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of the
Association for
Computational Linguistics

Proceedings of the Conference

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PREFACE

These are the proceedings of the 18th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics. They contain both the papers contributed to the annual conference and the position papers from the participants in the special parasession on Topics in Interactive Discourse. This year's conference features a session on improving the robustness of natural language understanding systems. Also noteworthy is the mixture of applied and theoretical studies, and the number of subdisciplines that have contributed to the meeting. The parasession addresses specific issues in interactive systems. Individual panels look at the influence of the social and task contexts. One panel considers future prospects.

Thanks are due to a large number of people. Gary Hendrix organized and chaired the program committee, and, with help from Don Walker, oversaw the production of the Call-for-Papers and the Advance Program. They received excellent secretarial support from Jane Perry. Bonnie Lynn Webber originated the idea for the parasession and brought it into existence. Both Bonnie and Gary were ably assisted by their respective committees. Kathy McKeown arranged the facilities for the meeting and handled the registration.

Financial support came from four sources. The Office of Naval Research, Information Systems Division provided support for the parasession under a grant to the University of Pennsylvania (ONR Grant NR049-458). SRI International produced the Call-for-Papers and the Advanced Program and supported the secretarial expenses of the program committee. Sperry Univac produced these proceedings. The Department of Computer and Information Science of the University of Pennsylvania provided partial support for the conference banquet and local arrangements.

Thanks are due to the authors and panelists whose research is the theme of this meeting. Wholehearted thanks are also due to the individuals whose submissions could not be accepted because of the conference's limited schedule. Finally, thanks are due to you, whose interest in the conference provides its essential motivation. I hope you find the meeting and these proceedings useful.

Norman K. Sondheimer
Conference Organizer

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

<u>Program</u>	<u>Parasession</u>	<u>Local Arrangements</u>
Gary Hendrix, Chair Charles Fillmore Jane Robinson Ivan Sag Henry Thompson Robert Wilensky	Bonnie Lynn Webber, Organizer Barbara Grosz Jerry Hobbs	Kathleen McKeown

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*** Paper not received at time of publication.

