Introduction

Natural Language Generation (NLG) is in the ascendant both as a stand-alone (data-to-text or text-to-text) task and as part of downstream applications such as abstractive summarization, dialogue-based interaction, question answering, etc. Only in 2017, three “deep” NLG shared tasks that focused on language generation from abstract semantic representations have been organized, although for English only. Surface realization is also a burning issue, in particular, in view of the recent creation of multilingual treebanks annotated with Universal Dependencies (UD). The Multilingual Surface Realization Shared Task (SR ’18), whose outcome is presented in these proceedings, targets surface realization from data released for the recent CoNLL shared task on multilingual parsing to UD. After the First Surface Realization Shared Task in 2011, which focused on English, SR ’18 is the second shared task on surface realization and the first to target multilingual input. 21 teams registered for SR ’18, and eight of them submitted outputs of their systems.

These proceedings include an overview of SR ’18 and the description of the eight participating systems, which will be presented at the workshop. We are pleased that for the workshop we could also win Hadar Shemtov, Head of NLG, dialog and summarization groups at Google Research, as invited speaker. We trust that overall the workshop will be a forum for fruitful discussion, and that it will give an impetus to further advances and to further shared tasks in the field.

The workshop organizers

June 2018
Organizers:
Anja Belz, University of Brighton, UK
Bernd Bohnet, Google Research, UK
Yvette Graham, Dublin City University, Ireland
Simon Mille, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain
Emily Pitler, Google Research, USA
Leo Wanner, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain

Program Committee:
Miguel Ballesteros, IBM Research, USA
Anders Björkelund, University of Stuttgart, Germany
Johan Bos, University of Groningen, Netherlands
Robert Dale, Macquarie University, Australia
Katja Filippova, Google Research, Switzerland
Claire Gardent, CNRS, LORIA, France
Kim Gerdes, Sorbonne Nouvelle, France
Yannis Konstas, Heriot Watt University, UK
Emiel Krahmer, Tilburg University, Netherlands
Mirella Lapata, University of Edinburgh, UK
Jonathan May, Information Sciences Institute, USA
David McDonald, Sift Inc., USA
Ryan McDonald, Google Research, USA
Detmar Meurers, University of Tübingen, Germany
Alexis Nasr, University of Aix Marseille, France
Joakim Nivre, Uppsala University, Sweden
Stephan Oepen, University of Oslo, Norway
Horacio Saggion, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain
Lucia Specia, University of Sheffield, UK
Kees Van Deemter, University of Aberdeen, UK
Sina Zarrieß, University of Bielefeld, Germany
Yue Zhang, Singapore University of Technology and Design, Singapore

Invited Speaker:
Hadar Shemtov, Google Research, USA
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Workshop Program

8:45–9:00 Opening

9:00–10:00 Invited Talk
Hadar Shemtov

10:00–10:30 The First Multilingual Surface Realisation Shared Task: Overview and Evaluation Results
Simon Mille, Anja Belz, Bernd Bohnet, Yvette Graham, Emily Pitler, Leo Wanner

10:30–11:00 Coffee break

11:00–12:30 Oral session 1
11:00–11:30 BinLin: A Simple Method of Dependency Tree Linearization
Yevgeniy Puzikov and Iryna Gurevych

11:30–12:00 IIT (BHU) Varanasi at MSR-SRST 2018: A Language Model Based Approach for Natural Language Generation
Shreyansh Singh, Ayush Sharma, Avi Chawla and A.K. Singh

12:00–12:30 Surface Realization Shared Task 2018 (SR18): The Tilburg University Approach
Thiago Castro Ferreira, Sander Wubben and Emiel Krahmer

12:30–13:45 Lunch break

13:45–14:15 Oral session 2
13:45–14:15 The OSU Realizer for SRST ’18: Neural Sequence-to-Sequence Inflection and Incremental Locality-Based Linearization
David King and Michael White

14:15–15:30 Poster session
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15:30–16:00 Coffee break

16:00–17:30 Panel, Discussions