

TINLAP-2

Theoretical Issues
in
Natural Language Processing-2

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
July 25-27, 1978

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PREFACE

Three years ago (June 6-8, 1975) a highly successful interdisciplinary workshop called TINLAP (Theoretical Issues in Natural Language Processing) was held at MIT with the purpose of "bringing together researchers and students from computational linguistics, psychology, linguistics and artificial intelligence to provide a forum at which people with different interests in, and consequently different emphases on, the problems of natural language understanding, could learn of the models developed and difficult issues faced by people working on other aspects of understanding."

The workshop was organized by Roger Schank of Yale and Bonnie Lynn Webber of Bolt Beranek and Newman. Approximately 350 people attended the meeting, many more than anticipated. A conference proceedings was published and made available before the meeting; so far approximately 1200 copies of this volume have been sold, and requests for copies are still being received.

In my statement as candidate for Chairman of ACM/SIGART, written in November 1976, I suggested that it would be valuable to hold one or more workshops on topics of common interest in years between the International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence (held on odd years since 1969), and I asked for suggestions about the topics and forms such workshops might take. Of the approximately 30 responses I received, nearly all specifically suggested another TINLAP conference. The University of Illinois was selected as the site because the ACL annual meeting was already scheduled for July 25-27, 1978 at Urbana in conjunction with the LSA (Linguistics Society of America) Summer Institute, and because I had originally proposed the idea and am on the faculty at this campus.

For TINLAP-2, I selected six topics which I felt were especially interesting from among those suggested by persons who had asked for another TINLAP meeting, and generated lists of questions to be considered by authors for four of the sessions; Session 2 questions were generated by Bonnie Lynn Webber, and those in Session 5 are from Aravind Joshi. The lists of questions appear at the end of this volume. Authors were encouraged to summarize or criticize research, to speculate on language understanding mechanisms or future research directions, or to report recent work of their own.

I would like to thank the session chairpersons who took on a great deal of the organizing role, and the authors, all of whom had to meet a very tight deadline. I would also especially like to thank Bonnie Lynn Webber and Andrew Ortony for helpful advice on organizing the conference, the Association for Computing Machinery and Association for Computational Linguistics for their sponsorship, support and advice, and Gary Brooks and Hazel Corray who helped prepare this volume.

David Waltz
June 1978

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