

Dear ELRA Members,

Following the tradition we established after the LREC'98 in Granada, this issue of our newsletter reports on the second LREC (International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation), held in Athens from 31 May to 2 June 2000.

The second issue of the LREC series was organized by ELRA with the support of the major organizations involved in Human Language Technologies. The local organization was trusted to ILSP (Institute for Language & Speech Processing) and the National Technical University of Athens.

According to comments from participants, LREC conferences are now a major event in our field. With over 500 participants in 1998 and over 600 in 2000, we hope that LREC constitutes a significant milestone in the life of Human Language Technologies.

At this second issue we offered the opportunity to some key players (both industry and academic research centers) to show their latest products and services, through an exhibition that lasted four days. Standing by the tradition established with LREC98, we were able to accommodate ten satellite workshops. Due to time constraints, most of these workshops lasted half a day but gave the participants fruitful forums for discussions. We hope to continue such action in the future as part of our contribution to the development of the field.

Some general statistics to illustrate the LREC'2000 success : over 280 papers (129 oral versus 152 posters), over 600 participants from 47 countries and all the continents.

In order to give you (remind you) an idea of what happened in Athens, this newsletter is structured into three parts; We start with the closing session as the first part of the newsletter. It consists of general overviews drawn up by the program committee at the closing ceremony. As was done at the 1st LREC, these overviews focus on Spoken Language Resources (H. Höge), Written Language Resources (N. Calzolari), Evaluation in the spoken area (J. Mariani), Evaluation on the written area (B. Maegaard), the general aspects of LREC (K. Choukri), and some concluding remarks from the chairman of the conference (A. Zampolli) and the chairman of the local organizing committee (G. Carayannis).

The second part includes short summaries of some technical sessions and panels, reported by the chairpersons or the panels organizers. This is an attempt to highlight some major topics of the conference. This part also includes summaries of some of the satellite workshops.

The last part is devoted to the important speeches given by some key political guests and supporters during the opening session. Their messages addressed the crucial issues of Language Resources, Multilinguality and Human Language Technologies as key elements for the growth of today's economy. Their contributions and statements reflect the importance of the HLT field that goes beyond the simple economy and business competitiveness, with important social and cultural impacts.

In his speech and referring to his introductory speech at LREC'98, A. Zampolli, President of ELRA and chairman of the conference, drew a picture of the Human Language Technologies field stating that although the general framework still hold, efforts are devoted to some key topics identified in Granada but there is still a large number of areas which did not receive the attention they deserve.

We would like to express our warm thanks to all members of local organizing committee for the valuable work they did. Special thanks to G. Carayannis and E. Fotinea.

Last but not least, at ELRA/ELDA we continued to carry out our regular activities during the last quarter. We entered into agreements with a number of Language Resource providers and we added new resources to our catalogue. These are described in this issue.

ELRA/ELDA have been extending their activities and new positions are open. See below for more details or on <http://www.elda.fr>.

Antonio Zampolli, President

Khalid Choukri, CEO

Open positions at ELDA

ELRA is expanding its activities in the Human Language Technology area. Positions for technical engineers with background in speech processing, terminology management, marketing and market analysis are available.

The ideal candidates would have:

- Experience in the field of language engineering/ computational linguistics/ speech processing or a related field;
- Experience in developing market studies and writing technical reports in the field of information technologies or Human Language Technologies;
- Knowledge of /Experience in integrating and implementing language resources in new applications;
- Experience with technology transfer projects, industrial projects, collaborative projects within the European Commission or other international frameworks;
- Experience /motivations in establishing and supervising external contracts;
- Citizenship of (or residency papers) a European Union country;
- The ability to work in at least two European languages (English being essential).

Positions are based in Paris.

Applicants should E-mail, Fax, or post a cover letter addressing the points listed above, together with a Curriculum Vitae, to:

Khalid CHOUKRI, ELRA / ELDA, 55-57 rue Brillat Savarin, 75013 Paris FRANCE; Tel: +33 1 43 13 33 33; Fax: +33 1 43 13 33 30; E-mail : choukri@elda.fr.