



Chinese Zero Pronoun Resolution: An Unsupervised Probabilistic Model Rivalling Supervised Resolvers

Chen Chen and Vincent Ng

Human Language Technology Research Institute
University of Texas at Dallas

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俄罗斯作为米洛舍夫维奇一贯的支持者，
pro 曾经提出调停这场政治危机。

Russia is a consistent support of Milosevic,
pro has proposed to mediate the political crisis.

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 - **AZP resolution**
 - Identify an antecedent of an AZP
- State of the art resolvers: **supervised** approach
 - Train one classifier for AZP identification and another one for AZP resolution

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 - State-of-the-art supervised resolvers achieved an F-score of only 47.7% for **resolving** manually identified Chinese AZPs
- Will evaluate our resolution model on both manually identified and automatically identified AZPs

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 - Does not require training data with manually resolved AZPs
 - Underlying generative process is not language-dependent
 - Can be applied to languages without such annotated data
 - Based on a **novel hypothesis**

We can apply a probabilistic pronoun resolution model trained on **overt** pronouns in an **unsupervised** manner to resolve AZPs

Plan for the Talk

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- Generative model for overt pronoun resolution
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- Evaluation

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Chinese Overt Pronouns

Pronoun	Number	Gender	Person	Animacy
我 (I)	singular	neuter	first	animate
你 (you)	singular	neuter	second	animate
他 (he)	singular	masculine	third	animate
她 (she)	singular	feminine	third	animate
它 (it)	singular	neuter	third	inanimate
你们 (you)	plural	neuter	second	animate
我们 (we)	plural	neuter	first	animate
他们 (they)	plural	masculine	third	animate
她们 (they)	plural	feminine	third	animate
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- Use 10 overt pronouns
 - Each can be uniquely identified using these 4 attributes

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Generative Model for Unsupervised Overt Pronoun Resolution

- estimates $P(p, c, k, l)$

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context surrounding p and **all**
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- estimates $P(p, c, k, l)$
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 - overt pronoun to be resolved
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 - context surrounding p and **all** of its candidate antecedents (global context)
 - a binary variable indicating whether c is p 's correct antecedent
- This is an **unsupervised** procedure
 - probability estimated from an unannotated corpus
 - treat p, c, k as observed data and l as hidden data
 - use EM to estimate the model parameters

The EM Algorithm

- E-step
 - using current parameter estimates, label each overt pronoun p with the **probability** it co-refers with each candidate antecedent c given context k

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$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$$

p1	c1	?
p1	c2	?
p2	c1	?
p2	c2	?
p2	c3	?

Initially, we don't know what's the probability that a pronoun and a candidate antecedent are coreferent

The EM Algorithm

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$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$$

p1	c1	0.87
p1	c2	0.11
p2	c1	0.42
p2	c2	0.98
p2	c3	0.69

E-step: fill in the missing value (the expected value of l) for each pair of pronouns and candidates

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- M-step

- (re)estimate **model parameters** from data containing the overt pronouns probabilistically labeled in the E-step

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- **Goal:** estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

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$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k) = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{P(p, c, k)}$$

Definition of conditional prob.

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- Rewriting the denominator,

$$\begin{aligned} &P(p, c, k) \\ &= P(p, c, k, l = 1) + P(p, c, k, l = 0) \end{aligned}$$

The two cases are mutually exclusive

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Assume **exactly** one of p's candidate antecedent is its correct antecedent

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$$= P(p, c, k, l = 1) + P(p, c, k, l = 0)$$

$$= P(p, c, k, l = 1) + P(p, c_1, k, l = 1) + \dots + P(p, c_n, k, l = 1)$$

Assume **exactly** one
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Refers to the case
where p and c are
not coreferent (l=0)

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By assumption, one of the remaining candidates of p must be its correct antecedent

E-step

p: overt pronoun
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- **Goal:** estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k) = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{P(p, c, k)}$$

Enumerates over all possible candidates

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$$= \sum_{c' \in C} P(p, c', k, l = 1)$$

Shorthand by using summation
Sum over all possible candidates

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These two probabilities
have the same form

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- Using Chain Rule, we can decompose

$$\begin{aligned} &P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ &= P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k) \end{aligned}$$

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generate
context k



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generate
candidate
antecedent c
given context k

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$$P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ = P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

generate coref
label l given
candidate c and
context k

generate
candidate
antecedent c
given context k

generate
context k

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- **Goal:** estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k) = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{P(p, c, k)} = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{\sum_{c' \in C} P(p, c', k, l = 1)}$$

- Using Chain Rule, we can decompose

$$P(p, c, k, l = 1)$$

$$= P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

generate pronoun p
given coref label l,
candidate c and
context k

generate coref
label l given
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- Using Chain Rule, we can decompose

$$\begin{aligned} &P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ &= P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \end{aligned}$$

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$$P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ = P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k)$$

Probability of
generating p given k
and c, and that p and c
are coreferent

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- Using Chain Rule

$$P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ = P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

$$P(p | k, c, l = 1) \approx P(p | c, l = 1)$$


rewrite by dropping k

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$$P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) \approx P(p \mid c, l = 1)$$

Reason:

given $l=1$, we assume we can
generate p from c without k

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the man $\rightarrow$ he
the women $\rightarrow$ they

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$$P(p | k, c, l = 1) \approx P(p | c, l = 1) \\ \approx P(p_{Num}, p_{Gen}, p_{Per}, p_{Ani} | c, l = 1)$$

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p: overt pronoun
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$$P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ = P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

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Represent p using its
four grammatical
attribute values: Num,
Gen, Per, Ani

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$$P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ = P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

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decompose the joint probability into 4 smaller probabilities

E-step

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assume p's value w.r.t. attribute a can be generated independently of other values given c's value w.r.t. a

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- Using Chain Rule

$$P(p, c, k, l = 1)$$

$$= P(p | k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

$$= \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a | c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k, c) P(c | k) P(k)$$

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Probability that p and c are
coreferent given k and c

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$$P(l = 1 \mid k, c) \approx P(l = 1 \mid k_c, c)$$

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$$\begin{aligned} &P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ &= P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \\ &= \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a \mid c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \end{aligned}$$

$$P(l = 1 \mid k, c) \approx P(l = 1 \mid k_c, c)$$

Replace k with k_c

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
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$$P(l = 1 \mid k, c) \approx P(l = 1 \mid k_c, c)$$

Replace k with k_c

k can be thought of as the global context surrounding p and all of its candidates

k_c can be thought of as the local context surrounding p and candidate c

E-step

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$$P(l = 1 \mid k, c) \approx P(l = 1 \mid k_c, c)$$

given k_c (**local context** surrounding p and c), whether p and c are coreferent is not affected by remaining context

E-step

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Rewrite by
dropping c

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$$\begin{aligned} &P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ &= P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \\ &= \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a \mid c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \end{aligned}$$

$$P(l = 1 \mid k, c) \approx P(l = 1 \mid k_c, c) \approx P(l = 1 \mid k_c)$$

Rewrite by
dropping c

local context k_c is sufficient for
determining whether p and c
are coreferent

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
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l: whether p&c are coref

- Using Chain Rule

$$P(p, c, k, l = 1)$$

$$= P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k)$$

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Probability of
c given k

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- Using Chain Rule

$$\begin{aligned} &P(p, c, k, l = 1) \\ &= P(p \mid k, c, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \\ &= \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a \mid c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k, c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \\ &= \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a \mid c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 \mid k_c) P(c \mid k) P(k) \end{aligned}$$

$$P(c \mid k) \approx P(c' \mid k) \quad \forall c, c' \in C$$



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$$P(c \mid k) \approx P(c' \mid k) \quad \forall c, c' \in C$$



given context k, all candidate antecedents
of p can be generated with equal probability

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- Goal: estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k) = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{P(p, c, k)} = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{\sum_{c' \in C} P(p, c', k, l = 1)}$$

We have been trying to decompose this joint probability

E-step

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c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

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Using the assumptions we have made so far, we can rewrite this probability

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- Goal: estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

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Two sets of model parameters

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- Goal: estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

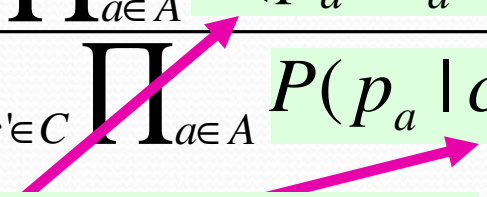
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First set of parameters

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- Goal: estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

$$\begin{aligned} P(l = 1 | p, c, k) &= \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{P(p, c, k)} = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{\sum_{c' \in C} P(p, c', k, l = 1)} \\ &= \frac{\prod_{a \in A} P(p_a | c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k_c)}{\sum_{c' \in C} \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a | c'_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k_{c'})} \end{aligned}$$


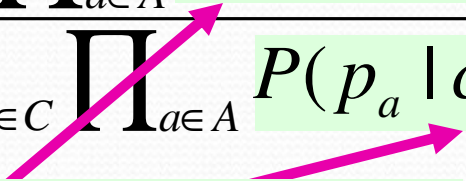
First set of parameters

given p and c are coreferent,
the probability of generating
p's attribute values from c's
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First set of parameters

given p and c are coreferent,
the probability of generating
p's attribute values from c's
attribute values

Second set of parameters

E-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- **Goal:** estimate $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$

$$P(l = 1 | p, c, k) = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{P(p, c, k)} = \frac{P(p, c, k, l = 1)}{\sum_{c' \in C} P(p, c', k, l = 1)}$$

$$= \frac{\prod_{a \in A} P(p_a | c_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k_c)}{\sum_{c' \in C} \prod_{a \in A} P(p_a | c'_a, l = 1) P(l = 1 | k_{c'})}$$

First set of parameters
given p and c are coreferent,
the probability of generating
p's attribute values from c's
attribute values

Second set of parameters
given the local context
surrounding p and k, the
probability that p and c are coref

M-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- **Goal:** given $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$, estimate model parameters:

$$P(p_a | c_a, l = 1) \quad P(l = 1 | k_c)$$

M-step

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- **Goal:** given $P(l = 1 | p, c, k)$, estimate model parameters:

$$P(p_a | c_a, l = 1)$$

$$P(l = 1 | k_c)$$

$$P(p_{Per} | c_{Per}, l = 1)$$

$$P(p_{Gen} | c_{Gen}, l = 1)$$

$$P(p_{Num} | c_{Num}, l = 1)$$

$$P(p_{Ani} | c_{Ani}, l = 1)$$

Composed of four groups of parameters, one for each attribute

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Composed of four
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use maximum likelihood estimation

What have we done so far?

- described how EM can be used to learn the parameters of our model for overt pronoun resolution in an unsupervised way

What have we done so far?

- described how EM can be used to learn the parameters of our **model for overt pronoun resolution** in an **unsupervised** way

How can we apply this overt pronoun resolution model to resolve AZPs?

Applying the model to resolve AZPs

- Given an AZP z ,
 - exhaustively search for the candidate antecedent c and overt pronoun p that maximize $P(l = 1 \mid p, c, k)$ when p is used to fill the gap left behind by z

Applying the model to resolve AZPs

- Given an AZP z ,
 - exhaustively search for the candidate antecedent c and overt pronoun p that maximize $P(l = 1 \mid p, c, k)$ when p is used to fill the gap left behind by z
- since the model is trained on overt pronouns but is applied to ZPs, we have to fill each ZP's gap with every overt pronoun when applying the model

What remains to be done?

p: overt pronoun
c: candidate antecedent
k: context
l: whether p&c are coref

- Recall that the model parameters are:

$$P(p_a | c_a, l = 1) \quad P(l = 1 | k_c)$$

What remains to be done?

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need to compute the person, gender, number, and animacy of a NP

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Probability that p and c are coreferent given their context k_c

need to compute the person, gender, number, and animacy of a NP

heuristically or via unsupervised learning

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p: overt pronoun
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How to represent k_c ?

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Representing Context

- 8 features; motivated by previous work on AZP resolution

Distance (1)	Sentence distance between p and c
Positional (1)	whether p is the first word of a sentence; if not, whether p is the first word of an IP
Syntactic (4)	whether the node spanning c has an ancestor NP node; if so, whether this node is a descendant of c's lowest ancestor IP node, ...
Grammatical (1)	whether c is a subject whose governing verb is lexically identical to the verb governing p
Semantic (1)	whether c is the closest candidate with subject grammatical role and is semantically compatible with p's governing verb

Plan for the Talk

- Intro to Chinese overt pronouns
- Generative model for overt pronoun resolution
 - Training and application
- Evaluation

Evaluation

- **Goal:** evaluate our unsupervised model

Experimental Setup

- **Corpus**
 - Chinese portion of the OntoNotes 5.0 corpus
 - **Unsupervised training** of the overt pronoun resolution model
 - Chinese training set used in the CoNLL 2012 shared task
 - 1,391 documents (13,418 overt pronouns)
 - **Testing** (Applying the model to resolve AZPs)
 - Chinese development set used in the CoNLL 2012 shared task
 - 172 documents (1,713 AZPs)
- **Evaluation measures**
 - recall (R), precision (P), and F-measure (F) on resolving AZPs

Three Evaluation Settings

- Setting 1: **gold** parse trees, **gold** AZPs
- Setting 2: **gold** parse trees, **system** AZPs
- Setting 3: **system** parse trees, **system** AZPs

Three Evaluation Settings

- Setting 1: gold parse trees, gold AZPs
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Seven Baselines

- 4 simple heuristic baselines
 - gauge the difficulty of the resolution task
- 3 state-of-the-art supervised Chinese AZP resolvers

Baselines: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
Selecting closest candidate	25.0	25.2	25.1	10.3	6.7	8.1

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	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
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Selecting closest subject	42.0	43.6	42.8	18.0	11.9	14.4

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- Baseline 2 performs significantly better than Baseline 1
 - salience plays a greater role than recency

Baselines: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
Selecting closest candidate	25.0	25.2	25.1	10.3	6.7	8.1
Selecting closest subject	42.0	43.6	42.8	18.0	11.9	14.4
Selecting closest sem. compat. cand.	28.5	28.8	28.7	11.7	7.6	9.2

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Selecting closest candidate	25.0	25.2	25.1	10.3	6.7	8.1
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- The last two heuristic baselines are created by adding semantic compatibility to the first two heuristic baselines
 - The last two baselines outperform the first two baselines
 - Semantic compatibility is useful for Chinese AZP resolution

Baselines: Results

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	R	P	F	R	P	F
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- Best heuristic baseline (Baseline 4) uses both salience and semantic compatibility

Baselines: Results

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	R	P	F	R	P	F
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Duplicated Zhao and Ng (2007)	41.5	41.5	41.5	12.7	14.2	13.4

Baselines: Results

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- proposed first learning-based approach to Chinese AZP resolution
- performs worse than the best heuristic baseline

Baselines: Results

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Baselines: Results

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Selecting closest sem. compat. cand.	28.5	28.8	28.7	11.7	7.6	9.2
Selecting closest sem. compat. subject	45.2	45.7	45.5	18.9	12.3	14.9
Duplicated Zhao and Ng (2007)	41.5	41.5	41.5	12.7	14.2	13.4
Duplicated Kong and Zhou (2010)	44.9	44.9	44.9	18.7	11.9	14.5

- resolves AZPs using parse trees as structured features
- Performs better than Zhao and Ng (2007)
- still underperforms best heuristic baseline

Baselines: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
Selecting closest candidate	25.0	25.2	25.1	10.3	6.7	8.1
Selecting closest subject	42.0	43.6	42.8	18.0	11.9	14.4
Selecting closest sem. compat. cand.	28.5	28.8	28.7	11.7	7.6	9.2
Selecting closest sem. compat. subject	45.2	45.7	45.5	18.9	12.3	14.9
Duplicated Zhao and Ng (2007)	41.5	41.5	41.5	12.7	14.2	13.4
Duplicated Kong and Zhou (2010)	44.9	44.9	44.9	18.7	11.9	14.5
Chen and Ng (2013)	47.7	47.7	47.7	14.9	16.7	15.7

Baselines: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
Selecting closest candidate	25.0	25.2	25.1	10.3	6.7	8.1
Selecting closest subject	42.0	43.6	42.8	18.0	11.9	14.4
Selecting closest sem. compat. cand.	28.5	28.8	28.7	11.7	7.6	9.2
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- our supervised resolver
- improves Zhao and Ng's (2007) system with two extensions
- best of the 7 baselines

Baselines: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
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Our unsupervised model	47.5	47.9	47.7	19.9	12.9	15.7

- performs as well as the best baseline
 - though with a higher recall and lower precision under Setting 3

Ablation Experiments

- in each experiment, remove exactly one probability term from our model and retrain the model

Ablation Experiments: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
Full model	47.5	47.9	47.7	19.9	12.9	15.7
without Number	47.5	47.9	47.7	19.7	12.8	15.5
without Gender	44.5	45.0	44.7	19.2	12.5	15.1
without Person	45.2	45.6	45.4	19.1	12.4	15.1
without Animacy	45.1	45.5	45.3	19.1	12.4	15.1
without Context features	32.9	33.1	33.0	15.2	9.8	11.9

Ablation Experiments: Results

	Gold Parses, Gold AZPs			System Parses, System AZPs		
	R	P	F	R	P	F
Full model	47.5	47.9	47.7	19.9	12.9	15.7
without Number	47.5	47.9	47.7	19.7	12.8	15.5
without Gender	44.5	45.0	44.7	19.2	12.5	15.1
without Person	45.2	45.6	45.4	19.1	12.4	15.1
without Animacy	45.1	45.5	45.3	19.1	12.4	15.1
without Context features	32.9	33.1	33.0	15.2	9.8	11.9

- no drop in performance when Number is ablated
- performance drops significantly when other terms are ablated
 - context features contributed the most to overall performance

Major Sources of Error

- Failure in tracking the discourse entity in focus
- Errors in computing semantic compatibility
- Assumption that overt pronouns and ZPs occur in the same context is not always correct

*pro*不客气。
(*pro* are welcome.)

- In Chinese, this sentence is never used with an overt pronoun, so the overt pronoun resolver learned from unannotated data will not have the knowledge needed to resolve this ZP

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- Failure in tracking the discourse entity in focus
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*pro*不客气。
(*pro* are welcome.)

- In Chinese, this sentence is never used with an overt pronoun, so the overt pronoun resolver learned from unannotated data will not have the knowledge needed to resolve this ZP
- This is a case that can be easily handled by the supervised resolvers but not by our model

Summary

- Proposed an unsupervised model for AZP resolution
 - rivaled its supervised counterparts in performance when evaluated on the Chinese portion of the OntoNotes v5.0 corpus