

PREFACE

This volume contains the papers accepted for presentation at the ACL2002/SIGLEX workshop on Unsupervised Lexical Acquisition, held on Friday, July 12th, 2002, during the 40th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Lexical resources form a cornerstone of all natural language understanding systems. It has long been recognized, however, that creating lexicons manually is a time-consuming, laborious, and expensive undertaking. Moreover, such lexicons can never be complete, given the ever-changing content of the lexicon, especially across different domains. Finally, development of broad-coverage NL systems in many languages may be hindered by the lack of broad-coverage machine-readable lexical resources in those languages.

We proposed this workshop as an opportunity for surveying the state of the art in the field, and for further stimulating discussion on the use of unsupervised, or minimally supervised, methods in the acquisition of lexical information. The papers in this volume attest to the broad appeal of these methods, as well as to the variety of lexical tasks addressed, such as acquiring semantic, syntactic, and collocational information; learning translation lexicons; processing out-of-vocabulary words; and thesaurus extraction. With the availability of online corpora, and the increased sophistication of machine-learning methods, self-augmenting lexicons for NL systems and other applications cannot be far off!

As is true of all collaborative efforts, a workshop is more than the sum of its parts. We would like to thank both the authors who submitted papers for the workshop, and the members of the program committee, who cheerfully agreed to add yet another set of reviews to their already overloaded schedule. We also thank Philip Resnik for agreeing to present the invited talk at the workshop. And, last but not least, we thank the authors selected for their excellent papers; their contribution is ultimately what creates a successful event.

In closing, we would like to express our gratitude to our sponsor, Microsoft Research, for their support of this endeavor.

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