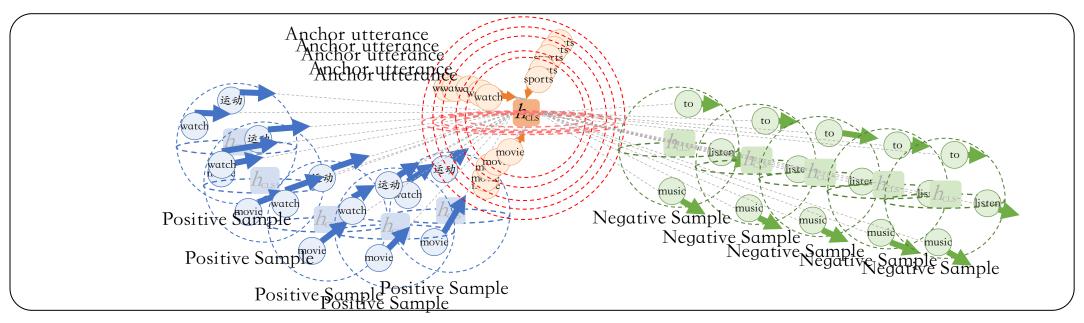
• A token-level local slot CL loss to help the model to consider token alignment for slot filling, achieving fine-grained cross-lingual transfer. In this situation, token-level CL is applied to all tokens in the query.

Token-level Slot Local CL



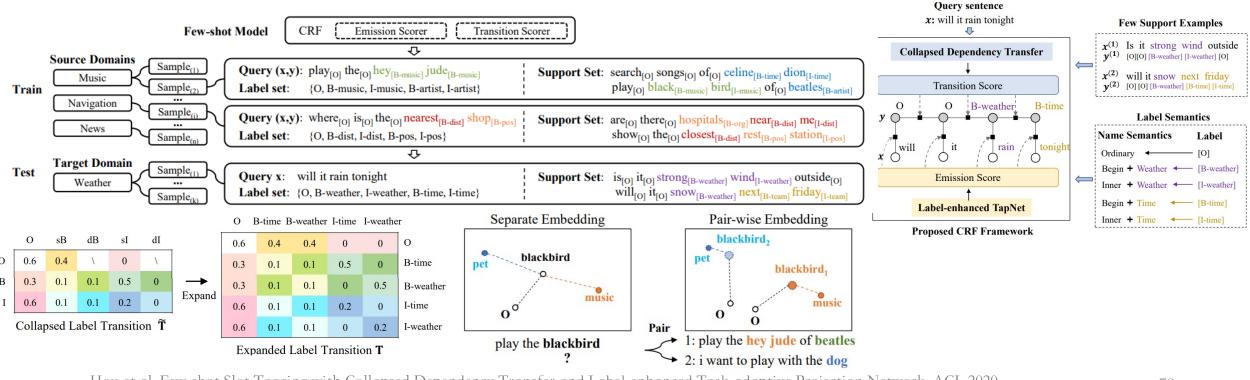
• A semantic-level global intent-slot CL loss to model the semantic interaction between slots and intent, which may further enhance cross-lingual transfer between them.

Semantic-level Intent-Slot Global CL



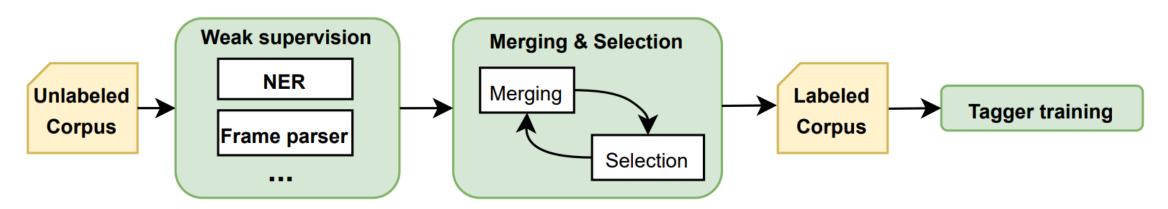
2 Low-resource SLU (Few-shot SLU)

- A CRF model for few-shot slot filling
 - A collapsed dependency transfer mechanism to transfer abstract label dependency patterns across domains
 - L-TapNet to leverage label name semantics in representing labels
 - A pair-wise embedding mechanism to obtain better word representation



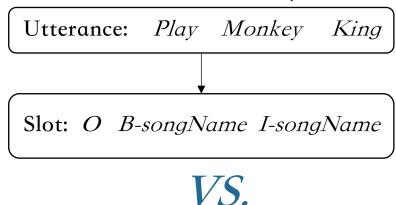
2 Low-resource SLU (Unsupervised SLU)

- First, use the existing linguistic annotation models (e.g., NER) to identify potential slot candidates
- Then, automatically identify domain-relevant slots by using clustering algorithms.
- Finally, use the resulting slot annotation to train a slot filling model that achieves to perform slot tagging with no human intervention

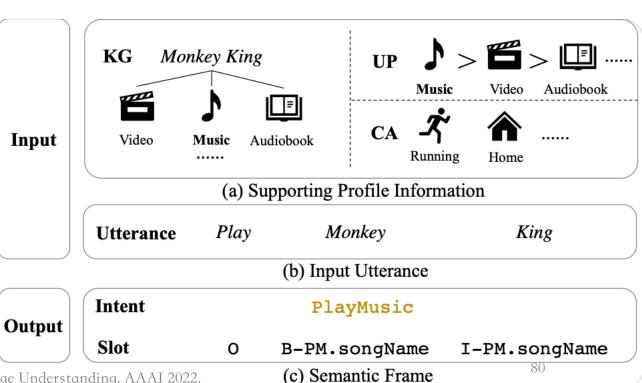


(3) Real-world SLU (Profile-based SLU)

- Traditional SLU
 - Input: Plain Text
 - Output: Semantic Parsing Result



- Profile-based SLU
 - Input: Plain Text + Supporting Profile Information
 - Output: Semantic Parsing Result



3 Real-world SLU (Profile-based SLU)

- Profile-based SLU requires a model to rely not only on the surface utterance but also on the supporting information
- Supporting Information
 - Knowledge Graph (KG): large amounts of interlinked entities and their corresponding rich attributes
 - User Profile (UP): a collection of settings and information (items) associated with the user
 - Context Awareness (CA): denotes the user state and environmental information, including the user's movement state, posture, geographic location, etc

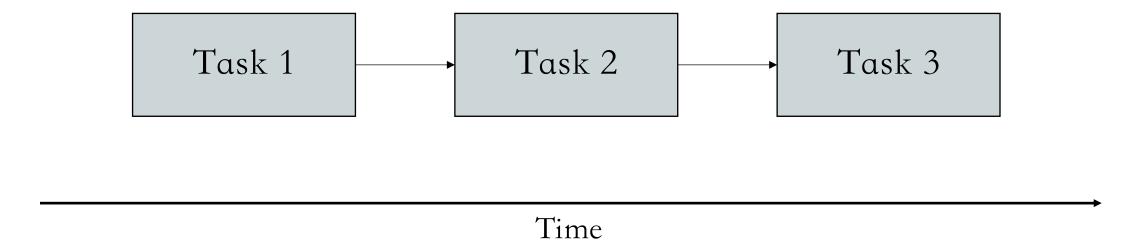
Input						
Utterance	Play Monkey King					
KG	Mention "Monkey King": {music, video and audiobook},					
UP	Preference for [music, video, audiobook]: [0.5, 0.3, 0.2],					
CA	Movement State: Running, Geographic Location: Home,					
Output						
Intent	PlayMusic					
Slot	O B-PlayMusic.songName I-PlayMusic.songName					

(3) Real-world SLU (Profile-based SLU)

- All baseline including non pre-trained and pre-trained models significantly drop a lot, which show the existing models can not support the profile-based SLU
- It can be seen that the performance of all models improve significantly by a large margin by incorporating supporting profile information

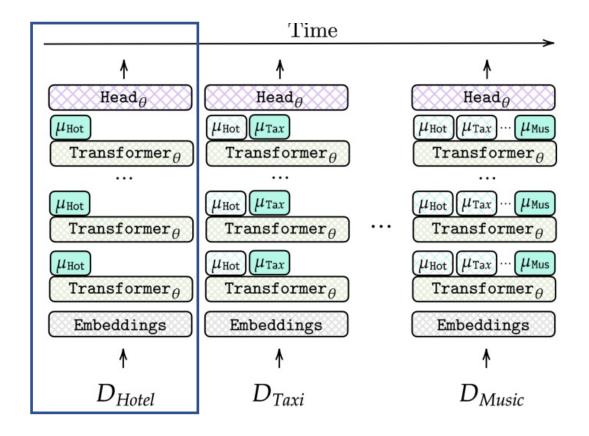
Model		w/o Profile	e	w/ Profile				
Model	Slot (F1)	Intent (Acc)	Overall (Acc)	Slot (F1)	Intent (Acc)	Overall (Acc)		
Non Pre-trained SLU Models								
Slot-Gated (Goo et al. 2018)	36.53	41.24	32.02	74.18	83.24	69.11		
Bi-Model (Wang, Shen, and Jin 2018)	37.37	44.63	32.58	77.76	82.30	73.45		
SF-ID (E et al. 2019)	39.63	42.37	30.89	73.70	83.24	68.36		
Stack-Propagation (Qin et al. 2019)	39.29	39.74	36.35	81.08	83.99	78.91		
General SLU Model	42.24	43.13	37.85	83.27	85.31	79.10		
Pre-trained-based SLU Models								
BERT (Devlin et al. 2019)	44.80	45.76	42.18	82.51	84.56	80.98		
XLNet (Yang et al. 2019)	46.92	48.59	43.88	83.39	85.88	81.73		
RoBERTa (Liu et al. 2019)	45.92	47.83	43.13	82.90	85.31	81.17		
ELECTRA (Clark et al. 2020)	46.48	47.46	42.56	84.38	86.63	82.30		

Table 3: Slot Filling and Intent Detection results on the PROSLU dataset.

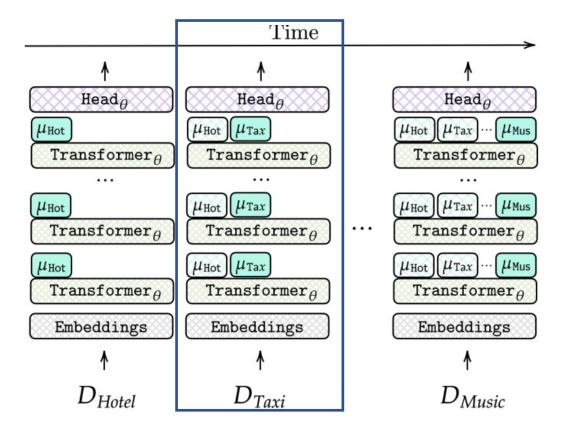


How to learn from new task without forgetting knowledge learned from previous task?

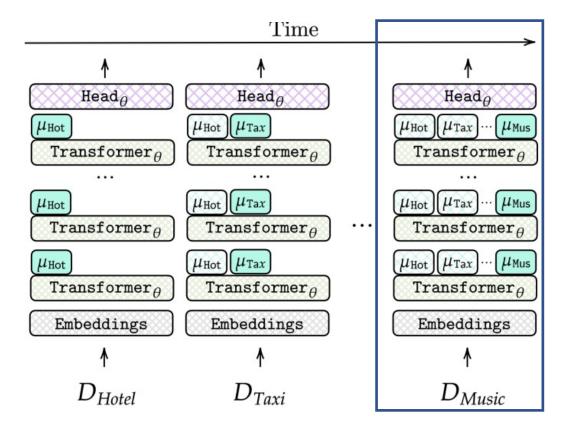
• Only train task-specific parameters and the original weights are left frozen



• Only train task-specific parameters and the original weights are left frozen

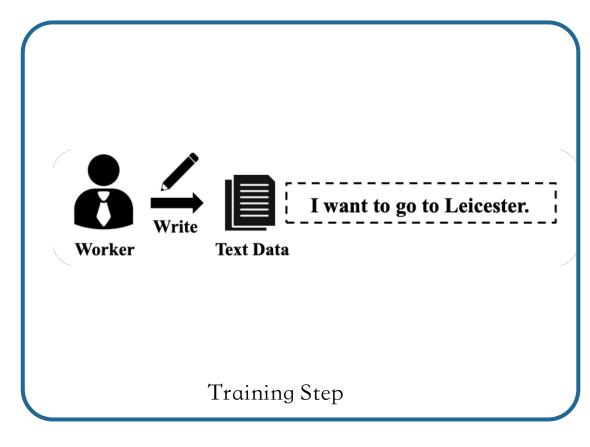


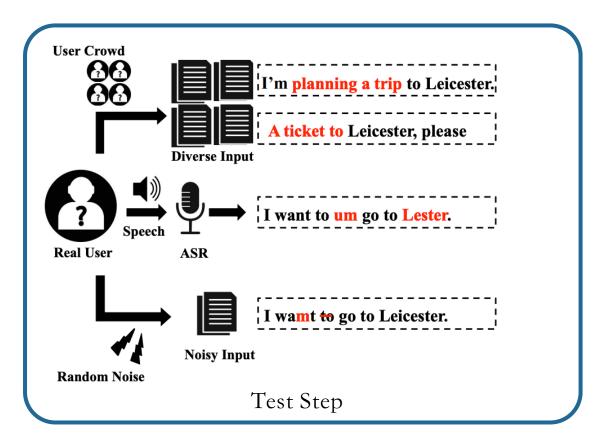
• Only train task-specific parameters and the original weights are left frozen



(3) Real-world SLU (Robust SLU)

• This work make a comprehensive study on robustness of task-oriented dialogue system including SLU task





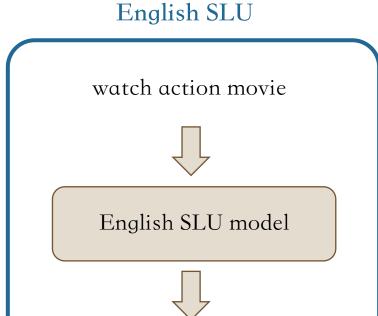
3 Real-world SLU (Robust SLU)

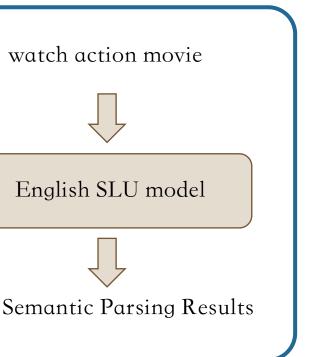
• The current models lack robustness

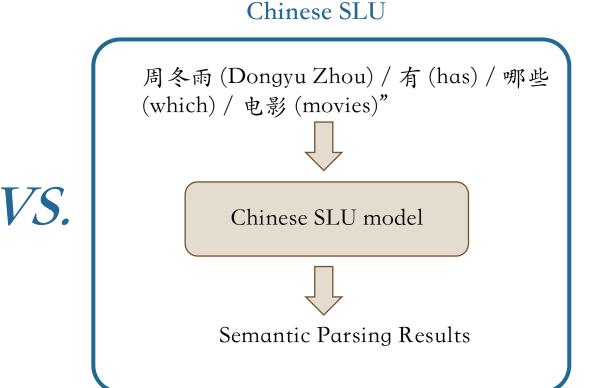
Model	Train	Ori.	WP	TP	SR	SD	Avg.	Drop	Recov.
MILU	Original	74.15	71.05	69.58	61.53	65.27	66.86	-7.29	/
	Augmented	75.78	72.49	71.96	64.76	70.92	70.03	-5.75	+3.17
BERT	Original	78.82	75.92	74.57	70.31	70.31	72.78	-6.04	/
	Augmented	78.21	76.70	75.63	72.04	77.34	75.43	-2.78	+2.65
ToD-BERT	Original	80.61	77.30	76.19	70.88	71.94	74.08	-6.53	/
	Augmented	80.37	77.32	77.26	72.54	79.04	76.54	-3.83	+2.46
CopyNet	Original	67.84	63.90	61.41	56.11	59.26	60.17	-7.67	/
	Augmented	69.35	67.10	65.90	60.98	67.71	65.42	-3.93	+5.25
GPT-2	Original	78.78	74.96	72.85	69.00	69.19	71.50	-7.28	/
	Augmented	79.15	75.25	73.86	71.37	74.19	73.67	-5.48	+2.17
(a) Frames									

How to improve the robustness of SLU model is a very important research topic

(3) Real-world SLU (Chinese SLU)



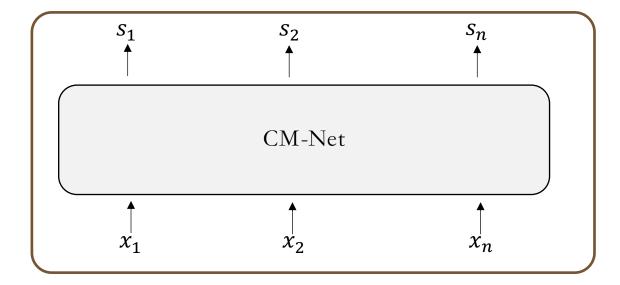




How to leverage both character and word feature for Chinese SLU

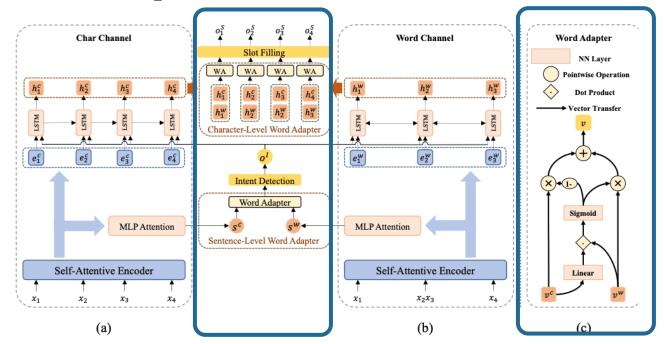
(3) Real-world SLU (Chinese SLU)

- Character-level model for Chinese SLU, which is able to utilize the character information
- Ignore word information for Chinese SLU



(3) Real-world SLU (Chinese SLU)

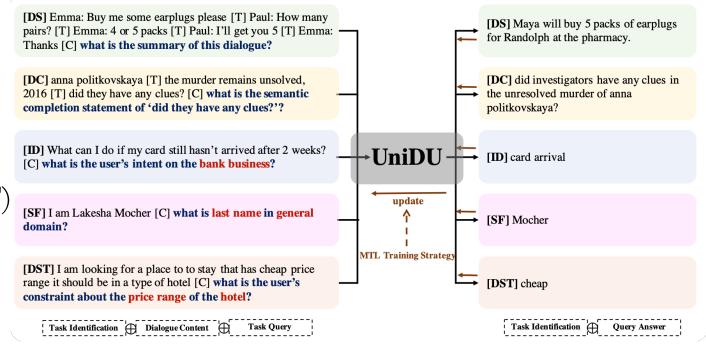
- Multi-level adapter for injecting both character and word information
 - Character-level word adapter for slot filling
 - Sentence-level word adapter for intent detection



4 Unified and Pre-training Paradigm (Unified Model)

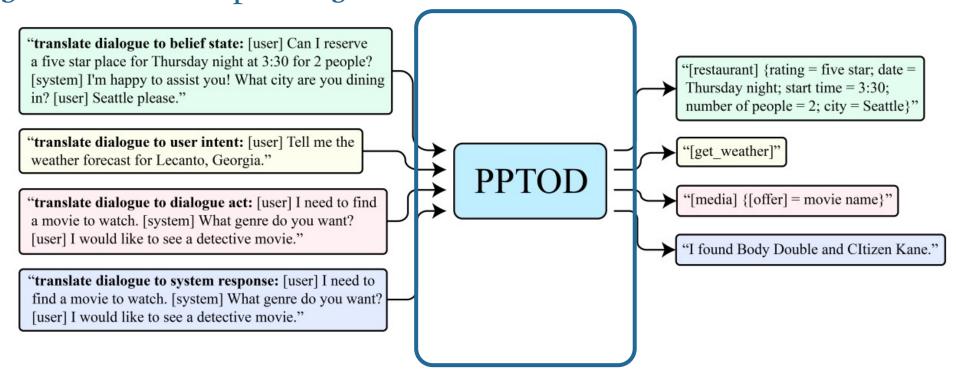
• Different dialogue understanding (DU) tasks as the unified generation including five DU tasks

- Dialogue Summary (DS)
- Dialogue Completion (DC)
- Slot Filling (SF)
- Intent Detection (ID)
- Dialogue State Tracking (DST)



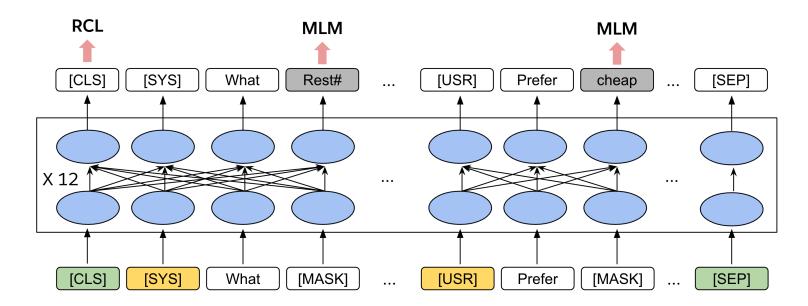
4 Unified and Pre-training Paradigm (Pre-training Model)

• A unified model to model all components in pipeline task-oriented dialogue including dialogue state tracking, intent detection, dialogue act recognition and response generation



4 Unified and Pre-training Paradigm (Pre-training Model)

- A pre-trained dialogue BERT model for task-oriented dialogue using two pre-training task
 - Masked language modeling
 - Response contrastive loss



4 Unified and Pre-training Paradigm (Pre-training Model)

- Masked Language Modeling
 - help model to capture the dialogue domain feature
- Response Contrastive Loss
 - encourage the model to capture underlying dialogue sequential order, structure information, and response similarity.

	Domain	Intent	Dialogue Act	
	(acc)	(acc)	(F1-micro)	
GPT2	63.5%	74.7%	85.7%	
DialoGPT	63.0%	65.7%	84.2%	
BERT	60.5%	71.1%	85.3%	
TOD-BERT-mlm	63.9%	70.7%	83.5%	
TOD-BERT-jnt	68.7%	77.8%	86.2%	

(4) Unified and Pre-training Paradigm (Pre-training Model)

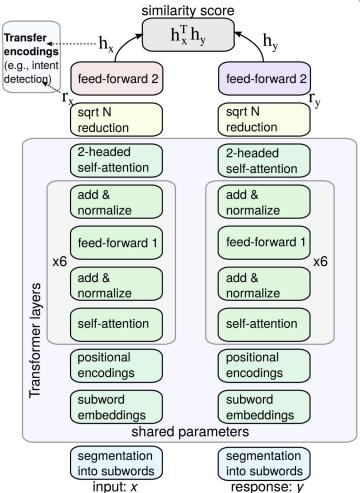
• A pretraining framework for conversational tasks that is effective,

affordable, and quick to train

Response selection task

<i>(</i>	Banking	Shopping	Company FAQ
USE-LARGE BERT-LARGE	92.2 93.2	94.0 94.3	62.4 61.2
ConveRT	92.7	94.5	64.3

Table 6: Intent classification results.



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Conclusion and Highlight



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Conclusion and Highlight

• Spoken Language Understanding has attracted more and more attention in both academic and industry.

• Remarkable success have been achieved on single-turn, single domain and single-intent SLU direction.

- Multi-intent SLU, Robust SLU, Profile-based SLU and other real-world scenario applications gradually become the future trend.
- Resource: https://github.com/yizhen20133868/Awesome-SLU-Survey









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Thanks & QA



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