# Myanmar Word Segmentation using Syllable level Longest Matching 

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#### Abstract

In Myanmar language, sentences are clearly delimited by a unique sentence boundary marker but are written without necessarily pausing between words with spaces. It is therefore non-trivial to segment sentences into words. Word tokenizing plays a vital role in most Natural Language Processing applications. We observe that word boundaries generally align with syllable boundaries. Working directly with characters does not help. It is therefore useful to syllabify texts first. Syllabification is also a non-trivial task in Myanmar. We have collected 4550 syllables from available sources. We have evaluated our syllable inventory on 2,728 sentences spread over 258 pages and observed a coverage of $99.96 \%$. In the second part, we build word lists from available sources such as dictionaries, through the application of morphological rules, and by generating syllable n-grams as possible words and manually checking. We have thus built list of 800,000 words including inflected forms. We have tested our algorithm on a 5000 sentence test data set containing a total of (35049 words) and manually checked for evaluating the performance. The program recognized 34943 words of which 34633 words were correct, thus giving us a Recall of $\mathbf{9 8 . 8 1 \%}$, a Precision of $\mathbf{9 9 . 1 1 \%}$ and a $\mathbf{F}$ Measure is 98.95\%.


Key Words:- Myanmar, Syllable, Words, Segmentation, Syllabification, Dictionary

## 1 Introduction

Myanmar (Burmese) is a member of the BurmeseLolo group of the Sino-Tibetan language spoken by about 21 Million people in Myanmar (Burma). It is a tonal language, that is to say, the meaning of a syllable or word changes with the tone. It has been classified by linguists as a mono-syllabic or isolating language with agglutinative features. According to history, Myanmar script has originated from Brahmi script which flourished in India from about 500 B.C. to over 300 A.D (MLC, 2002). The script is syllabic in nature, and written from left to right.

Myanmar script is composed of 33 consonants, 11 basic vowels, 11 consonant combination symbols and extension vowels, vowel symbols, devowelizing consonants, diacritic marks, specified symbols and punctuation marks(MLC, 2002),(Thu and Urano, 2006). Myanmar script represents sequences of syllables where each syllable is constructed from consonants, consonant combination symbols (i.e. Medials), vowel symbols related to relevant consonants and diacritic marks indicating tone level.

Myanmar has mainly 9 parts of speech: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, particle , conjunction, post-positional marker and interjection (MLC, 2005), (Judson, 1842).

In Myanmar script, sentences are clearly delimited by a sentence boundary marker but words are not always delimited by spaces. Although there is a general tendency to insert spaces between phrases, inserting spaces is more of a convenience rather than
a rule. Spaces may sometimes be inserted between words and even between a root word and the associated post-position. In fact in the past spaces were rarely used. Segmenting sentences into words is therefore a challenging task.

Word boundaries generally align with syllable boundaries and syllabification is therefore a useful strategy. In this paper we describe our attempts on syllabification and segmenting Myanmar sentences into words. After a brief discussion of the corpus collection and pre-processing phases, we describe our approaches to syllabification and tokenization into words.

Computational and quantitative studies in Myanmar are relatively new. Lexical resources available are scanty. Development of electronic dictionaries and other lexical resources will facilitate Natural Language Processing tasks such as Spell Checking, Machine Translation, Automatic Text summarization, Information Extraction, Automatic Text Categorization, Information Retrieval and so on (Murthy, 2006).

Over the last few years, we have developed monolingual text corpora totalling to about 2,141,496 sentences and English-Myanmar parallel corpora amounting to about 80,000 sentences and sentence fragments, aligned at sentence and word levels. We have also collected word lists from these corpora and also from available dictionaries. Currently our word list includes about 800,000 words including inflected forms.

## 2 Myanmar Words

Myanmar words are sequences of syllables. The syllable structure of Burmese is $\mathrm{C}(\mathrm{G}) \mathrm{V}((\mathrm{V}) \mathrm{C})$, which is to say the onset consists of a consonant optionally followed by a glide, and the rhyme consists of a monophthong alone, a monophthong with a consonant, or a diphthong with a consonant ${ }^{1}$. Some representative words are:

- CV [mei] girl
- CVC [me '] crave
- CGV [mjei] earth
- CGVC [mje '] eye

[^0]- CVVC [maun] (term of address for young men)
- CGVVC [mjaun] ditch

Words in the Myanmar language can be divided into simple words, compound words and complex words (Tint, 2004),(MLC, 2005),(Judson, 1842). Some examples of compound words and loan words are given below.

- Compound Words

> - head [u:] হ̊: + pack [htou '] ${ }^{\circ} \delta=$ hat $\left[o u{ }^{\prime}\right.$ htou '] $\mathrm{\imath}: \propto \propto^{\circ}$

- Loan Words
- ஐईソ|llom [kun pju ta] computer
- ఐీఠcmiboo [hsa ' ko ma ti] sub-committee
- ఇబீஜ̊ [che ri] cherry


## 3 Corpus Collection and Preprocessing

Development of lexical resources is a very tedious and time consuming task and purely manual approaches are too slow. We have downloaded Myanmar texts from various web sites including news sites including official newspapers, on-line magazines, trial e-books (over 300 full books) as well as free and trial texts from on-line book stores including a variety of genres, types and styles - modern and ancient, prose and poetry, and example sentences from dictionaries. As of now, our corpus includes 2,141,496 sentences.

The downloaded corpora need to be cleaned up to remove hypertext markup and we need to extract text if in pdf format. We have developed the necessary scripts in Perl for this. Also, different sites use different font formats and character encoding standards are not yet widely followed. We have mapped these various formats into the standard WinInnwa font format. We have stored the cleaned up texts in ASCII format and these pre-processed corpora are seen to be reasonably clean.

## 4 Collecting Word Lists

Electronic dictionaries can be updated much more easily than published printed dictionaries, which need more time, cost and man power to bring out a fresh edition. Word lists and dictionaries in electronic form are of great value in computational linguistics and NLP. Here we describe our efforts in developing a large word list for Myanmar.

### 4.1 Independent Words

As we keep analyzing texts, we can identify some words that can appear independently without combining with other words or suffixes. We build a list of such valid words and we keep adding new valid words as we progress through our segmentation process, gradually developing larger and larger lists of valid words. We have also collected from sources such as Myanmar Orthography(MLC, 2003), CD versions of English-English-Myanmar (Student's Dictionary)(stu, 2000) and English-Myanmar Dictionary (EMd, ) and Myanmar-French Dictionary (damma sami, 2004). Currently our word list includes 800,000 words.

### 4.2 Stop Word Removal

Stop words include prepositions/post-positions, conjunctions, particles, inflections etc. which appear as suffixes added to other words. They form closed classes and hence can be listed. Preliminary studies therefore suggested that Myanmar words can be recognized by eliminating these stop words. Hopple (Hopple, 2003) also notices that particles ending phrases can be removed to recognize words in a sentence. We have collected stop words by analyzing official newspapers, Myanmar grammar text books and CD versions of English-English-Myanmar (Student's Dictionary)(stu, 2000), English-Myanmar Dictionary (EMd, ) and The Khit Thit English-Myanmar dictionary (Saya, 2000). We have also looked at stop word lists in English (www.syger.com, ) and mapped them to equivalent stop words in Myanmar. See Table 1. As of now, our stop words list contains 1216 entries. Stop words can be prefixes of other stop words leading to ambiguities. However, usually the longest matching stop word is the right choice.

Identifying and removing stop words does not

| Nominative personal pronouns |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| I |  <br>  mjo [kja ma.] |
| Possessive pronouns and adjectives |  |
| my |  <br>  <br>  <br>  <br>  শృөণั. [kja ma. je.],clò.[nga je.], <br>  <br>  |
| Indefinite pronouns and adjectives |  |
| some |  <br>  ๑จิ\|.ขึ|. [ta chou.ta chou.], <br>  |

Table 1: Stop-words of English Vs Myanmar
always necessarily lead to correct segmentation of sentences into words. Both under and over segmentation are possible. When stop-words are too short, over segmentation can occur. Under segmentation can occur when no stop-words occur between words. Examples of segmentation can be seen in Table 2. We have observed that over segmentation is more frequent than under segmentation.

| ఫ¢¢:¢¢:จి: |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | зб¢ว¢ |
| [waing: win: chi: kyu: khan ya] |  | [a nay khak] |
| received compliments |  | abashed |
| $\mathrm{V}_{p p}$ |  | $\mathrm{V}_{\text {past }}$ |
|  |  |  |
|  | अఱ్రీ:טmir | -¢ீఖ¢ |
| [kyaung: aop hsa ya kyi:] | [a kyan: phak mhu] | [sak sop] |
| The headmaster | violence | abhors |
| $\mathrm{N}_{\text {subj }}$ | $\mathrm{N}_{\text {obj }}$ | $\mathrm{V}_{\text {present }}$ |

Table 2: Removing stop-words for segmentation

### 4.3 Syllable N-grams

Myanmar language uses a syllabic writing system unlike English and many other western languages which use an alphabetic writing system. Interestingly, almost every syllable has a meaning in Myanmar language. This can also be seen from the work of Hopple (Hopple, 2003).

Myanmar Natural Language Processing Group has listed 1894 syllables that can appear in Myanmar texts (Htut, 2001). We have observed that there are more syllables in use, especially in foreign words including Pali and Sanskrit words which are widely used in Myanmar. We have collected other pos-
sible syllables from the Myanmar-English dictionary(MLC, 2002). Texts collected from the Internet show lack of standard typing sequences. There are several possible typing sequences and corresponding internal representations for a given syllable. We include all of these possible variants in our list. Now we have over $\mathbf{4 5 5 0}$ syllables.

| Bigram bisyllables | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Trigram } \\ & \text { 3-syllables } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 4-gram } \\ & \text { 4-syllables } \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ఆథ઼วัธ <br> lantern <br> [hpan ein] | ฯ§̊จจे <br> with a big sound <br> [boun: ga ne:] | Sosimmm <br> whole-heartedly <br> [hni ' hni ' ka ga] |
|  <br> glassware <br> [hpan tha:] | 68.9 థे effortlessly [swei. ga ne:] |  outstanding [htu: htu: ke: ke:] |
| mథీడoうč: <br> bank of lake <br> [kan saun:] | 600 c ®.à̀ fuming with rage [htaun: ga ne:] |  many,much [mja: mja: sa: za:] |

Table 3: Examples of Collected N -grams

| No. of syllables | No of words | Example |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1 | 4550 | ธm์: |
|  |  | Good (Adj) |
|  |  | [kaun:] |
| 2 | 59964 | O®\% |
|  |  | Butterfly, Soul (N) |
|  |  | [lei ' pja ] |
| 3 | 170762 | Uర¢č:ธules |
|  |  | Window (N) |
|  |  | [b a din: bau ${ }^{\text { }}$ ] |
| 4 | 274775 |  |
|  |  | Domestic Product (N) |
|  |  | [pji dwin: htou ' koun] |
| 5 | 199682 |  |
|  |  | [hlja ${ }^{\prime}$ si ${ }^{\prime}$ ht a min: ou:] |
|  |  | Rice Cooker(N) |
| 6 | 99762 | 20po రipopo |
|  |  | Nurse(female) (N) |
|  |  | [thu na bju. hs a ja ma.] |
| 7 | 41499 |  |
|  |  | become friend (V) |
|  |  | [jin: hni: thwa: kya. pei to. thi] |
| 8 | 14149 | Uరక్ర600 |
|  |  | Union of Myanmar (N) |
|  |  | [pji daun zu. mj a ma nain gan to ] |
| 9 | 4986 |  |
|  |  | Natural Resources (N) |
|  |  | [than jan za ta. a jin: a mji ${ }^{\prime}$ ] |
| 10 | 1876 |  |
|  |  | be agitated or shaken(V) |
|  |  | [ chei ma kain mi. le ${ }^{\prime}$ ma kain mi. hpji ${ }^{\prime}$ thi] |

Table 4: Syllable Structure of Words

We have developed scripts in Perl to syllabify words using our list of syllables as a base and then generate n -gram statistics using Text::Ngrams which is developed by Vlado Keselj (Keselj, 2006). This program is quite fast and it took only a few minutes on a desktop PC in order to process 3.5 M bytes
of Myanmar texts. We have used "-type=word" option treating syllables as words. We had to modify this program a bit since Myanmar uses zero (as "(0) wa " letter) and the other special characters ( ",", "<", ">", ".", "\&", "[","]" etc.) which were being ignored in the original Text::Ngrams software. We collect all possible words which is composed of n-grams of syllables up to 5 -grams. Table 1 shows some words which are collected through ngram analysis. Almost all monograms are meaningful words. Many bi-grams are also valid words and as we move towards longer n-grams, we generally get less and less number of valid words. See Table 3. Further, frequency of occurrence of these n-grams is a useful clue. See Table 4.

By analyzing the morphological structure of words we will be able to analyze inflected and derived word forms. A set of morphemes and morphological forms have been collected from (MLC, 2005) and (Judson, 1842) . See Table 5. For example, the four-syllable word in Table 3 is an adverb
 from the verb " $\propto_{\imath}: m "$. See Table 3.

Statistical construction of machine readable dictionaries has many advantages. New words which appear from time to time such as Internet, names of medicines, can also be detected. Compounds words also can be seen. Common names such as names of persons, cities, committees etc. can be also mined. Once sufficient data is available, statistical analysis can be carried and techniques such as mutual information and maximum entropy can be used to hypothesize possible words.

### 4.4 Words from Dictionaries

Collecting words using the above three mentioned methods has still not covered all the valid words in our corpus. We have got only 150,000 words. Words collected from n-grams needs exhaustive human effort to pick the valid words. We have therefore collected words from two on-line dictionaries - the English-English-Myanmar (Student's Dictionary) (stu, 2000), English-Myanmar Dictionary (EMd, ) and from two e-books - FrenchMyanmar(damma sami, 2004), and Myanmar Orthography (MLC, 2003). Fortunately, these texts can be transformed into winninnwa font. We have

| basic unit 1 syllable | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{B} \\ (\text { Verb })= \\ \mathrm{A}+\ldots \mathrm{J} \\ \hline \end{gathered}$ |  | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{D} \\ (\text { Negative })= \\ \theta+\mathrm{A}+\mathrm{r}_{\mathfrak{n}}: \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \mathrm{E} \\ (\text { Noun })= \end{gathered}$ $\mathrm{A}+\mathrm{g}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| бməट： $[\mathrm{kaun}:]$ good（Adj） | ตmఁఁఃుల్ర <br> ［kaun：thi］ is good | з๘m๐č： ［a kaun：］ good | Not good | 6mox： ［kaun：mhu．］ good deeds |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { 2ి: } \\ {[\text { hso:] }} \\ \operatorname{bad}(A d j) \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { ฉo:up } \\ & \text { [hso: thi] } \\ & \text { is bad } \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { зэฉั: } \\ {\left[\begin{array}{c} \text { a hso: } \\ \text { bad } \end{array}\right]} \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { งฉฉఃวన: } \\ \text { [ma. hso: bu:] } \\ \text { Not bad } \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \text { ఖั: } \% \\ \text { [hso: mhu.] } \\ \text { Bad Deeds } \end{gathered}$ |
| ธ甲¢： ［jaun：］ sell（Verb） | ธొలఁః：uఇీ ［jaun：thi］ sell | зьๆрс： ［a jaun：］ sale |  | $\begin{gathered} \text { فopर्ध } \\ \text { [jaun: mhu.] } \\ \text { sale } \end{gathered}$ |
| $\begin{gathered} 69 \% \\ \text { [jei:] } \\ \text { write(Verb) } \end{gathered}$ | ธุโวన์ ［jei：thi］ write | $\begin{gathered} \text { 3ヶ69\% } \\ \text { [a jei:] } \\ \text { writing } \end{gathered}$ | ［ma．jei：bu：］ do not write | $\left.\begin{array}{c}\text { бๆ\％} \% \\ \text {［jei：mhu．］} \\ \text { writing }\end{array}\right]$ |
| $\begin{gathered} \text { 6[00 } \\ \text { [pjo:] } \\ \text { talk,speak(Verb) } \end{gathered}$ |  ［pjo：thi］ talk，speak | з๔〔్ర <br> ［a pjo：］ <br> talk，speech |  <br> ［ma．pjo：bu：］ not talk，speak | $\begin{gathered} \text { Gog } \\ \text { [pjo: mhu.] } \\ \text { talking } \end{gathered}$ |

Table 5：Example patterns of Myanmar Morphological Analysis
written Perl scripts to convert to the standard font． Myanmar Spelling Bible lists only lemma（root words）．We have suffixed some frequently used mor－ phological forms to these root words．

There are lots of valid words which are not de－ scribed in published dictionaries．The entries of words in the Myanmar－English dictionary which is produced by the Department of the Myanmar Lan－ guage Commission are mainly words of the com－ mon Myanmar vocabulary．Most of the compound words have been omitted in the dictionary（MLC， 2002）．This can be seen in the preface and guide to the dictionary of the Myanmar－English dictio－ nary produced by Department of the Myanmar Lan－ guage Commission，Ministry of Education．4－ syllables words like＂$\propto_{R}: \propto_{\Lambda}: \infty \oint: \infty \oint: ~ "[h t u: ~ h t u: ~$ zan：zan：］（strange），＂о̊：๐ロ：ゥ̀̀̀＂［htu：htu：ke：
 gja：］（different）（see Table 3）are not listed in dictio－ nary although we usually use those words in every day life．

With all this，we have been able to collect a total of about 800,000 words．As we have collected words from various sources and techniques，we believe we have fairly good data for further work．

| On screen | セั： | शْ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | セo： | 饣ั |
| In ascii | MuD： | udk |
|  | BuD： | ukd |

Table 6：Syllables with different typing sequences

## 5 Syllabification and Word Segmentation

Since dictionaries and other lexical resources are not yet widely available in electronic form for Myanmar language，we have collected 4550 possible syllables including those used in Pali and foreign words such
 quences and corresponding internal representations， and from the 800,000 strong Myanmar word－list we have built．With the help of these stored syllables and word lists，we have carried out syllabification and word segmentation as described below．Many researchers have used longest string matching（An－ gell et al．，1983），（Ari et al．，2001）and we follow the same approach．

The first step in building a word hypothesizer is syllabification of the input text by looking up sylla－ ble lists．In the second step，we exploit lists of words （viewed as n－grams at syllable level）for word seg－ mentation from left to right．

## 5．1 Syllabification

As an initial attempt we use longest string matching alone for Myanmar text syllabification．Examples are shown in Table 7.

Pseudo code Here we go from left－to－right in a greedy manner：

[^1]```
    pos }\leftarrow
    while (length > 0) do
        for }j=10..1 do
        for-each syllable in }\mp@subsup{N}{j}{}\mathrm{ do
            if string-match sentence(pos, pos }+j\mathrm{ ) with syllable
                        Syllable found. Mark syllable
                    pos \leftarrowpos +j
                    length }\leftarrow\mathrm{ length }-
                    End if
                End for
            End for
        End while
Print syllabified string
End for
}
```

We have evaluated our syllables list on a collection of 11 short novels entitled "Orchestra" ๖-
 (Ye, 1997) which includes 2,728 sentences spread over 259 pages including a total of 70,384 syllables. These texts were syllabified using the longest matching algorithm over our syllable list and we observed that only $0.04 \%$ of the actual syllables were not detected. The Table 6 shows that different typing sequences of syllables were also detected. Here are some examples of failure: $\varrho_{\imath} \approx s:[r k d C f ;]$ and \%ops:[rkdvf;] which are seldom used in text. The typing sequence is also wrong. Failures are generally traced to

- differing combinations of writing sequences
- loan words borrowed from foreign languages
- rarely used syllables not listed in our list


### 5.2 Word Segmentation

We have carried out tokenization with longest syllable word matching using our 800,000 strong stored word list. This word list has been built from available sources such as dictionaries, through the application of morphological rules, and by generating syllables $n$-grams and manually checking. An example sentence and its segmentation is given in Table 8.

Load the set of words from word-file
for-each word do
$i \leftarrow$ syllabification(word);
Store all words of syllable length $i$ in $N_{i}$ where $i=10 . .1$
End for

Load the sentences to be processed from sentence-file
for-each sentence do
length $\leftarrow$ syllabification(sentence);
\#length of the sentence in terms of syllables
pos $\leftarrow 0$
while (length $>0$ ) do

```
        for j=10..1 do
            for-each word in }\mp@subsup{N}{j}{}\mathrm{ do
        if string-match sentence(pos,pos +j) with word
                word found. Mark word
                pos }\leftarrowpos+
                length }\leftarrow\mathrm{ length }-
            End if
        End for
            End for
    End while
Print tokenized string
End for
```


## 6 Evaluation and Observations

We have segmented 5000 sentences including a total of ( 35049 words) with our programs and manually checked for evaluating the performance. These sentences are from part of the English-Myanmar parallel corpus being developed by us (Htay et al., 2006). The program recognized 34943 words of which 34633 words were correct, thus giving us a Recall of $98.81 \%$ and a Precision of $99.11 \%$. The F-Measure is $98.95 \%$. The algorithm suffers in accuracy in two ways:

Out-of-vocabulary Words: Segmentation error can occur when the words are not listed in dictionary. No lexicon contains every possible word of a language. There always exist out-of-vocabulary words such as new derived words, new compounds words, morphological variations of existing words and technical words (Park, 2002). In order to check the effect of out-of-vocabulary words, we took a new set of 1000 sentences ( 7343 words). We have checked manually and noticed 329 new words, that is about $4 \%$ of the words are not found in our list, giving us a coverage of about $96 \%$.

## Limitations of left-to-right processing:

Segmentation errors can also occur due to the limitations of the left-to-right processing. See the example 1 in Table 9. The algorithm suffers most in recognizing the sentences which have the word $H e{ }_{\mathrm{ou}}[\mathrm{thu}]$ followed by a negative verb starting with the particle $\odot[m a$.$] .$ The program wrongly segments she as he. Our text collection obtains from various sources and the word "she" is used as modern novels and Internet text. Therefore, our

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| aumfzDaomuf\&if;tefwDESihftvyovyajymaecJhonf |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 ms | $\stackrel{8}{8}$ | 603 ¢ | ๆ¢: | $3{ }^{\text {¢ }}$ | ¢ั | ¢¢ ¢¢ | з | $\sim$ | $\bigcirc$ | 20 | $\sim$ | 0 | 600 | ${ }_{6}{ }^{4}$ | à | 2బ్ర |
| aumf | zD | aomuf | \&if; | tef | wD | ESihf | t | v | y | 0 | v | y | ajym | ae | cJh | onf |
| [ko] | [hpi] | [thau'] | [jin:] | [an] | [ti] | [hnin.] | [a] | [1a] | [pa.] | [tha.] | [la] | [pa.] | [pjo] | [nei] | [khe.] | [thi] |
| Having his coffee, he chit-chat with the lady. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Table 7: Example syllabification

|  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 2uన | उセ్రీ:um̧ | ¢ั |  |
| [kyaung: aop hsa ya kyi:] | [thi] | [a kyan: phak mhu] | [ko] | [sak sop thi] |
| The headmaster |  | violence |  | abhors |
| $\mathbf{N}_{\text {subj }}$ | Particle | $\mathrm{N}_{\text {obj }}$ | Particle | $\mathrm{V}_{\text {present }}$ |

Table 8: A sentence being segmented into words
word list contains she or o. This problem can be solved by standardization. Myanmar Language Commission (MLC, 1993) has advised that the words "she" and "he" should be written only as $y_{i}$ and the word ${ }_{n} \otimes$ representing a feminine pronoun should not be used. For example 2 in Table 9, the text зaว:60:دొన్ర can be segmented into two ways. 1) ऊəః:60:دున్ర [a: pei: thi] which means "encourage" and 2) ъః: [particle for indicating dative case] and $60: د \mathfrak{\Omega}$ give [pei: thi]. Because of greedy search from left to right, our algorithm will always segment as अว:ธu:دయर no matter what the context is.

In order to solve these problems, we are plan to use machine learning techniques which 1) can also detect real words dynamically (Park, 2002) while we are segmenting the words and 2 ) correct the greedy cut from left to right using frequencies of the words from the training samples.

Although our work presented here is for Myanmar, we believe that the basic ideas can be applied to any script which is primarily syllabic in nature.

## 7 Conclusions

Since words are not uniformly delimited by spaces in Myanmar script, segmenting sentences into words is an important task for Myanmar NLP. In this paper we have described the need and possible techniques for segmentation in Myanmar script. In particular, we have used a combination of stored lists, suffix removal, morphological analysis and syllable level n-grams to hypothesize valid words with about $99 \%$ accuracy. Necessary scripts have been written in Perl. Over the last few years, we have col-
lected monolingual text corpora totalling to about 2,141,496 sentences and English-Myanmar parallel corpora amounting to about 80,000 sentences and sentence fragments, aligned at sentence and word levels. We have also built a list of 1216 stop words, 4550 syllables and 800,000 words from a variety of sources including our own corpora. We have used fairly simple and intuitive methods not requiring deep linguistic insights or sophisticated statistical inference. With this initial work, we now plan to apply a variety of machine learning techniques. We hope this work will help to accelerate work in Myanmar language and larger lexical resources will be developed soon.

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| -0:O9\% |  | $)_{8}{ }^{\text {c }}$ | $\mathrm{zi}^{\circ}$ | Oloç̣วగ: |  |
| [damja. hmu.] |  | [twin] | [thu ma.] | [pa wun khe. bu;] |  |
| robbery |  | in | she | did not involve |  |
| N |  | Particle | $\mathrm{N}_{\text {subj }}$ | $\mathrm{V}_{\text {pastneg }}$ |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ¢88 |  | ¢ 0 ¢ ${ }^{\text {¢ }}$ | ¢ं | Mnosiol: | 33:6u:ux |
| [mi. mi.] | [ma. lou chin tho:] | [ta wun] | [gou] | [thu daba:] | [a: pei: thi] |
| I,myself | don't want | duty,responsibility |  | others | encourage |
| $\mathrm{N}_{\text {subj }}$ | $\mathrm{V}_{\text {neg }}$ | $\mathrm{N}_{\text {obj1 }}$ | Particle | $\mathrm{N}_{\text {obj } 2}$ | V |

Table 9: Analysis of Over-Segmentation

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[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burmese_language

[^1]:    sub syllabification $\{$
    Load the set of syllables from syllable－file
    Load the sentences to be processed from sentence－file
    Store all syllables of length $j$ in $N_{j}$ where $j=10 . .1$
    for－each sentence do
    length $\leftarrow$ length of the sentence

