

BLP 2023

**The First Workshop on Bangla Language Processing
(BLP-2023)**

Proceedings of the Workshop

December 7, 2023

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Preface

Welcome to the First Workshop on Bangla Language Processing (BLP 2023) collocated with the EMNLP 2023, hosted in Singapore.

In this first edition, the program is rich and varied, featuring a keynote talk, four paper presentation sessions, two poster sessions, a panel discussion, and an industry presentation.

At this first edition of the BLP workshop, we received 24 submissions comprising 16 long and 8 short papers. Each paper was rigorously peer-reviewed by at least three expert reviewers in the field. From these submissions, 16 papers were accepted, including 10 long and 6 short papers, all of which have been selected for oral presentation. Note that we made no distinction in the quality between long and short papers, or between oral and poster presentations.

The workshop featured two shared tasks: (1) Task 1: Violence Inciting Text Detection (VITD), and (2) Task 2: Sentiment Analysis of Bangla Social Media Posts. Both tasks were well-received, with robust participation. For Task 1, we had 27 team registrations, out of which 16 submitted system description papers. For task 2 we had registrations from 71 teams, with 29 and 30 teams participating in the development and evaluation phases, respectively, culminating in 15 system description papers.

Each system description paper for the shared tasks peer-reviewed by at least three expert reviewers and each system description papers were reviewed by two reviewers. The proceedings include these papers along with two comprehensive overview papers, which will be presented in an oral session at the workshop.

We were fortunate to secure sponsorship funding for the workshop, which has been instrumental in subsidizing registrations for students and aspiring young researchers.

Finally, we would like to thank all the contributors of papers and the 81 members of the Program Committee for their dedication to ensuring the delivery of high-quality reviews in a timely manner.

Firoj Alam, Sudipta Kar, and Shammur Absar Chowdhury
On Behalf of the BLP Workshop Organizing Committee
Workshop website at <https://blp-workshop.github.io/>

Organizing Committee

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Keynote Talk: NLP in Mexican Spanish: A path through shared tasks

Manuel Montes-y-Gómez

2023-12-07 09:20:00 – Room: Pisces 2 & 3

Abstract: Although Spanish is one of the most spoken languages in the world, it was only until very recently that the development of linguistic technologies for it had a strong boost. However, this is not entirely true for some of its Latin American variants, such as the Mexican Spanish, which show phonetic, and also some lexical and semantic differences with respect to peninsular Spanish.

This talk will focus on presenting the development of NLP for Mexican Spanish, emphasizing the path taken through the organization of different evaluation campaigns. It will present some data about Mexican Spanish as well as about the impact of the organization of shared tasks in the context of IberLEF for the development of the NLP area in our country, first as a mechanism to motivate more students to get involved, and then as a vehicle to build resources and design and implement specific methods. The talk will conclude by exposing some of the obstacles faced, our main achievements, and some plans for the coming years.

Bio: Manuel Montes is Full Professor at the National Institute of Astrophysics, Optics and Electronics (INAOE) of Mexico. His research is on automatic text processing. He is author of more than 250 journal and conference papers in the fields of information retrieval, text mining and authorship analysis.

He has been visiting professor at the Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain), and the University of Alabama (USA). He is also member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences (AMC), and founding member of the Mexican Academy of Computer Science (AMEXCOMP), and the Mexican Association of Natural Language Processing (AMNLP). In the context of the latter, he has been the organizer of the National Workshop on Language Technologies (from 2004 to 2016), the Mexican Workshop on Plagiarism Detection and Authorship Analysis (2016-2020), the Mexican Autumn School on Language Technologies (2015 and 2016), and shared tasks on author profiling, aggressiveness analysis and fake news detection in Mexican Spanish at IberLEF (2018-2021).

Keynote Talk: Towards Transforming the Landscape of Indian Language Technology

Mitesh Khapra

2023-12-07 15:05:00 – Room: Pisces 2 & 3

Abstract: In this talk, I will reflect on our journey towards transforming the landscape of Indian language technology. I will delve on our engineering-heavy approach in addressing the initial scarcity of data for Indian languages, while gradually establishing the necessary human resources to gather high-quality data on a larger scale through Bhashini. The objective is to share our insights into developing high quality open-source technology for Indian languages. This involves curating extensive data from the internet, constructing multilingual models for transfer learning, and crafting high-quality datasets for fine-tuning and evaluation. I will then transition into how our experiences can benefit the broader AI community, particularly as India aspires to create Language Model Models (LLMs) for Indic languages.

Bio: Mitesh M. Khapra is an Associate Professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at IIT Madras. He heads the AI4Bharat Research Lab at IIT Madras which focuses on building datasets, tools, models and applications for Indian languages. His research work has been published in several top conferences and journals including ACL, NeurIPS, TALLIP, EMNLP, EACL, AACL, etc. He has also served as Area Chair or Senior PC member in top conferences such as ICLR and AACL. Prior to IIT Madras, he was a Researcher at IBM Research India for four and a half years, where he worked on several interesting problems in the areas of Statistical Machine Translation, Cross Language Learning, Multimodal Learning, Argument Mining and Deep Learning. Prior to IBM, he completed his PhD and M.Tech from IIT Bombay in Jan 2012 and July 2008 respectively. His PhD thesis dealt with the important problem of reusing resources for multilingual computation. During his PhD he was a recipient of the IBM PhD Fellowship (2011) and the Microsoft Rising Star Award (2011). He is also a recipient of the Google Faculty Research Award (2018), the IITM Young Faculty Recognition Award (2019), the Prof. B. Yegnanarayana Award for Excellence in Research and Teaching (2020) and the Srimathi Marti Annapurna Gurunath Award for Excellence in Teaching (2022).

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Program

Thursday, December 7, 2023

09:00 - 09:20 *Opening Remarks*

09:20 - 09:50 *Invited Talk 1: NLP in Mexican Spanish: A Path Through Shared Tasks*

09:50 - 10:26 *Oral Presentation I (long papers)*

BSpell: A CNN-Blended BERT Based Bangla Spell Checker

Chowdhury Rafeed Rahman, MD.Hasibur Rahman, Samiha Zakir, Mohammad Rafsan and Mohammed Eunus Ali

BLP-2023 Task 1: Violence Inciting Text Detection (VITD)

Sourav Saha, Jahedul Alam Junaed, Maryam Saleki, Mohamed Rahouti, Nabeel Mohammed and Mohammad Ruhul Amin

BLP-2023 Task 2: Sentiment Analysis

Md. Arid Hasan, Firoj Alam, Anika Anjum, Shudipta Das and Afiyat Anjum

10:30 - 11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00 - 12:00 *Poster Session*

12:00 - 13:00 *Lunch Break*

13:00 - 14:00 *Oral Presentation II (long papers)*

Low-Resource Text Style Transfer for Bangla: Data & Models

Sourabrata Mukherjee, Akanksha Bansal, Pritha Majumdar, Atul Kr Ojha and Ondrej Dusek

Vio-Lens: A Novel Dataset of Annotated Social Network Posts Leading to Different Forms of Communal Violence and its Evaluation

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Pseudo-Labeling for Domain-Agnostic Bangla Automatic Speech Recognition

Rabindra Nath Nandi, Mehadi Hasan Menon, Tareq Al Muntasir, Sagor Sarker, Quazi Sarwar Muhtaseem, Md. Tariqul Islam, Shammur Absar Chowdhury and Firoj Alam

Thursday, December 7, 2023 (continued)

Contextual Bangla Neural Stemmer: Finding Contextualized Root Word Representations for Bangla Words

Md Fahim, Amin Ahsan Ali, M Ashraful Amin and Akmmahbubur Rahman

Crosslingual Retrieval Augmented In-context Learning for Bangla

Xiaoqian Li, Ercong Nie and Sheng Liang

14:00 - 14:10 *Break*

14:10 - 15:05 *Oral Presentation III (long + short papers)*

Advancing Bangla Punctuation Restoration by a Monolingual Transformer-Based Method and a Large-Scale Corpus

Mehedi Hasan Bijoy, Mir Fatema Afroz Faria, Mahbub E Sobhani, Tanzid Ferdoush and Swakkhar Shatabda

BanglaCHQ-Summ: An Abstractive Summarization Dataset for Medical Queries in Bangla Conversational Speech

Alvi Aveen Khan, Fida Kamal, Mohammad Abrar Chowdhury, Tasnim Ahmed, Md Tahmid Rahman Laskar and Sabbir Ahmed

Offensive Language Identification in Transliterated and Code-Mixed Bangla

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Intent Detection and Slot Filling for Home Assistants: Dataset and Analysis for Bangla and Sylheti

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Assessing Political Inclination of Bangla Language Models

Surendrabikram Thapa, Ashwarya Maratha, Khan Md Hasib, Mehwish Nasim and Usman Naseem

SynthNID: Synthetic Data to Improve End-to-end Bangla Document Key Information Extraction

Syed Mostofa Monsur, Shariar Kabir and Sakib Chowdhury

BEemoLexBERT: A Hybrid Model for Multilabel Textual Emotion Classification in Bangla by Combining Transformers with Lexicon Features

Ahasan Kabir, Animesh Chandra Roy and Zaima Sartaj Taheri

15:05 - 15:35 *Invited Talk 2: Towards Transforming the Landscape of Indian language Technology*

Thursday, December 7, 2023 (continued)

15:35 - 16:00 *Coffee Break*

16:00 - 16:36 *Oral Presentation IV (long papers)*

BaTEClCor: A Novel Dataset for Bangla Text Error Classification and Correction

Nabilah Tabassum Oshin, Syed Mohaiminul Hoque, Md Fahim, Amin Ahsan Ali, M Ashraful Amin and Akmmahbubur Rahman

Investigating the Effectiveness of Graph-based Algorithm for Bangla Text Classification

Farhan Noor Dehan, Md Fahim, Amin Ahsan Ali, M Ashraful Amin and Akmmahbubur Rahman

Pipeline Enabling Zero-shot Classification for Bangla Handwritten Grapheme

Linsheng Guo, Md Habibur Rahman Sifat and Tashin Ahmed

16:36 - 17:15 *Panel Discussion*

17:15 - 17:30 *Industry Talk*

17:30 - 17:45 *Awards and Ending Remarks*