

REPORT ON SIGDIAL ACTIVITIES

SIGdial is the ACL and ISCA Special Interest Group on Discourse and Dialogue which was formed in November 1997. This report covers the period from July 2001 to June 2002.

PEOPLE:

The second SIGdial elections were held in the autumn of 2001. As a result of the elections and subsequent nominations, SIGdial is now being run by the following team: President: Laila Dybkjær; Vice President: David Traum; Secretary: Jennifer Chu-Carroll; Science Advisory Committee: Jan Alexandersson, Kristiina Jokinen, Akira Kurematsu, Alexander Rudnicky, Ronnie Smith, and Jan van Kuppevelt; Information Officer: Claudia Soria assisted by Kristiina Jokinen, Eric Chang, and Pamela Jordan; ACL Student Liaison: Weiqun Xu and Holmer Hensen; CHI Liaison: Nils Dahlbäck; ICSLP/ISCA Liaison: Julia Hirschberg; Mailing list maintenance: Laurent Romary.

SIGdial has about 250 members registered on its membership web page coming from at least 20 different countries across the world.

WORKSHOP ENDORSEMENT

During the past year several workshops with strong relations to the SIGdial field of interest have been endorsed by SIGdial. The workshops endorsed by SIGdial which have taken place within the reported period include:

July 6-7 2001: ACL-EACL Workshop on Evaluation for Language and Dialogue Systems (Toulouse, France).

August 5 2001: 2nd IJCAI Workshop on Knowledge And Reasoning In Practical Dialogue Systems (Seattle, USA).

August 20-24 2001: ESSLLI Workshop: Information Structure, Discourse Structure and Discourse Semantics (Helsinki Finland).

October 22-24 2001: ISCA Tutorial and Research Workshop on: Prosody in Speech Recognition and Understanding (Red Bank, USA).

June 4 2002: ITS 2002 Workshop on Empirical Methods for Tutorial Dialogue Systems (San Sebastian, Spain).

June 17-19 2002: ISCA Tutorial and Research Workshop on Spoken Dialogue in Mobile Environments (Kloster Irsee, Germany).

Workshops which have been endorsed by SIGdial but haven't been held yet include:

September 4-6 2002: EDILOG 2002: Sixth Workshop on the Semantics and Pragmatics of Dialogue (Edinburgh, Scotland).

March 24-26 2003. AAAI Spring Symposium on Natural Language Generation in Spoken and Written Dialogue (Palo Alto, CA, USA).

SIGDIAL WORKSHOP SERIES

Following the first and successful SIGdial workshop on Discourse and Dialogue held on 7-8 October 2000 in Hong Kong in conjunction with ACL'2000, the second SIGdial workshop on Discourse and Dialogue was held on 1-2 September 2001 in Aalborg, Denmark, in conjunction with Eurospeech'2001. This workshop was a very successful event with 90 participants – more than twice as many as participated in the first SIGdial workshop. The workshop received 57 paper submissions. Of these 29 were selected for presentation. The online workshop proceedings are available at http://www.sigdial.org/sigdialworkshop01/acceptance_list.php. Hardcopies can be bought via ACL. Based on some of the best workshop submissions a book is now being edited by the workshop chairs Jan van Kuppevelt and Ronnie Smith. The book will be published by Kluwer later this year.

The third SIGdial workshop will take place on 11-12 July in Philadelphia, USA, in conjunction with ACL'2002. Information on SIGdial workshops can be found at <http://www.sigdial.org/workshops.php>.

WEB

SIGdial has a web site at <http://www.sigdial.org>. The web site is hosted by NISLab. Some pages are maintained by a particular person, such as the information officer, while other pages are intended to be maintained by the membership collectively. For instance, the web site enables members to easily update their personal information in the membership database. Also a resource page has been established which members are encouraged to collectively maintain by adding references to resources they are aware of and which may be of interest to the SIGdial community. This page includes references to e.g. coding schemes, language resources, spoken dialogue systems, and tools.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Since autumn 2000 SIGdial has a collaboration with Elsnet, the European Language and Speech Network. Elsnet has a quarterly newsletter, Elsnews, and Elsnet has generously offered one page in each issue of Elsnews for SIGdial purposes. SIGdial contributions in Elsnews can be found in issue 9.3 and onwards. Elsnews can be freely downloaded in pdf format from <http://www.elsnet.org/elsnews.html>. Contributions from the reported period include

1. Kristiina Jokinen: The USIX Interact Project: Adaptivity in Dialogue Systems.
2. Hans Dybkjær: Stray Thoughts from a Crossroad.
3. Alexander Rudnicky: The DARPA Communicator Programme.
4. Yasuharu Den: Current Research Activities on Discourse and Dialogue in Japan.

A flyer on SIGdial was produced for distribution at Eurospeech'2001, the 2nd SIGdial workshop and the COCOSDA workshop. The flyer is available for download in pdf format from www.sigdial.org.

SIGdial has a business meeting each year in connection with the SIGdial workshop. Agenda, slides and minutes are available at <http://www.sigdial.org/businessmeetings/>