

Preface

We are pleased to present the Proceedings of NODALIDA 2009, the 17th Nordic Conference of Computational Linguistics, held 14-16 May 2009 in Odense, Denmark.

The NODALIDA conference has always been an important meeting for the Nordic computational linguistics and language technology community. In recent years, especially through the establishment of the Northern European Association of Language Technology (NEALT), it has emerged as a major conference covering the geographical area of the Nordic countries as well as the Baltic countries and Northwest Russia. The previous NODALIDA conference was a success along the new dimension of being both a regional and an international character, and the current NODALIDA conference follows these lines. Although smaller in numbers, it shows similar recognition on the international level, as witnessed by a fair amount of submissions from outside the core geographical areas in Europe, and also from the US, India, and Japan.

We received altogether 82 submissions from 24 countries in the five categories of regular full papers, regular short papers, student papers, demos and workshops. The review process was rigorous and aimed at high scientific standards: each submission received three reviews and borderline cases were further subjected to discussion among the reviewers and the Programme Committee members. This resulted in the acceptance of 43 high-quality papers which appear in these proceedings, as well as five workshops which will produce their own proceedings. Of the accepted papers in the main conference, nine are short papers, three are student papers, and five are demos. The low number of student papers was disappointing, and we hope this will improve in future conferences.

The conference also features two distinguished invited speakers. Their talks concern language research and technological applications that allow us to address challenges encountered in the multilingual and multimodal contexts. Jean Carletta (University of Edinburgh) talks about interdisciplinary work on corpus collection, analysis of group dynamics, and interaction management in her keynote talk "Developing Meeting Support Technologies: From Data to Demonstration (and Beyond)". Ralf Steinberger (EC - Joint Research Centre) presents the cross-lingual functionality of a news analysis system and highlights various language technology topics in a rich multilingual environment (between 19 and 43 languages) in his keynote talk "Linking News Content Across Languages".

Besides presenting novel research, another important goal of the NODALIDA conference is to establish a series of tutorials concerning state-of-the-art language technology and computational linguistics research. In this conference, Graham Wilcock (University of Helsinki) presents an overview of linguistic annotation using open source tools in his tutorial "Text Annotation with OpenNLP and UIMA".

The conference programme also includes five workshops as specialised meetings on various relevant topics. We are proud to offer the following workshops, held immediately before the main conference:

W1: Nordic Perspectives on the CLARIN Infrastructure of Common Language Resources

W2: Multimodal Communication: from Human Behaviour to Computational Models

W3: Lexical Semantic Resources for NLP Purposes - the Interplay between Lexical Semantics, Lexicography, Terminology and Formal Ontologies

W4: Extraction and Use of Constructions in NLP

W5: Constraint Grammar and Robust Parsing

The conference has also attracted two satellite events, held before the workshops: the student and board meetings of the NGS LT (The Nordic Graduate School of Language Technology), and the project-related workshop "Linguistic Theory and Raw Sound" organised by Peter Juel Henriksen (Copenhagen Business School). Moreover, during the conference there will be the second NEALT business meeting.

The organisation of a conference of this size is not possible without the efforts of several people working together in a friendly yet efficient manner. We would first like to thank our international Review Committee for their wonderful work on reviewing. Their prompt and constructive judgments greatly assisted us in putting together the current, exciting programme. We also wish to thank the Program Committee for their insightful comments, inviting the reviewers, and in general sharing their views on many complicated issues dealing with the structure and format of the conference. A big thank you goes to the Local Organisation Committee at the University of Southern Denmark for all their hard work concerning conference logistics and practical issues for the conference, and to the Institute of Language and Communication for financial and logistic support. Special thanks go to Mare Koit, Editor-in-Chief of the NEALT Publication Series at University of Tartu, for her kind help in the production of the electronic proceedings.

Finally, on behalf of the organisers, we would like to thank all the conference speakers and participants. Your interactions and enthusiasm will make the actual conference into what it aims to be: a forum for fruitful conversations and discussions which contribute to connections and work for years to come.

We wish you inspiring, useful, and enjoyable conference days at NODALIDA 2009.

Kristiina Jokinen
Programme Chair
NODALIDA 2009

Eckhard Bick
Local Chair
NODALIDA 2009