Natural Language Engineering **7** (2): 189–190. Printed in the United Kingdom

© 2001 Cambridge University Press

Call for Papers

Special Issue on Robust Methods in Analysis of Natural Language Data

Guest editors: Afzal Ballim and Vincenzo Pallotta
Department of Computer Science
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology - Lausanne.

The automated analysis of natural language data has become a central issue in the design of Intelligent Information Systems. The term *natural language* is intended to cover all the possible modalities of human communication and it is not restricted to written or spoken language. Processing unrestricted natural language is still considered as an AI-hard task. However various analysis techniques have been proposed in order to address specific aspects of natural language. In particular, recent interest has been on providing approximate analysis techniques, assuming that perfect analysis is not possible, but that partial results are still very useful.

There are many ways in which the topic of robustness may be tackled: as a competency problem, as a problem of achieving interesting partial results, as a shallow analysis method, etc. What they have in common is that no simple combination of *complete* analysis modules for different linguistic levels in a chain can give a robust system, because they cannot adequately account for real-world data. Rather, robustness must be considered as a system-wide concern. We consider of central interest improving and integrating various processing methods with respect to the following issues:

– Extending coverage
– Improving efficiency
– Disambiguation ability
– Approximate processing
– Enhancement of underlying theories

Robustness may be seen as an engineering *add-on* – something that we add to a system to take account of the inability of our theories to cope with real-world data – or as a basic element of our theories – our theories are developed to admit that understanding of the domain can be incomplete. Both approaches may be valid under certain circumstances. The main goal of this Special Issue of the Natural Language Engineering journal is devoted to advances in fields like artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, human-computer interaction, cognitive sciences who are faced with the problem of feasible and reliable NLP systems implementation. Theoretical aspects of robustness in NLP are welcome as well as engineering and industrial experiences.

We invite papers on all topics related to Robustness in Natural Language Processing and Understanding, including, but not limited to:

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1351324901009433 Published online by Cambridge University Press

– Text Analysis
– Knowledge and Information Extraction
– Spoken Dialogue Systems
– Multimodal Human-Computer interfaces
– Natural Language Architectures
– Distributed NLP
– NLP and Soft Computing
– Semantics
– Underspecification
– Multimedia Document Analysis
– Robust Parsing
– Incremental Parsing
– Discourse analysis
– Summarization
– Complexity of linguistic analysis
– Hybrid methods in computational linguistics
– Text Mining
– Corpus linguistics
– Indexing and Information Retrieval

Submission procedure

We are expecting full papers to describe original, previously unpublished research, be written in English, and not be simultaneously submitted for publication elsewhere (previous publication of partial results at workshops with informal proceedings is allowed). Papers should be formatted according to the NLE journal instructions and should be between 15 and 25 pages long.

Important dates

Papers due: 30 June 2001
Acceptance notice: 30 October 2001
Final version due: 31 January 2002
Journal publication: (after March 2002)

Papers should be submitted to: Vincenzo Pallotta
DI-LITH EPFL
IN F Ecublens
1015 Lausanne
Switzerland
tel. +41-21-693 52 97
fax. +41-21-693 52 78
Vincenzo.Pallotta@epfl.ch

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1351324901009433 Published online by Cambridge University Press