LLM-assisted Data Quality Improvement: SRL as a Case Study

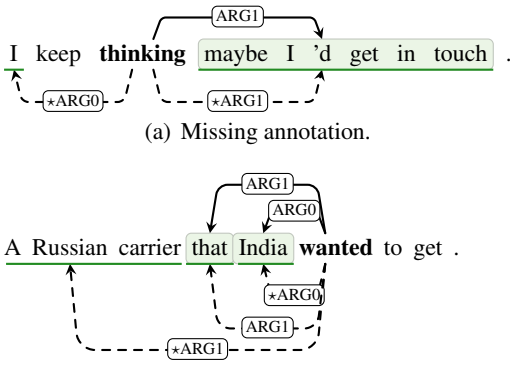
Anonymous ACL submission

Abstract

Although large language models (LLMs) perform much worse than traditional supervised models on the semantic role labeling (SRL) task, our closer investigation reveals two important findings. First, the existing labeled SRL data is substantially flawed, i.e., of unsatisfactory quality. Second, LLMs can serve as an effective tool for detecting annotation errors and deciding which labels require human review, from the perspective of minimizing human effort. This paper proposes an LLM-assisted data quality improvement approach, and applies it to two SRL evaluation datasets from two different domains. With our approach, human annotators need to review only 11% of the originally annotated arguments flagged for manual inspection, among which 40% are truly erroneous. Meanwhile, our approach suggests 20% new arguments potentially missed in the original labels for human review, among which 60% are indeed missing. In total, our approach locates and corrects 21% errors in the two evaluation datasets. Experiments show that both traditional supervised models and LLMs performs much better on the revised evaluation datasets.

1 Introduction

Recently, large language models (LLMs) have shown remarkable generalization across various NLP tasks under the prompt-based framework, such as reasoning (Wei et al., 2022; Kojima et al., 2022), machine translation (Raunak et al., 2023) and text classification (Ouyang et al., 2022; Gilardi et al., 2023). The prompt-based framework takes natural language instructions, zero- or few-shot examples, and task-specific problems as input prompts, enabling LLMs to fulfill these prompts without additional fine-tuning. However, to the best of our knowledge, such prompt-based methods perform much worse than traditional supervised methods on linguistics-intense structural inference tasks,



(a) Missing annotation.

(b) Multiple valid spans.

Figure 1: Examples of annotation quality issues in the original SRL test set. **Bold** words denote predicates; boxes and underlined text indicate argument spans; and labels (e.g., ARG0, ARG1) denote semantic roles. Solid arrows represent *original gold annotations* (above) , while dashed arrows indicate *corrected annotations* (below). The symbol ⋆ marks LLM-generated arguments.

such as Semantic Role Labeling (SRL) and syntactic parsing (Cheng et al., 2024; Li et al., 2025; Zhang et al., 2025; Bai et al., 2025).

This work focuses on SRL, a fundamental NLP task that aims to identify the predicate-argument structure of a sentence (Pradhan et al., 2005, 2012; He et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2022). Notably, Cheng et al. (2024) reported that the prompt-based ChatGPT (Achiam et al., 2023) achieves an F1 score of only 38.6% on the CoNLL-2012 SRL benchmark (Pradhan et al., 2012), whereas the traditional MRC-SRL model (Wang et al., 2022) achieves 88.3%. Motivated by this discrepancy, we use SRL as a case study to investigate the performance and challenges of prompt-based LLMs on such tasks.

We reimplemented the work of Cheng et al. (2024) by employing the more sophisticated o1-mini for argument generation. Despite achieving an F1 score of 55.3%, its performance remains substantially inferior to that of traditional supervised models. Upon closer inspection of the LLM out-

puts, we observed that some predictions, though diverging from gold annotations, are semantically correct. As shown in Figure 1(a), the LLM correctly identifies "*I*" as the ARG0 of "*thinking*", while the gold annotation misses this argument. Further analysis of the discrepancies reveals that a significant proportion of these cases stem from errors in the gold annotations and limitations in current annotation guidelines, which overlook multiple valid spans for a single role. For instance, in Figure 1(b), the LLM generates a valid span "*A Russian carrier*" for the ARG1, whereas the gold annotation is simply "*that*". Consequently, valid LLM generations that recover missing annotations or provide alternative valid spans are misleadingly penalized as false negatives, distorting the assessment of LLM capabilities. Therefore, refining datasets and annotation guidelines is imperative for accurately evaluating LLMs in SRL and advancing the field.

Inspired by our finding that LLMs effectively capture semantic structures, we propose an LLM-assisted data quality improvement approach. First, we employ an LLM to generate candidate spans for each semantic role, supplementing gold annotations by recovering missing roles and providing other valid spans for existing roles. Second, we use an LLM to assess the validity of each predicate-argument pair, where arguments are drawn from gold annotations, traditional supervised model predictions, and LLM generations. Finally, human review is prioritized for gold annotations flagged as invalid and for newly collected spans judged as valid. This strategy exhibits high efficiency: reviewing only 11% of the originally annotated arguments corrects 40% of erroneous labels, and suggesting an additional 20% of argument spans achieves a validity rate of 60%.

In summary, the main contributions of our work are as follows:

- We conduct the first systematic analysis of quality issues in mainstream SRL benchmarks. Accordingly, we refine annotation guidelines to accommodate multiple valid spans and optional annotations, and correct two SRL evaluation datasets from two different domains[1].
- We propose a simple yet effective data optimization framework that achieves high data quality through reduced inspection, locating and correcting 21% of the errors in the two evaluation datasets.
- On the revised test set, both traditional supervised methods and LLM-based approaches show significant performance improvements and robust cross-domain generalization, indicating that annotation deficiencies in existing benchmarks have underestimated model capabilities.

[1]Our code, revised dataset, and corresponding evaluation protocols will be publicly available at `github.com` for research purposes.

2 Related Work

2.1 SRL Modeling

Traditional supervised SRL methods generally fall into three categories: **transition-based**, **graph-based**, and **generative** methods. Transition-based methods cast SRL as an incremental decoding process, employing a sequence of actions to construct predicate-argument structures with explicit structural constraints (Fernández-González and Gómez-Rodríguez, 2020; Fei et al., 2021). Graph-based methods model the structured dependencies between predicates and arguments, covering both end-to-end (He et al., 2018; Cai et al., 2018; Fei et al., 2020) and given-predicate settings (He et al., 2017; Zhou et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022). Generative methods reformulate SRL as a sequence-to-sequence generation task (Daza and Frank, 2018; Rexhina Blloshmi, 2021).

Recent studies have explored the application of LLMs to SRL through prompt-based generation. Cheng et al. (2024) proposed Prompt-SRL, a method that outperforms supervised models in the same few-shot settings (e.g., 3-shot) but still lags behind traditional models trained on full datasets. Li et al. (2025) further employed retrieval-augmented generation and self-correction to annotate predicate-argument pairs for fine-tuning an LLM, achieving state-of-the-art performance in end-to-end settings and matching traditional methods in given-predicate settings.

Despite these advances, existing studies have primarily focused on improving model performance through various strategies, while paying little attention to data quality, particularly the quality of evaluation benchmarks, where erroneous annotations can underestimate model capabilities.

2.2 Annotation Error Detection Methods

Recent studies have shown that annotation errors are pervasive in widely used NLP benchmarks (Northcutt et al., 2021). Existing annota-

Issue Type	Sentence	Role:Desc.	Span Annotation Type		
			Original	LLM-G	Corrected
Boundary	And I *got* a card from.	ARG2:giver	"from" → ✗	None	None
Missing	Among other things, the US has worked with Bangladesh to *establish* ...	ARG0:agent	None	"the US" → ✓	"the US" and "Bangladesh"
Multiple valid spans	I think there are a number of other measures that *indicate* how well somebody's doing running a company ...	ARG0:indicator	"of other measures" → ✗	"a number of other measures" → ✓	"other measures" or "a number of other measures"
Optional	and she's telling me about you *know* her sister's wedding.	ARG0:knower	"you" → ✓	"you" → ✓	"you" (optional)

Table 1: Examples of four types of annotation quality issues. Each example consists of a sentence, a predicate (highlighted in red italics), and a role label along with its description (Role: Desc.). "Original" denotes gold annotations, "LLM-G" denotes the argument spans generated by an LLM, and "Corrected" denotes the revised annotations. The symbols ✓/✗indicate whether the spans are judged as correct by an LLM.

tion error detection (AED) work have mainly focused on tasks such as part-of-speech tagging (Liu et al., 2025) and named entity recognition (Reiss et al., 2020), while SRL has received comparatively limited attention. The most relevant prior work for SRL, Dickinson and Lee (2008), introduces a variation-based method for detecting local predicate-argument inconsistencies but does not address dataset-level issues. This limitation is further reflected in Klie et al. (2023), who systematically evaluate 18 AED methods across text classification, token labeling, and span labeling, and observe that structured semantic tasks such as SRL remain underexplored.

To bridge this gap, we conduct a thorough investigation into data quality issues in SRL and demonstrate that rectifying annotation errors leads to more reliable evaluation and greater performance gains across a range of architectures.

3 An Analysis of Annotation Quality Issues in SRL Test Sets

To investigate the inferior performance of LLMs compared to traditional supervised models on SRL, we employed an LLM to generate predicate-argument structures for sampled instances from CoNLL-2012 (Pradhan et al., 2012) and conducted a fine-grained error analysis. Specifically, given a tuple of {*sentence, predicate, roles, role descriptions*[2]}, the LLM was prompted to extract a corresponding argument span from the sentence for each role. The prompt used to guide this extraction process is shown in Figure 4 (Appendix A). Then we performed string matching to compare the LLM-generated span against the gold annotated span for each predicate-role pair. In cases of discrepancy, two analysts independently labeled the underlying causes, such as LLM hallucination, semantic misunderstanding by the LLM, or errors in original gold annotations. Our analysis of 100 such cases revealed that nearly half of the LLM-generated outputs were reasonable, primarily attributable to errors or omissions in the original annotations.

We subsequently categorized these annotation quality issues into four primary types, with corresponding examples shown in Table 1 (see Table 4 in Appendix B for additional examples):

- **Boundary Error**: this error type refers to instances where an annotated argument exhibits imprecise span boundaries or is spurious (i.e., the argument is non-existent).
- **Missing Annotation**: this error type refers to instances where a valid argument span exists in the sentence but was omitted from the gold annotations.
- **Multiple Valid Spans**: this category refers to cases where multiple valid spans exist for a role in a sentence, but the gold annotations include only one of them.
- **Optional Annotation**: this category refers to instances where, for non-essential predicates (e.g., colloquial parentheticals), incomprehensible sentences, or ambiguous role descriptions, the annotation of corresponding argu-

[2]The *role description* is derived from the frame file of PropBank (https://propbank.github.io/v3.4.0/frames), which defines the frames of the predicates and provides descriptions for their corresponding core arguments.

Data Source	LLM-J	Valid Rate (%)
Golden data	Valid	93.3–100
	Invalid	60.0
Collected new data	Valid	43.3–66.7
	Invalid	6.7

Table 2: Manual spot-check results of LLM judgments (LLM-J) on gold and newly collected data. *Valid Rate* denotes the proportion of valid data verified by human annotators, reported as a range across the two test sets.

ments is often inconsistent in current datasets. Consequently, such arguments should be designated as optional.

The first two types correspond to conventional annotation errors, while the latter two types mainly stem from limitations in the current annotation guidelines, as they overlook scenarios involving multiple valid spans for a single role or inherently optional annotation decisions.

Notably, such data quality issues not only skew the evaluation of LLMs' capability on SRL but also hinder progress in the field of SRL by providing unreliable signals for model comparison and development. This motivates us to revise test sets and refine the corresponding annotation guidelines.

4 Our Method

4.1 Exploring LLM Assistance in SRL Annotation

Our prior analysis in Section 3 demonstrates that LLMs are indeed capable of capturing structured semantics. Building on this insight, we further investigate their potential to assist in the manual annotation process and conduct an empirical study to assess their effectiveness.

First, we employed LLMs to generate argument spans for missing roles and alternative valid spans for existing roles (i.e., "*Missing Annotation*" and "*Multiple Valid Spans*" in Table 1), serving as a supplement to gold annotations. Specifically, given the tuple of {*sentence, predicate, role, role description*}, the LLM generated an argument span for each semantic role using the prompt shown in Figure 5 (Appendix A). Human evaluation on 50 sampled instances shows that by aggregating the gold annotations, predictions from traditional supervised models, and the LLM-generated outputs, the recall of valid spans across all predicate-role pairs reaches 97.9%, with LLM-generated outputs contributing an additional 40.7% to the newly collected arguments. These results indicate that LLMs can effectively supplement missing annotations or spans in the gold annotations.

Second, to handle large-scale data requiring manual verification, we employed LLMs to identify samples for manual review and annotation, i.e., erroneous instances in gold annotations and valid arguments in newly collected data. Specifically, given a tuple of {*sentence, predicate, role description, argument span*}, we prompted the LLM to assess the validity of the predicate-argument pair via the prompt in Figure 6 (Appendix A). Subsequently, we randomly sampled instances from both the valid and invalid sets to manually evaluate the actual proportion of valid data.

For the gold annotations, among instances deemed valid by the LLM, we conducted random spot checks on 30 samples from each of the two test sets. The proportion of valid spans in one set was 93.3% (reflecting the accuracy of gold annotations), with 6.7% of cases exhibiting multiple valid spans; conversely, the proportion in the other set was 100%, with no multiple spans observed. In contrast, for instances classified as invalid by the LLM, the proportion of valid spans in the randomly spot-checked subsets of both test sets was approximately 60%.

For the newly collected arguments, we randomly sampled 30 instances from each of the two sets judged as valid by the LLM, revealing validity rates of 43.3% and 66.7%, respectively. Conversely, among 30 randomly sampled instances judged as invalid by the LLM from the same two sets, the proportions of valid data were only 6.7% in both sets.

The manual spot-check results are detailed in Table 2, demonstrating the potential of leveraging LLMs to uncover annotation errors in gold data and identify valid arguments in new data.

Therefore, to improve efficiency and reduce manual workload in dataset correction, we propose an LLM-assisted data optimization approach. By leveraging LLMs for span generation and candidate data selection, this approach effectively reduces manual annotation costs while ensuring high precision and recall in role annotation.

4.2 Data Processing and Annotation Workflow

The overall workflow is illustrated in Figure 2. It consists of two main pipelines: an error correction

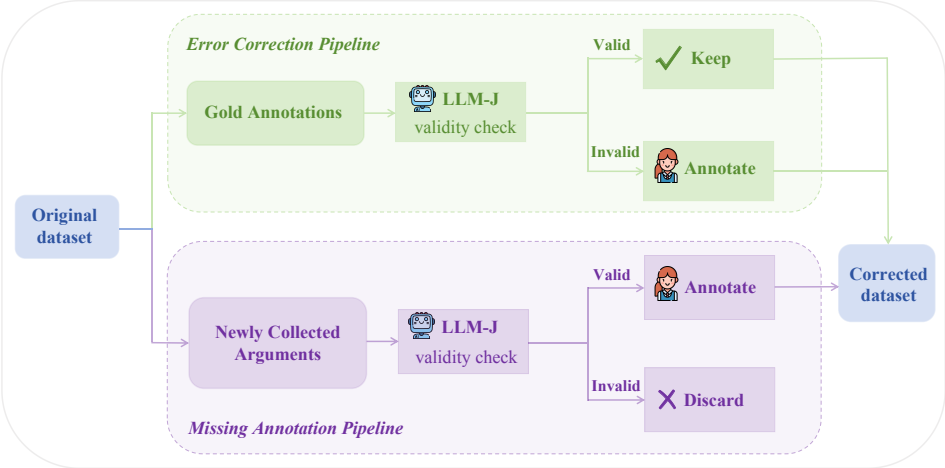


Figure 2: Data processing and annotation workflow. The *Error Correction Pipeline* identifies and corrects erroneous annotations in the original test set; the *Missing Annotation Pipeline* identifies and completes missing annotations in the gold annotations. *LLM-J* denotes the LLM's judgement, which is detailed in Section 4.1.

pipeline designed to revise existing gold annotations, and a missing annotation pipeline aimed at collecting and verifying additional valid predicate-argument pairs. The following paragraphs provide a detailed introduction of each component.

Original Dataset We curated data from the CoNLL-2012 dataset (Pradhan et al., 2012), a standard benchmark for span-based SRL. To assess cross-domain performance, we selected the BN (broadcast news) and TC (telephone conversation) subsets as near- and far-domain test sets. We then randomly sampled 500 sentences from each subset, excluding those without predicates or containing only *be* verbs. Furthermore, we retained only core arguments and excluded non-core arguments, as they often lack concrete semantics or have ambiguous definitions, resulting in low annotation consistency[3] and posing challenges for non-linguists (He et al., 2015; Cheng et al., 2024).

Error Correction Pipeline This pipeline is designed to identify and correct erroneous instances in gold annotations. Specifically, an LLM is prompted to assess the validity of each predicate-argument pair in the gold annotations. Based on the pilot validation in Table 2, gold annotations judged valid by LLM-J are retained as low-priority cases for manual revision and directly incorporated into the corrected test set, while those judged invalid are sent to human annotators for correction. The corrected outputs are then integrated into the revised test set.

Missing Annotation Pipeline We employ a dual strategy to identify potentially missing arguments and other valid spans for each predicate-role pair: aggregating predictions from multiple traditional supervised models and collecting generations from LLMs, subsequently filtering out spans already present in the gold annotations. For these newly collected predicate-argument pairs, an LLM is further employed to evaluate the validity of each pair. Guided by the pilot validation results in Table 2, we exclude candidates deemed invalid by LLM-J from manual verification to reduce annotation costs, while forwarding those classified as valid to human annotators for verification and correction. The verified arguments are then incorporated into the revised test set.

Corrected Dataset The final revised test set comprises three components: retained gold annotations, human-corrected gold annotations and newly collected arguments verified through manual review.

4.3 Refinement of Annotation Guidelines

Motivated by the annotation quality issues identified in Section 3, we refined the annotation guidelines to address two scenarios not adequately covered by the original protocols: (i) the existence of multiple valid spans for a single role, and (ii) the optionality of annotations in cases where it is ambiguous whether an argument should be annotated.

[3] He et al. (2015) proposed a QA-based annotation method, and their evaluation of non-core arguments (e.g., *adverbial modifiers*, *extent*) against the gold-standard CoNLL-2009 yielded a precision of 59.9% and a recall of 63.6%.

Multiple Valid Spans Our analysis revealed that a single argument may correspond to multiple valid spans in a sentence. For instance, in the sentence "*Barak , who has been forced to call national elections, offered to recognize a Palestinian state*", the "*entity offering* " for the predicate "*offered*" could reasonably be annotated as either "*Barak*" or the full noun phrase "*Barak, who has been forced to call national elections*". This inconsistency frequently arises concerning the inclusion of modifiers, restrictive relative clauses, and appositives. Given that the existing dataset exhibits inconsistent annotations for such cases and the original guidelines lack clear specifications regarding their inclusion, we revise the guidelines to annotate all semantically valid spans for a role.

Optional Annotation We identify three specific cases where the annotation is labeled as optional:

- **Ambiguous role definition.** Consider the predicate "*based*" in the sentence "*All this happening about 90 minutes ago based on the wire reports we 're getting here*". The description for the role "ARG1" is "*decision, whole*", and the gold annotation is "*All this happening about 90 minutes ago*". Due to the ambiguity of the role description and the resulting low inter-annotator agreement, this role is annotated as optional.
- **Ungrammatical or incomprehensibility sentence.** For example, in the sentence "*And there were having a sale on the wine dad wanted*", the "*owner*" for the predicate "*having*" is annotated as "*there*" in the gold annotations. Since the sentence contains a grammatical error (likely a typo), arguments in such contexts should ideally be left unannotated, and we labeled them as optional.
- **Colloquial parentheticals.** For instance, in the utterance "*and she 's telling me about you know her sister 's wedding*", the predicate "*know*" functions as a colloquial parenthetical, rendering its semantic roles less critical. So these roles are annotated as optional.

Accordingly, we revise the evaluation metric as follows: (1) for roles with multiple valid spans, a prediction is considered correct if it matches any of the ground truth annotations; and (2) for optional annotations, a match between the prediction and the ground truth is counted as correct, while the absence of a prediction does not penalize the model's recall. The detailed evaluation strategy is presented in Algorithm 1.

Algorithm 1 Core Computation for Precision, Recall, and F1 Metrics on the Revised Set.

```
Metrics ← Dict{TP : 0, FP : 0, FN : 0}
AllRoles ← Gold.roles ∪ Pred.roles
for role ∈ AllRoles do
    GoldSpans ← Gold.roles.spans
    PredSpan ← Pred.roles.spans
    if GoldSpans ≠ ∅ AND PredSpan ≠ ∅ then
        ▷ A prediction is considered correct if it matches a candidate
        if PredSpan ∈ GoldSpans then
            Metrics[role][TP] += 1
        else
            Metrics[role][FP] += 1
            Metrics[role][FN] += 1
        end if
    else if GoldSpans ≠ ∅ then
        ▷ If the role is optional, failing to identify it does not penalize recall
        if role is not Optional then
            Metrics[role][FN] += 1
        end if
    else if PredSpan ≠ ∅ then
        Metrics[role][FP] += 1
    end if
end for
```

4.4 Manual Annotation Mechanism

For the annotation process, we employed three annotators with expertise in syntactic and semantic parsing, all of whom possessed a solid understanding of English and the SRL task. First, the annotators were provided with a brief tutorial and a representative set of sample annotations drawn from the frame files. Then, given a predicate-role pair and the corresponding context, the annotators were asked to check its validity, revise the provided span, and identify additional valid spans. The annotation interface is shown in Figure 7 (Appendix C). On average, verifying and revising a predicate-role pair required approximately 2 minutes for the TC set and 6 minutes for the BN set, depending on sentence length and complexity.

During the review process, if the results from the three annotators were consistent, their output was adopted directly. In cases of discrepancy, a consensus discussion was convened involving all annotators and two additional reviewers to resolve

the differences. The average inter-annotator agreement rate was 78.7%.

4.5 Post-Correction Statistics

Figure 3 reports the rates of the three error types for the selected BN and TC subsets. The two subsets originally contain 2,132 and 1,844 argument spans, respectively. Based on LLM judgement, 11.2% and 11.0% of these spans were flagged for manual review, within which we corrected 40.6% and 39.2% of the label errors, respectively.

Additionally, among the newly collected spans (22.9% for BN and 17.5% for TC), 44.8% (BN) and 67.6% (TC) were confirmed as missing annotations, while 15.8% (BN) and 12.3% (TC) were confirmed as valid supplementary spans[4] for existing roles. Overall, approximately 60% of the newly collected spans are valid on average.

In total, we corrected 21.1% of errors in the BN set and 21.3% in the TC set, covering all three error types shown in Figure 3. Finally, the revised BN set contains 2,425 argument spans for 2,280 core roles, while the revised TC set contains 2,140 argument spans for 2,062 core roles.

5 Experiments

5.1 Experimental Setup

Datasets. To investigate cross-domain generalization, we conduct experiments on the CoNLL-12 English SRL benchmark (Pradhan et al., 2012), a multi-domain dataset encompassing seven genres: newswire (NW), broadcast news (BN), broadcast conversation (BC), magazine (MZ), telephone conversation (TC), web data(WB) or pivot text (PT) (Pradhan et al., 2013). In this study, models are trained on the NW domain and evaluated on the BN and TC domains. The BN domain exhibits stylistic similarity to NW, as both are characterized by relatively formal and well-structured text. In contrast, TC consists of conversational speech featuring colloquialisms and disfluencies, thereby representing a more substantial domain shift. This setup facilitates a systematic comparison of model behavior under near-domain and far-domain conditions.

All experiments in this work are conducted under the predicate-given setting, with a focus on the labeling of core arguments.

[4]Note that the multiple valid spans contributing to the rate in Figure 3 includes both model-generated spans and those added manually.

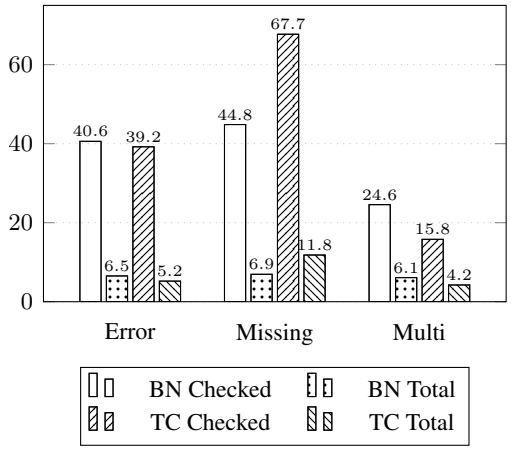


Figure 3: Error, missing, and multiple candidate rates (%) of the original annotations. Solid bars: rates over manually checked instances (*Checked*); hatched bars: rates over the entire dataset (*Total*).

Models. We evaluate both traditional supervised models and LLM-based models on the original and corresponding corrected test sets. For traditional supervised models, we assess two representative span-based methods: SemiCRF (Lin et al., 2021) and TreeCRF (Zhang et al., 2022), both of which are trained on NW training data. For LLM-based models, which operate in a training-free manner, we follow the methodology of Cheng et al. (2024) who prompted ChatGPT (Achiam et al., 2023) to generate all label-span pairs for a given predicate in a single pass, and we employ **o1-mini** as the generative LLM model.

Evaluation Metrics. We adopt standard span-level SRL metrics, namely Precision (P), Recall (R), and F1 score. To accommodate two specific annotation refinements, i.e., multiple valid spans and optional annotations, we have accordingly adapted the metric computation, as detailed in Algorithm 1.

5.2 Main Results

Table 3 details the Precision, Recall, and F1 scores for both traditional supervised models and the LLM-G model[5]. We observe that SemiCRF, TreeCRF, and LLM-G achieved F1 score improvements of 3.51, 3.11, and 4.13 on the BN set, and 7.39, 8.26, and 4.75 on the TC set, respectively.

[5]Preposition inclusion within role spans significantly impacts matching. For instance, regarding the predicate *questions* in the sentence "*We begin tonight with urgent questions for the government*", the gold annotation for the role "*entity asked*" is "*for the government*", whereas the model generates "*the government*". To resolve this, we relaxed matching criteria by ignoring initial prepositions and report results accordingly.

Model	Test Set	BN			TC		
		P	R	F1	P	R	F1
SemiCRF	Original	84.99	84.71	84.85	79.22	85.99	82.47
	Corrected	90.12	86.67	88.36	90.08	89.63	89.86
	Δ	*+5.13*	*+1.96*	*+3.51*	*+10.86*	*+3.64*	*+7.39*
TreeCRF	Original	85.81	87.38	86.59	79.17	87.34	83.05
	Corrected	90.60	88.82	**89.70**	91.02	91.60	**91.31**
	Δ	*+4.79*	*+1.44*	*+3.11*	*+11.85*	*+4.26*	*+8.26*
LLM-G	Original	61.55	69.84	65.44	62.06	76.46	68.51
	Corrected	66.27	73.23	69.57	68.66	78.51	73.26
	Δ	*+4.72*	*+3.39*	*+4.13*	*+6.60*	*+2.05*	*+4.75*

Table 3: Overall Precision (P), Recall (R), and F1 (%) on the original and corrected test sets for the BN and TC domains of CoNLL12. Δ denotes the performance gain achieved by correcting the test set.

These results indicate a consistent performance boost across both traditional and LLM models on the new test sets, implying that annotation errors in the original test sets constrained the models' capabilities. Then we discuss several key findings.

First, the improvement in model performance aligns with the proportion of error corrections in the dataset. Both traditional models and the LLM-based model exhibited greater improvements in precision compared to recall. For instance, on the BN set, SemiCRF, TreeCRF, and LLM-G achieved precision gains of 5.13, 4.79, and 4.72, respectively, versus recall gains of 1.96, 1.44, and 3.39. This disparity in improvement is largely attributable to the nature of annotation errors: while recall is primarily affected by boundary errors and multiple valid spans, precision is more sensitive to boundary errors and missing annotations (false negatives). As indicated in Figure 3, the proportions of annotation errors and missing annotations in two sets are higher than those of multiple valid spans, thereby resulting in more substantial gains in precision.

Second, correcting the test sets proved crucial for accurately evaluating the cross-domain performance of traditional supervised models. On the original test sets, models trained on the NW domain naturally performed better on the near-domain (BN) than on the far-domain (TC). However, on the revised test sets, this performance gap narrows, with the TC domain even surpassing BN. This suggests that the cross-domain generalization capability of traditional models is robust but was previously obscured by annotation errors. Specifically, in the original TC test set, the presence of colloquial expressions led to missing annotations for corresponding predicates. Consequently, correct predictions were treated as false negatives, artificially depressing the accuracy scores. On the corrected test data, performance on the TC set exceeds that of the BN set, primarily due to the relative simplicity of the TC data.

Finally, LLM-based methods exhibit insensitivity to domain variations. The LLM-G model demonstrated consistent improvement magnitudes across both test sets. This stability is primarily attributed to the training-free nature of LLMs and their reliance on direct prompting, which renders them inherently less susceptible to domain shifts compared to supervised approaches.

6 Conclusion

In this study, we conduct a systematic diagnosis of LLM performance on SRL and identify substantial annotation quality issues in existing SRL test sets. In particular, our manual inspection shows that nearly half of the discrepancies between LLM outputs and gold annotations stem from annotation quality issues, which can obscure the accurate evaluation of model capabilities.

To efficiently mitigate these data quality issues, we introduce a simple yet effective framework for data optimization. With this framework, human annotators correct 40% of erroneous labels by reviewing only 11% of the original gold annotations. Furthermore, our approach suggests an additional 20% of candidate arguments for missing roles and spans, of which 60% are confirmed as valid. Base on corrected test sets, our experiments show that both traditional supervised models and LLM-based generative models achieve notable performance improvements, with traditional models exhibiting robust cross-domain performance.

Limitations

First, our scope is currently limited to verifying and correcting core roles in the BN and TC sets, while the optimization of semantically distinct non-core roles is left for future work. Second, although the proposed LLM-assisted framework effectively reduces labor costs, approximately 6.7% of the data validated by the LLM still contains errors. Third, the LLM generation method used in this study is only one instance of applying LLMs to SRL and does not fully reflect their potential. Nevertheless, the insights from our analysis provide a solid foundation for future research.

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A LLM Prompts

LLM Prompt to Generate Argument for a Given Predicate

Give a sentence: <*sentence*>, a predicate: <*predicate*>. all possible argument roles and their descriptions: <{*role: description*}>, please label the arguments about predicate <*predicate*> of the sentence. Provide the answer in JSON format as follows: {<*predicate*>: {*role*: *argument*}}.

Figure 4: The prompt from Cheng et al. (2024).

LLM Prompt to Generate Span for a Given Predicate-Role

The sentence: <*sentence*>
The predicate: <*predicate*>
All possible argument roles and their descriptions: <{*role: description*}>
The annotation role and its description: <*role*>, <*role-des*>
Please label the argument from the sentence that represents <*role-des*> for predicate <*predicate*>. Provide the answer in JSON format as follows: {{*role*: *argument*}}.

Figure 5: The prompt used for LLMs to generate argument spans.

Figure 4 illustrates the prompt introduced by Cheng et al. (2024), which served as the reference model in our preliminary study (Section 3) and as the baseline for our LLM-based methods (Section 5). Figure 5 depicts the prompt designed to generate candidate spans for predicate-argument pairs, employed in Section 4.1 to supplement gold annotations. Finally, Figure 6 presents the prompt used for LLM-based judgment to assess the validity of predicate-argument pairs.

B Quality Issues in Gold Annotations

We provide additional examples to better illustrate the data quality issues, as shown in Table 4.

C Annotation Interface

Figure 7 shows the interface for human review and annotation, where annotators verify one predicate-argument pair at a time. As shown in the right sidebar, the interface displays instance details: **Index**, **Full Sentence**, **Predicate**, role **Label** (e.g., ARG1), **Argument Meaning** (i.e., role description), and candidate argument spans (listed under **Annotate Argument**). In the sentence view, tokens are indexed, the specific predicate is highlighted in *red*, and candidate spans are sourced from gold annotations and newly collected data.

The annotation workflow proceeds as follows: First, annotators perform a grammaticality check (*Sentence Check*); sentences deemed ungrammatical do not require further argument annotation. Next, annotators select valid spans from the provided candidates or manually add spans via *Custom Annotation*. For roles where annotation is optional, the annotator checks the *Optional Annotation* box, whereas the *No Argument* box is selected if no valid span exists. Finally, annotators click the *Submit* button to save the record to a local JSON file and advance to the next instance.

Additionally, the left sidebar facilitates manual saving and loading of annotations via dedicated buttons, while also displaying the annotation progress, including the total number of instances and the count of completed annotations.

D Experimental Implementation Details

D.1 Traditional Model Details

For TreeCRF, we directly used the open-source model from Zhang et al. (2022).

For our SemiCRF model for SRL, we adapt the network architecture described in Lin et al. (2021) with the following modifications. We used `bert-large-cased` as the pre-trained language model to encode the input sequence (a sentence and a given predicate). We encoded the given predicate by extracting its contextualized BERT representation and adding it to each token representation before span scoring. Then we applied two MLPs with a hidden size of 300 for span boundary prediction. Finally, a 300-dimensional biaffine scoring layer was applied to score candidate spans. In training, AdamW (Kingma, 2014) was used for optimization, with $\beta_1 = 0.9$, $\beta_2 = 0.9$, learning rate 2×10^{-5}, $\epsilon = 1 \times 10^{-12}$, and weight decay $\lambda = 0$. The model was trained for 80 epochs with early stopping (patience = 20).

D.2 Dataset Details

The traditional supervised models are trained on the NW domain, which comprises 15,288 sentences and 45,547 predicates. All models were evaluated on the original and revised test sets for both BN and TC. Each set contains 500 sentences, with 1,321 and 1,281 predicates in BN and TC, respectively. The revised BN test set contains 2,425 argument spans for 2,280 core roles, whereas the original set contains 2,132 argument spans for 2,132 core roles. Similarly, the revised TC test set contains 2,140 argument spans for 2,062 core roles, compared to 1,844 spans for 1,844 core roles in the original set.

LLM Prompt for Judgement

You are a professional linguistic analysis expert and are now required to perform the semantic role labeling verification task. Your task is to evaluate the correctness of the argument and that of the semantic role label for the given sentence, predict, argument and semantic role label. If any errors are found, you must provide a detailed explanation.

Fundamental Definition of SRL:
Semantic Role Labeling is a shallow semantic parsing task. Its core objective is to identify the arguments (i.e., participants or states) related to a given predicate and assign them specific semantic roles (e.g., Agent, Patient, Time, Location, etc.).
Predicate: refering to the word or phrase in a clause or sentence that expresses an action, behavior, state, relationship, or attribute.
Core Argument: refering to the word or phrase that plays a specific role in relation to the predicate, such as agent, patient, theme, instrument, benefactive, attribute, start point or end point, etc. Core arguments are essential components that help complete the meaning of the predicate and provide additional information about the event or state described by the predicate.

Execution Steps and Output Requirements:
1. Argument Extraction Verification:
- According to the given predicate and the phrase or clause where it is located, determine whether the given argument is correctly extracted based on syntactic and semantic knowledge. The possible results are: boundary correct, insufficient extraction, over extraction, boundary incorrect. That is to say, you need to judge whether the boundary of the given argument is correct, based on whether it expresses a complete meaning as the smallest semantic unit.
- Output in JSON format with the key fields being argument_extraction_evaluation and reason_for_argment_judgement. For the field of argument_extraction_evaluation, the candidate value is “yes” or “no”.
2. Semantic Role Correctness Validation:
- Determine whether the argument and the predicate satisfy the specified role relationship. The primary results include: correct relation and incorrect relation. In this task, if the “{argument}” is the “{role_mean}” of the “{predicate}”, then they satisfy the relation of "{role}", and the reverse is not true.
- Output in JSON format with the key fields being role_evaluation and reason_for_role_judgement. For the field of role_evaluation, the candidate value is “yes” or “no”.
3. Summary of Results:
- According to the results of the argument extraction evaluation and the semantic role correctness validation, provide a summary judgement. If the fields of argument_extraction_evaluation and role_evaluation are both “yes”, the final result is correct; if even one value is not “yes”, the final result will be incorrect.
- Output in JSON format with the key fields being final_judgement and reason_for_final_judgement. The candidate values for final_judgement are “correct” and “incorrect”.

Input Specification
We will input a sentence, a predicate, an argument, a role label and the description of this role label. Both the predicate and the argument are words or word fragments from the input sentence. Since there may be multiple identical words in the sentence but at different positions, to better distinguish which word is being referred to, the predicate in the input is marked with underscores (i.e., wrapped with _), and the semantic role field is highlighted in bold (i.e., wrapped with).

Example
Input:
Sentence: _Spending_ a lot of time hunting for bikes , and nah well . then getting one purchased , and then having to , you know , go get it and things like that .
Predicate: Spending
Argument: hunting for bikes
Role label: ARG2
Role description: in the clause or sentence where “Spending” is located, “hunting for bikes” represents the “instrument, benefactive, result, caused event, affected entity, topic, content, goal, destination, standard target, comparison target or attribute” of “Spending”
Output: {{“argument_extraction_evaluation”: “yes”, “reason_for_argment_judgement”:“The argument “hunting for bikes” is a contiguous phrase in the sentence and forms a complete semantic unit.”, “role_evaluation”: “yes”, “reason_for_role_judgement”: “In the clause “Spending a lot of time hunting for bikes”, the argument “hunting for bikes” specifies the purpose or goal of the predicate “Spending”, which aligns with the role description for ARG2 as it includes goal or content.”, “final_judgement”: “correct”, “reason_for_final_judgement”: “Both the argument extraction and the semantic role labeling are correct.”}}
Input:
Sentence: Which _was_ actually where the major problem came . Exactly . Exactly . yeah . Is that I suddenly had no transportation .
Predicate: was
Argument: Which
Role label: ARG1
Role description: in the clause or sentence where “was” is located, “Which” represents the “prototypical patient” of “was”
Output:{{“argument_extraction_evaluation”: “yes”, “reason_for_argument_judgement”:“The argument “Which” is correctly extracted as a single word with clear boundaries, serving as a complete semantic unit as a relative pronoun in the sentence.”, “role_evaluation”: “no”, “reason_for_role_judgement”: “ “Which” functions as the subject or theme, not as a prototypical patient.”, “final_judgement”: “incorrect”, “reason_for_final_judgement”: “The argument extraction is correct, but the semantic role label is incorrect because “Which” does not satisfy the specified role relationship as the prototypical patient of “was”.”}}

Input
Sentence: {sentence}
Predicate: {predicate}
Argument: {argument}
Role label: {role}
Role description: in the clause or sentence where “{predicate}” is located, “{argument}” represents the “{role_mean}” of “{predicate}”
Please Answer only with a JSON object, without any additional text, explanations, or Markdown formatting.

Figure 6: The prompt used for LLM to assess the validity of the predicate-argument pair.

Issue Type	Sentence	Role:Desc.	Span Annotation Type		
			Original	**LLM-G**	**Corrected**
Boundary	John M Wethy, ABC News, the Pentagon, still *looking* for answers.	ARG0:looker	"John M Wethy" → ✗	"John M Wethy, ABC News, the Pentagon" → ✓	"John M Wethy, ABC News, the Pentagon"
	I keep thinking maybe I 'd *get* in touch.	ARG1:thing	"I" → ✗	None	None
	I *think* Ozzy 's the guy that hit a head of a bat, you know ?	ARG1:thought	"Ozzy 's the guy that hit a head of a bat, you know" → ✗	"Ozzy 's the guy that hit a head of a bat" → ✓	"Ozzy 's the guy that hit a head of a bat"
Missing	I just *want* her to understand everything that has happened in the last several years .	ARG0:wanter	None	"I"→✓	"I"
	but it is a lot less expensive if we do it that way than if we actually make my parents in law *pay* it	ARG0:payer or buyer	None	"my parents" → ✗	"my parents in law"
	American warns it will seek more layoffs if it does *file* for Chapter 11 .	ARG1:file	None	"Chapter 11"→✓	"for Chapter 11" or "Chapter 11"
Multiple valid spans	Barak, who has been forced to call national elections, *offered* to recognize a Palestinian state.	ARG0:entity offering	Barak, who has been forced to call national elections → ✓	"Barak" → ✓	"Barak" or "Barak, who has been forced to call national elections"
	the most worthwhile thing as far as monetary value went that they *stole* was the pre-amplifier of my stereo	ARG1:thing stolen	"the most worthwhile thing" → ✓	"the pre-amplifier of my stereo" → ✓	"the most worthwhile thing" or "the pre-amplifier of my stereo"
	I think perhaps no one more surprised than some of the people *running* those firms on Wall Streat	ARG1:machine, operation, procedure	"those firms on Wall Streat" → ✓	"those firms" → ✓	"those firms" or "those firms on Wall Streat"
Optional	And there were *having* a sale on the wine dad wanted.	ARG0:owner	"there" → ✗	None	"there" (optional)
	But you *know* , I mean that mhm . should n't be a big deal .	ARG0:knower	you → ✓	you → ✓	"you" (optional)
	All this happening about 90 minutes ago *based* on the wire reports we 're getting here.	ARG1:decision, whole	"All this happening about 90 minutes ago" → ✗	None	"All this happening about 90 minutes ago" (optional)

Table 4: Extra examples for annotation quality issues. Each example consists of a sentence, a predicate (highlighted in red italics), and a role label along with its description (Role: Desc.). "Original" denotes gold annotations, "LLM-G" denotes the argument spans generated by an LLM, and "Corrected" denotes the revised annotations. The symbols ✓/✗indicate whether the spans are judged as correct by an LLM.

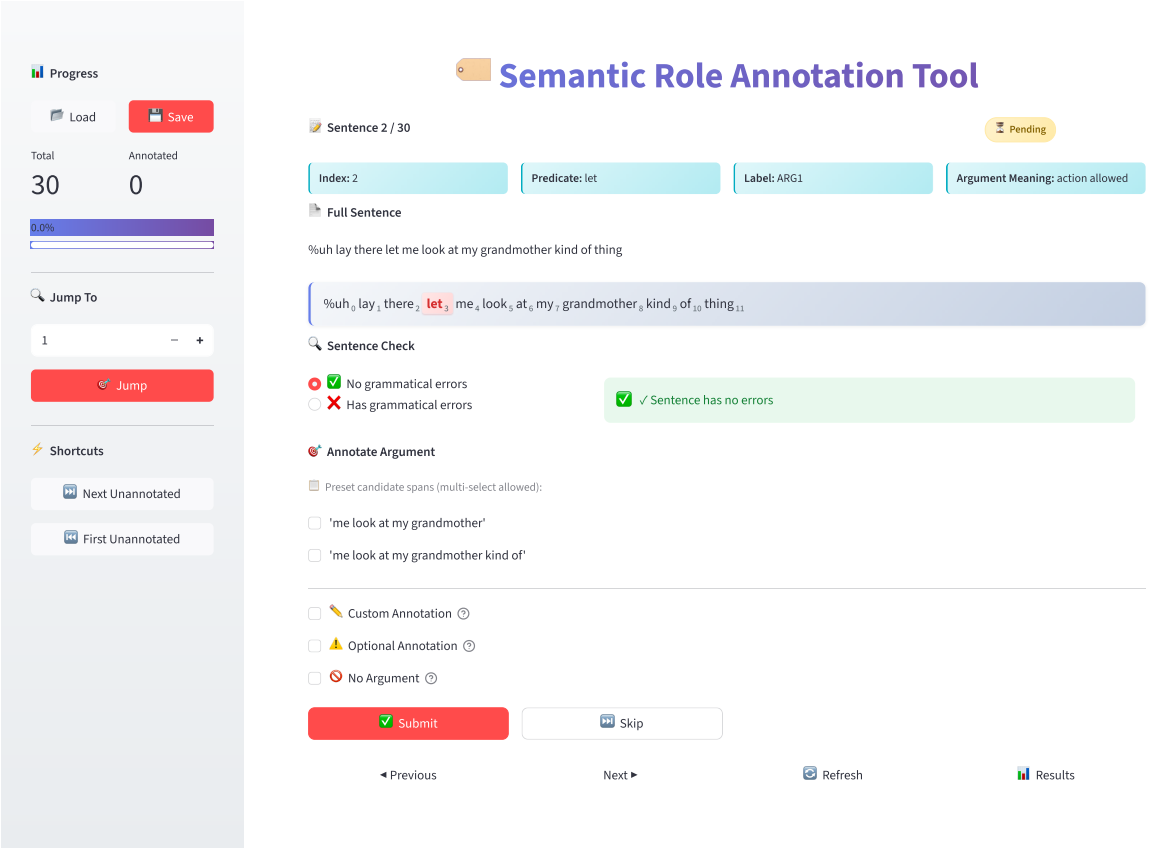

Figure 7: The annotation interface for human review and verification.