

Preface

This volume contains the papers of the main session of the 11th Conference of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (EACL). The conference also contains tutorials, workshops, posters, demos and a student workshop, which have companion volumes to these proceedings. We are proud to present two invited speakers at the main conference: Alfonso Caramazza, of the Cognitive Neuropsychology Laboratory, Harvard University, and Kevin Knight, of the Information Sciences Institute, University of Southern California. We are grateful to both for agreeing to deliver the keynote talks.

The main conference for EACL 2006 had a 46% increase in submitted papers compared to the 10th EACL which was held in 2003. This year we had 264 papers submitted from 35 countries in five continents (according to the affiliation of the corresponding author). The large number of papers submitted, and the broad geographical basis, demonstrate the growth in our field and considerable interest in EACL as a truly international conference. We would like to thank all authors of submitted papers for selecting EACL for presentation of their work.

Given the very substantial number of submitted papers, selection of those to appear at the conference, and therefore in these proceedings, has been a very challenging task. All papers were read by a minimum of three people, with discussions where there were differences of opinion. The final selections were made at a one and a half-day program committee meeting in Brighton. Of the 264 submissions, 52 papers were accepted giving an acceptance rate of 19.7%. We appreciate that this constitutes a considerably more competitive acceptance rate than EACL 2003, inevitable in light of the great increase in the number of submissions. The variety of work in the accepted papers highlights the great breadth of work in our field. We really hope that you both enjoy attending the conference and perusing these proceedings.

There are a great many people who have collaborated with us in the organisation of this conference. We are extremely grateful to the substantial effort put in by our 10 area chairs: Paul Buitelaar, Jason Eisner, Marcello Federico, Rob Gaizauskas, Mirella Lapata, Massimo Poesio, Ehud Reiter, Giorgio Satta, Antal van den Bosch and Andy Way. We are also indebted to the 240 reviewers for their expertise and hard work. Their careful scrutiny of papers and considered opinions are vital to the quality of the conference. We are indebted to Gertjan van Noord, the EACL President, for his advice and guidance. We benefited from great collaboration with the local organizers (Alberto Lavelli and Bernardo Magnini, co-chairs), who welcome us all to the beautiful city of Trento, and the publication chairs (Eneko Agirre, Sergio Balari and Emanuele Pianta), who have had the hard work of preparing the proceedings. We have also enjoyed collaboration with chairs for the poster & demo sessions (Frank Keller and Gabor Proszkey), workshops (Maarten de Rijke and Caroline Sporleder), student session (Sebastian Padó, Jonathon Read and Violeta Seretan) and tutorials (Alexis Nasr, Kemal Oflazer and Miles Osborne), all of whom have been essential in putting together what we hope will be a truly stimulating program together.

We hope you have a very enjoyable time at EACL 2006.

Diana McCarthy and Shuly Wintner (Program co-chairs)

