

INLG 2020

**The 13th International Conference
on Natural Language Generation**

Proceedings of the Conference

December 15-18, 2020
Dublin, Ireland

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ISBN 978-1-952148-54-5

Preface

We are pleased to present the Proceedings of the 13th International Natural Language Generation Conference (INLG 2020). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year the conference was held online, virtually from Dublin City University (DCU) on December 15-18 2020.

INLG 2020 was organised by ADAPT, the world-leading Science Foundation Ireland(SFI) funded Research Centre for Digital Media Technology and the University of Aberdeen. The event took place under the auspices of the Special Interest Group on Natural Language Generation (SIGGEN) of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL).

The INLG conference is the main international forum for the discussion of all aspects of Natural Language Generation (NLG), including data-to-text, concept-to-text, text-to-text and vision-to-text approaches. Special topics of interest for the 2020 edition included:

- Generating text in languages beyond English,
- NLG approaches from visual inputs (images, charts and virtual environments), and
- Evaluation of NLG Systems, with papers revisiting evaluation methodologies and human studies, and two Shared Task proposals.

Three international keynote speakers, experts on NLG and Multi-Modal and Multi-Lingual Generation contributed to this year's program:

- Claire Gardent (CNRS / LORIA, France)
- Lucia Specia (Imperial College London / University of Sheffield, UK and ADAPT Centre, DCU, Ireland)
- Michael White (Ohio State University, United States)

In addition to the main conference, a number of workshops were accepted following an open Call for Workshop Proposals:

- 1st Workshop on Discourse Theories for Text Planning
- 2nd Workshop on Interactive Natural Language Technology for Explainable Artificial Intelligence (NL4XAI)
- 2nd Workshop on Natural Language Generation for Human-Robot Interaction (NLG4HRI)
- 1st Workshop on Evaluating NLG Evaluation
- 3rd Workshop on Natural Language Generation from the Semantic Web

The main conference unfolds over two and a half days to accommodate the number of submissions. For the main conference, we received 119 submissions, of which 27 were accepted as long papers, 15 as

short papers, 1 as demo paper, and 3 as generation challenge papers. All accepted papers for the main conference are included in these proceedings.

We received financial support from the following sponsors:

- Google
- ARRIA NLG
- Huawei
- ADAPT Centre for Digital Media Technology
- Bloomberg L.P.

We would like to thank all our sponsors for their support, and in particular Abbey Conference Management for their hard work for the smooth transition to deliver INLG 2020 online. Finally would also like to extend our gratitude to all speakers, (area) chairs and reviewers for their excellent work.

Brian Davis
Yvette Graham
John Kelleher
Yaji Sripada

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John Kelleher (ADAPT, Technical University of Dublin, Ireland)
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Claire Gardent (CNRS / LORIA, France)
Lucia Spacia (Imperial College London / University of Sheffield, UK ADAPT Centre, DCU, Ireland)
Michael White (Ohio State University, United States)

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Table of Contents

<i>Memory Attentive Fusion: External Language Model Integration for Transformer-based Sequence-to-Sequence Model</i>	
Mana Ihori, Ryo Masumura, Naoki Makishima, Tomohiro Tanaka, Akihiko Takashima and Shota Orihashi	1
<i>Arabic NLG Language Functions</i>	
Wael Abed and Ehud Reiter	7
<i>Generating Intelligible Plumitifs Descriptions: Use Case Application with Ethical Considerations</i>	
David Beauchemin, Nicolas Garneau, Eve Gaumond, Pierre-Luc Déziel, Richard Khoury and Luc Lamontagne	15
<i>RecipeNLG: A Cooking Recipes Dataset for Semi-Structured Text Generation</i>	
Michał Bień, Michał Gilski, Martyna Maciejewska, Wojciech Taisner, Dawid Wisniewski and Agnieszka Lawrynowicz	22
<i>Controlled Text Generation with Adversarial Learning</i>	
Federico Betti, Giorgia Ramponi and Massimo Piccardi	29
<i>Studying the Impact of Filling Information Gaps on the Output Quality of Neural Data-to-Text</i>	
Craig Thomson, Zhijie Zhao and Somayajulu Sripada	35
<i>Improving the Naturalness and Diversity of Referring Expression Generation models using Minimum Risk Training</i>	
Nikolaos Panagiaris, Emma Hart and Dimitra Gkatzia	41
<i>Assessing Discourse Relations in Language Generation from GPT-2</i>	
Wei-Jen Ko and Junyi Jessy Li	52
<i>Data-to-Text Generation with Iterative Text Editing</i>	
Zdeněk Kasner and Ondřej Dušek	60
<i>The CACAPO Dataset: A Multilingual, Multi-Domain Dataset for Neural Pipeline and End-to-End Data-to-Text Generation</i>	
Chris van der Lee, Chris Emmerly, Sander Wubben and Emiel Kraemer	68
<i>Towards Generating Query to Perform Query Focused Abstractive Summarization using Pre-trained Model</i>	
Deen Mohammad Abdullah and Yllias Chali	80
<i>SimpleNLG-TI: Adapting SimpleNLG to Tibetan</i>	
Zewang Kuanzhuo, Li Lin and Zhao Weina	86
<i>Machine Translation Pre-training for Data-to-Text Generation - A Case Study in Czech</i>	
Mihir Kale and Scott Roy	91
<i>Text-to-Text Pre-Training for Data-to-Text Tasks</i>	
Mihir Kale and Abhinav Rastogi	97
<i>DaMata: A Robot-Journalist Covering the Brazilian Amazon Deforestation</i>	
André Luiz Rosa Teixeira, João Campos, Rossana Cunha, Thiago Castro Ferreira, Adriana Pagano and Fabio Cozman	103

<i>Generating Quantified Referring Expressions through Attention-Driven Incremental Perception</i> Gordon Briggs	107
<i>Rich Syntactic and Semantic Information Helps Unsupervised Text Style Transfer</i> Hongyu Gong, Linfeng Song and Suma Bhat	113
<i>PARENTing via Model-Agnostic Reinforcement Learning to Correct Pathological Behaviors in Data-to-Text Generation</i> Clement Rebuffel, Laure Soulier, Geoffrey Scoutheeten and Patrick Gallinari	120
<i>Evaluating Semantic Accuracy of Data-to-Text Generation with Natural Language Inference</i> Ondřej Dušek and Zdeněk Kasner	131
<i>Chart-to-Text: Generating Natural Language Descriptions for Charts by Adapting the Transformer Model</i> Jason Obeid and Enamul Hoque	138
<i>Market Comment Generation from Data with Noisy Alignments</i> Yumi Hamazono, Yui Uehara, Hiroshi Noji, Yusuke Miyao, Hiroya Takamura and Ichiro Kobayashi	148
<i>A Gold Standard Methodology for Evaluating Accuracy in Data-To-Text Systems</i> Craig Thomson and Ehud Reiter	158
<i>Twenty Years of Confusion in Human Evaluation: NLG Needs Evaluation Sheets and Standardised Definitions</i> David M. Howcroft, Anya Belz, Miruna-Adriana Clinciu, Dimitra Gkatzia, Sadid A. Hasan, Saad Mahamood, Simon Mille, Emiel van Miltenburg, Sashank Santhanam and Verena Rieser	169
<i>Disentangling the Properties of Human Evaluation Methods: A Classification System to Support Comparability, Meta-Evaluation and Reproducibility Testing</i> Anya Belz, Simon Mille and David M. Howcroft	183
<i>Stable Style Transformer: Delete and Generate Approach with Encoder-Decoder for Text Style Transfer</i> Joosung Lee	195
<i>Listener’s Social Identity Matters in Personalised Response Generation</i> Guanyi Chen, Yinhe Zheng and Yupei Du	205
<i>Understanding and Explicitly Measuring Linguistic and Stylistic Properties of Deception via Generation and Translation</i> Emily Saldanha, Aparna Garimella and Svitlana Volkova	216
<i>Shared Task on Evaluating Accuracy</i> Ehud Reiter and Craig Thomson	227
<i>ReproGen: Proposal for a Shared Task on Reproducibility of Human Evaluations in NLG</i> Anya Belz, Shubham Agarwal, Anastasia Shimorina and Ehud Reiter	232
<i>Task Proposal: Abstractive Snippet Generation for Web Pages</i> Shahbaz Syed, Wei-Fan Chen, Matthias Hagen, Benno Stein, Henning Wachsmuth and Martin Potthast	237
<i>BERT-Based Simplification of Japanese Sentence-Ending Predicates in Descriptive Text</i> Taichi Kato, Rei Miyata and Satoshi Sato	242

<i>Amplifying the Range of News Stories with Creativity: Methods and their Evaluation, in Portuguese</i> Rui Mendes and Hugo Gonçalo Oliveira	252
<i>Lessons from Computational Modelling of Reference Production in Mandarin and English</i> Guanyi Chen and Kees van Deemter	263
<i>Generating Varied Training Corpora in Runyankore Using a Combined Semantic and Syntactic, Pattern-Grammar-based Approach</i> Joan Byamugisha	273
<i>Schema-Guided Natural Language Generation</i> Yuheng Du, Shereen Oraby, Vittorio Perera, Minmin Shen, Anjali Narayan-Chen, Tagyoung Chung, Anushree Venkatesh and Dilek Hakkani-Tur	283
<i>OMEGA : A probabilistic approach to referring expression generation in a virtual environment</i> Maurice Langner	296
<i>Neural NLG for Methodius: From RST Meaning Representations to Texts</i> Symon Stevens-Guille, Aleksandre Maskharashvili, Amy Isard, Xintong Li and Michael White	306
<i>From "Before" to "After": Generating Natural Language Instructions from Image Pairs in a Simple Visual Domain</i> Robin Rojowiec, Jana Götze, Philipp Sadler, Henrik Voigt, Sina Zarriß and David Schlangen	316
<i>What BERT Sees: Cross-Modal Transfer for Visual Question Generation</i> Thomas Scialom, Patrick Bordes, Paul-Alexis Dray, Jacopo Staiano and Patrick Gallinari	327
<i>When an Image Tells a Story: The Role of Visual and Semantic Information for Generating Paragraph Descriptions</i> Nikolai Ilinykh and Simon Dobnik	338
<i>Transformer based Natural Language Generation for Question-Answering</i> Imen Akermi, Johannes Heinecke and Frédéric Herledan	349
<i>Rapformer: Conditional Rap Lyrics Generation with Denoising Autoencoders</i> Nikola I. Nikolov, Eric Malmi, Curtis Northcutt and Loreto Parisi	360
<i>Reducing Non-Normative Text Generation from Language Models</i> Xiangyu Peng, Siyan Li, Spencer Frazier and Mark Riedl	374
<i>ReviewRobot: Explainable Paper Review Generation based on Knowledge Synthesis</i> Qingyun Wang, Qi Zeng, Lifu Huang, Kevin Knight, Heng Ji and Nazneen Fatema Rajani	384
<i>Gradations of Error Severity in Automatic Image Descriptions</i> Emiel van Miltenburg, Wei-Ting Lu, Emiel Krahmer, Albert Gatt, Guanyi Chen, Lin Li and Kees van Deemter	398
<i>Policy-Driven Neural Response Generation for Knowledge-Grounded Dialog Systems</i> Behnam Hedayatnia, Karthik Gopalakrishnan, Seokhwan Kim, Yang Liu, Mihail Eric and Dilek Hakkani-Tur	412

Conference Program

Tuesday December 15, 2020

12:00–14:50 **Workshop 1: 1st Workshop on Discourse Theories for Text Planning**

14:50–16:00 *Lunch with exhibition, meeting hub and poster gallery*

Memory Attentive Fusion: External Language Model Integration for Transformer-based Sequence-to-Sequence Model

Mana Ihuri, Ryo Masumura, Naoki Makishima, Tomohiro Tanaka, Akihiko Takashima and Shota Orihashi

Arabic NLG Language Functions

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Controlled Text Generation with Adversarial Learning

Federico Betti, Giorgia Ramponi and Massimo Piccardi

Studying the Impact of Filling Information Gaps on the Output Quality of Neural Data-to-Text

Craig Thomson, Zhijie Zhao and Somayajulu Sripada

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Assessing Discourse Relations in Language Generation from GPT-2

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Tuesday December 15, 2020 (continued)

Towards Generating Query to Perform Query Focused Abstractive Summarization using Pre-trained Model

Deen Mohammad Abdullah and Yllias Chali

SimpleNLG-TI: Adapting SimpleNLG to Tibetan

Zewang Kuanzhuo, Li Lin and Zhao Weina

Machine Translation Pre-training for Data-to-Text Generation - A Case Study in Czech

Mihir Kale and Scott Roy

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DaMata: A Robot-Journalist Covering the Brazilian Amazon Deforestation

André Luiz Rosa Teixeira, João Campos, Rossana Cunha, Thiago Castro Ferreira, Adriana Pagano and Fabio Cozman

Generating Quantified Referring Expressions through Attention-Driven Incremental Perception

Gordon Briggs

Rich Syntactic and Semantic Information Helps Unsupervised Text Style Transfer

Hongyu Gong, Linfeng Song and Suma Bhat

16:00–16:15 *Welcome*

Tuesday December 15, 2020 (continued)

16:15–17:35 Oral Session 1: Data-to-Text Generation

PARENTing via Model-Agnostic Reinforcement Learning to Correct Pathological Behaviors in Data-to-Text Generation

Clement Rebuffel, Laure Soulier, Geoffrey Scoutheeten and Patrick Gallinari

Evaluating Semantic Accuracy of Data-to-Text Generation with Natural Language Inference

Ondřej Dušek and Zdeněk Kasner

Chart-to-Text: Generating Natural Language Descriptions for Charts by Adapting the Transformer Model

Jason Obeid and Enamul Hoque

Market Comment Generation from Data with Noisy Alignments

Yumi Hamazono, Yui Uehara, Hiroshi Noji, Yusuke Miyao, Hiroya Takamura and Ichiro Kobayashi

17:40–18:25 Keynote 1: Claire Gardent

Generating from Abstract Meaning Representations into 21 Languages

Wednesday December 16, 2020

12:00–13:00 Oral Session 2: Evaluation

A Gold Standard Methodology for Evaluating Accuracy in Data-To-Text Systems

Craig Thomson and Ehud Reiter

Twenty Years of Confusion in Human Evaluation: NLG Needs Evaluation Sheets and Standardised Definitions

David M. Howcroft, Anya Belz, Miruna-Adriana Clinciu, Dimitra Gkatzia, Sadid A. Hasan, Saad Mahamood, Simon Mille, Emiel van Miltenburg, Sashank Santhanam and Verena Rieser

Disentangling the Properties of Human Evaluation Methods: A Classification System to Support Comparability, Meta-Evaluation and Reproducibility Testing

Anya Belz, Simon Mille and David M. Howcroft

13:00–13:20 Coffee/Tea Break

Wednesday December 16, 2020 (continued)

13:20–14:20 Oral Session 3: Style Modelling in NLG

Stable Style Transformer: Delete and Generate Approach with Encoder-Decoder for Text Style Transfer

Joosung Lee

Listener's Social Identity Matters in Personalised Response Generation

Guanyi Chen, Yinhe Zheng and Yupei Du

Understanding and Explicitly Measuring Linguistic and Stylistic Properties of Deception via Generation and Translation

Emily Saldanha, Aparna Garimella and Svitlana Volkova

14:25–15:10 Keynote 2: Lucia Specia

Challenges in Evaluating Language Output Tasks

15:00–16:00 Lunch with exhibition, meeting hub and poster gallery

16:15–17:15 Generation Challenges Special Session

Shared Task on Evaluating Accuracy

Ehud Reiter and Craig Thomson

ReproGen: Proposal for a Shared Task on Reproducibility of Human Evaluations in NLG

Anya Belz, Shubham Agarwal, Anastasia Shimorina and Ehud Reiter

Task Proposal: Abstractive Snippet Generation for Web Pages

Shahbaz Syed, Wei-Fan Chen, Matthias Hagen, Benno Stein, Henning Wachsmuth and Martin Potthast

17:15–17:30 Coffee/Tea Break

Wednesday December 16, 2020 (continued)

17:30–18:50 Oral Session 4: NLG Beyond English

BERT-Based Simplification of Japanese Sentence-Ending Predicates in Descriptive Text

Taichi Kato, Rei Miyata and Satoshi Sato

Amplifying the Range of News Stories with Creativity: Methods and their Evaluation, in Portuguese

Rui Mendes and Hugo Gonalo Oliveira

Lessons from Computational Modelling of Reference Production in Mandarin and English

Guanyi Chen and Kees van Deemter

Generating Varied Training Corpora in Runyankore Using a Combined Semantic and Syntactic, Pattern-Grammar-based Approach

Joan Byamugisha

Thursday December 17, 2020

12:00–13:00 Oral Session 5: Document Planning

Schema-Guided Natural Language Generation

Yuheng Du, Shereen Oraby, Vittorio Perera, Minmin Shen, Anjali Narayan-Chen, Tagyoung Chung, Anushree Venkatesh and Dilek Hakkani-Tur

OMEGA : A probabilistic approach to referring expression generation in a virtual environment

Maurice Langner

Neural NLG for Methodius: From RST Meaning Representations to Texts

Symon Stevens-Guille, Aleksandre Maskharashvili, Amy Isard, Xintong Li and Michael White

13:00–13:15 Coffee/Tea Break

Thursday December 17, 2020 (continued)

13:15–14:15 Oral Session 6: NLG and Vision

From "Before" to "After": Generating Natural Language Instructions from Image Pairs in a Simple Visual Domain

Robin Rojowiec, Jana Götze, Philipp Sadler, Henrik Voigt, Sina Zarriß and David Schlangen

What BERT Sees: Cross-Modal Transfer for Visual Question Generation

Thomas Scialom, Patrick Bordes, Paul-Alexis Dray, Jacopo Staiano and Patrick Gallinari

When an Image Tells a Story: The Role of Visual and Semantic Information for Generating Paragraph Descriptions

Nikolai Ilinykh and Simon Dobnik

14:15–15:00 Lunch

15:00–16:00 Oral Session 7: Transformer-based NLG Systems

Transformer based Natural Language Generation for Question-Answering

Imen Akermi, Johannes Heinecke and Frédéric Herledan

Rapformer: Conditional Rap Lyrics Generation with Denoising Autoencoders

Nikola I. Nikolov, Eric Malmi, Curtis Northcutt and Loreto Parisi

Reducing Non-Normative Text Generation from Language Models

Xiangyu Peng, Siyan Li, Spencer Frazier and Mark Riedl

16:00–16:15 Coffee/Tea Break

Thursday December 17, 2020 (continued)

16:15–17:15 Oral Session 8: Knowledge Guided NLG Models

ReviewRobot: Explainable Paper Review Generation based on Knowledge Synthesis

Qingyun Wang, Qi Zeng, Lifu Huang, Kevin Knight, Heng Ji and Nazneen Fatema Rajani

Gradations of Error Severity in Automatic Image Descriptions

Emiel van Miltenburg, Wei-Ting Lu, Emiel Kraemer, Albert Gatt, Guanyi Chen, Lin Li and Kees van Deemter

Policy-Driven Neural Response Generation for Knowledge-Grounded Dialog Systems

Behnam Hedayatnia, Karthik Gopalakrishnan, Seokhwan Kim, Yang Liu, Mihail Eric and Dilek Hakkani-Tur

17:20–18:05 Keynote 3: Michael White

Data-Efficient Modeling for Compositional Neural NLG

Friday December 18, 2020

11:00–18:20 Workshop 2: 2nd Workshop on Interactive Natural Language Technology for Explainable Artificial Intelligence (NL4XAI)

11:00–18:20 Workshop 3: 2nd Workshop on Natural Language Generation for Human-Robot Interaction (NLG4HRI)

11:00–18:20 Workshop 4: 1st Workshop on Evaluating NLG Evaluation

Friday December 18, 2020 (continued)

11:00–18:20 **Workshop 5: 3rd Workshop on Natural Language Generation from the Semantic Web**

17:25–18:15 *Round Table*

18:15–18:25 *Concluding Remarks and Farewell*