

Natural Language Processing, 2003

Discussion Sessions

After we have surveyed the basic concepts of NLP, we will focus on systems issues and on work at the research forefront.

This will be done in discussion format, instead of lecture.

Before class, everyone should read the chosen paper, write down 2 or 3 “searching questions”, make 10 copies and bring them to class to distribute to everyone. For example:

- Is this author being consistent in his use of the word “XXX”?
- What exactly does he mean on page X?
- This theory does not seem to explain phenomenon YYY. How could it be extended?
- What sort of analysis could be used to resolve problem ZZ?
- Could this program be extended to handle language LL?
- Why does the author assume that a theory of X must have property Y?

For each paper, discussion will be led by one or two volunteers. The discussion leaders should focus on interesting aspects of each paper, relate them to other papers, and bring out possibly controversial aspects. Be sure to address the questions:

- Why was this paper written?
- What is the point of this paper?
- What evidence is given for this point claim?
- Is the evidence and argumentation convincing?
- How does this paper relate to other work?”

Come see me if you’d like to discuss these choices.

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I, _____, would like to be a discussion leader for (in order of preference):

☐ “Fastus: A Cascaded Finite-state Transducer for Extracting Information from Natural-Language Text” (Hobbs, Appelt et al 1997) (about Mar 27)

☐ “SCANMail: Browsing and Searching Speech Data by Content” (Hirschberg, Bacchiani et al, 2001) (about April 3)

☐ “Extractive Summarization of Voicemail using Lexical and Prosodic Feature Subset Selection” (Koumpis, Renals et al, 2001) (about April 10)

☐ “Integrating Knowledge Bases and Statistics in MT” (Knight et al. 1994) (about April 10)

☐ “Optimizing Dialogue Management with Reinforcement Learning” (Singh, Litman et al. 2002) (about April 17)

☐ something else _____

☐ I do not want to be a discussion leader (this option is not available to graduate students).