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INSTITUT NATIONAL DE RECHERCHE EN INFORMATIQUE ET EN AUTOMATIQUE

Project-Team TALARIS

Traitement Automatique des Langues: Représentations, Inférences et Sémantique

Nancy - Grand Est

THEME SYM

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TALARIS is an INRIA project-team (UMR 7503) common to INRIA, the CNRS, the University of Nancy 1 (Henri Poincaré), the University of Nancy 2, and the National Polytechnic Institute of Lorraine. For more details, we invite the reader to consult the team web site at http://talaris.loria.fr/.

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2. Overall Objectives

2.1. Background

TALARIS stands for *Traitment Automatique des Langues: Representation, Inference, et Semantique*. As this name suggests, the aim of the TALARIS team is to investigate semantic phenomena (broadly construed) in natural language from a computational perspective. More concretely, TALARIS's goal is to develop grammars (with a special emphasis on French) with a semantic dimension, to explore the linguistic and computational issues involved in such areas as natural language generation, textual entailment recognition, discourse and dialogue modeling, pragmatics, and multilinguality, and to investigate the interplay between representation and inference in computational semantics for natural language.

2.2. Organization

The work of the TALARIS team can be subdivided into four overlapping and mutually supporting categories.

Computational Semantics. This theme is devoted to the theoretical and computational issues involved in building semantic representations for natural language. Special emphasis is placed on developing large scale semantic coverage for the French Language.

Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics. This theme is devoted to developing theoretical and computational models of discourse and dialogue processing, and investigating the inferential impact of pragmatic factors (that is, the factors affecting how humans being actually use language).

Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation. The theme is devoted to theoretical and computational tools for working with logics suitable for natural language inference and knowledge representation. Special emphasis is place on hybrid logic, higher order logic, and discourse representation theory (DRT).

Multilinguality for Multimedia. This theme is devoted to creating generic ISO-based mechanisms for representing and dealing with multilingual textual information. The center of this activity is the MLIF (Multi Lingual Information Framework) specification platform for elementary multilingual units.

2.3. Overall Objectives

The major long term computational goals of the TALARIS team are:

- The creation of a large scale computational semantics framework for French that supports deep semantic analysis and surface realisation (the production of sentences from meaning representations),
- The creation of dialogue systems (in particular, for French) that support flexible and realistic interaction with the user.
- The creation of efficient inference systems for logics that are capable of representing natural language content and the background knowledge required to support reasoning.
- Integrating language technology and semantic resources into multimedia applications.

These computational goals will be pursued in the context of theoretical investigations that will rigorously map out the required scientific and mathematical context.

2.4. Highlights

There were four main highlights in 2008. First, Yannick Parmentier won the best paper award at TALN 2008 conference in Avignon; TALN is the annual French computational linguistics conference, and the main meeting place for the French computational linguistics community. Second, Marilisa Amoia, Alexander Denis, and Sébastien Hinderer all successfully completed their PhD theses. Third, from 24-26 June 2008, Claire Gardent organised a three day workshop called *NaTAL* which was designed to support and develop research and teaching links with the University of the Saarland in Saabrücken, Germany; we hope that this will become an annual event. Finally, Carlos Areces and Patrick Blackburn organised the *AiML 2008* (Advances in Modal Logic 2008) in Nancy from 9-12 September 2008. The AiML is the leading international conference on modal logic and its applications and attracted some 70 international participants to Nancy. In addition, the year was marked by a number of successes in obtaining new research grants and forming collaborations, some of which have already started, and some which will start in 2009. In particular, two ITEA grants were obtained (SemBySem and METAVERSE), two ANR projects (CCCP-Prosodie and PORT-MEDIA), an INRIA research partnership called InToHyLo was formed with the University of Buenos Aires, and the team will participate in a Danish research project called HyLoCore as a foreign partner.

3. Scientific Foundations

3.1. Computational Linguistics and Computational Logic

Keywords: *computational logic*, *computational semantics*, *empirical studies*, *inference*, *knowledge representation*, *linguistic resources*, *logic engineering*.

We said above that the central research theme of TALARIS was computational semantics (where "semantics" is broadly construed to cover various pragmatic and discourse level phenomena) and that TALARIS is particularly focused on investigating the interplay between representation and inference. Another way of putting this would be to say that the scientific foundations of TALARIS's work boil down to the motto: *computational linguistics* meets *computational logic* and *knowledge representation*.

From computational linguistics we take the large linguistic and lexical semantics resources, the parsing and generation algorithms, and the insight that (whenever possible) statistical information should be employed to cope with ambiguity. From computational logic and knowledge representation we take the various languages and methodologies that have been developed for handling different forms of information (such as temporal information), the computational tools (such as theorem provers, model builders, model checkers, sat-solvers and planners) that have been devised for working with them, together with the insight that, whenever possible, it is better to work with inference tools that have been tuned for particular problems, and moreover that, whenever possible, it is best to devote as little computational energy to inference as possible.

This picture is somewhat idealized. For example, for many languages (and French is one of them) the large scale linguistic resources (lexicons, grammars, WordNet, FrameNet, PropBank, etc.) that exist for English are not yet available. In addition, the syntax/semantics interface often cannot be taken for granted, and existing inference tools often need to be adapted to cope with the logics that arise in natural language applications (for example, existing provers for Description Logic, though excellent, do not cope with temporal reasoning). Thus we are not simply talking about bringing together known tools, and investigating how they work once they are combined — often a great deal of research, background work and development is needed. Nonetheless, the ideal of bringing together the best tools and ideas from computational linguistics, knowledge representation and computational logic and putting them to work in coordination is the guiding line.

3.2. Semantics and Inference

Keywords: *computational logic*, *computational semantics*, *empirical studies*, *inference*, *knowledge representation*, *linguistic resources*, *logic engineering*.

Over the next decade, progress in natural language semantics is likely to depend on obtaining a deeper understanding of the role played by inference. One of the simplest levels at which inference enters natural language is as a disambiguation mechanism. Utterances in natural language are typically highly ambiguous: inference allows human beings to (seemingly effortlessly) eliminate the irrelevant possibilities and isolate the intended meaning. But inference can be used in many other processes, for example, in the integration of new information into a known context. This is important when generating natural language utterances. For this task we need to be sure that the utterance we generate is suitable for the person being addressed. That is, we need to be sure that the generated representations fit in well with the recipient's knowledge and expectations of the world, and it is inference which guides us in achieving this.

Much recent semantic research actively addresses such problems by systematically integrating inference as a key element. This is an interesting development, as such work redefines the boundary between semantics and pragmatics. For example, van der Sandt's algorithm for presupposition resolution (a classic problem of pragmatics) uses inference to guarantee that new information is integrated in a coherent way with the old information.

The TALARIS team investigates such semantic/pragmatic problems from various angles (for example, from generation and discourse analysis perspectives) and tries to combine the insights offered by different approaches. For example, for some applications (e.g., the textual entailment recognition task) shallow syntactic parsing combined with fast inference in description logic may be the most suitable approach. In other cases, deep analysis of utterances or sentences and the use of a first-order inference engine may be better. Our aim is to explore these approaches and their limitations.

3.3. Linguistic Resources

Keywords: *computational logic*, *computational semantics*, *empirical studies*, *inference*, *knowledge representation*, *linguistic resources*, *logic engineering*.

In an ideal world, computational semanticists would not have to worry overly much about linguistic resources. Large scale lexica, treebanks, and wide coverage grammars (supported by fast parsers and offering a flexible syntax semantics interface) would be freely available and easy to combine and use. The semanticist could then focus on modeling semantic phenomena and their interactions.

Needless to say, in reality matters are not nearly so straightforward. For a start, for many languages (including French) there are no large-scale resources of the sort that exist for English. Furthermore even in the case of English, the idealized situation just sketched does not obtain. For example, the syntax/semantics interface cannot be regarded as a solved problem: phenomena such as gapping and VP-ellipsis (where a verb, or verb phrase, in a coordinated sentence is missing and has to be somehow "reconstructed" from the previous context) still offer challenging problems for semantic construction.

Thus a team like TALARIS simply cannot focus exclusively on semantic issues: it must also have competence in developing and maintaining a number of different lexical resources (and in particular, resources for French).

TALARIS is involved in such aspects in a number of ways. For example, it participates in the development of an open source syntactic and synonymic lexicon for French, in an attempt to lay the ground for a French version of FrameNet; and it also works on developing a large scale, reversible (i.e., usable both for parsing and for generation) Tree Adjoining Grammar for French.

3.4. Logic Engineering

Keywords: *computational logic*, *computational semantics*, *empirical studies*, *inference*, *knowledge representation*, *linguistic resources*, *logic engineering*.

Once again, in the ideal world, not only would computational semanticists not have to worry about the linguistic resources at their disposal, but they would not have to worry about the inference tools available either. These could be taken for granted, applied as needed, and the semanticist could concentrate on developing linguistically inspired inference architectures. But in spite of the spectacular progress made in automated theorem proving (both for very expressive logics like predicate logics, and for weak logics like description logics) over the last decade, we are not yet in the ideal world. The tools currently offered by the automated reasoning community still have a number of drawbacks when it comes to natural language applications.

For a start, most of the efforts of the first-order automated reasoning community have been devoted to theorem proving; model building, which is also a useful technology for natural language processing, is nowhere nearly as well developed, and far fewer systems are available. Secondly, the first-order reasoning community has adopted a resolutely 'classical' approach to inference problems: their provers focus exclusively on the satisfiability problem. The description logic community has been much more flexible, offering architectures and optimisations which allow a greater range of problems to be handled more directly. One reason for this has been that, historically, not all description logics offered full Boolean expressivity. So there is a long tradition in description logic of treating a variety of inference problems directly, rather than via reduction to satisfiability. Thirdly, many of the logics for which optimised provers exists do not directly offer the kinds of expressivity required for natural language applications. For example, it is hard to encode temporal inference problems in implemented versions of description logics. Fourth, for very strong logics (notably higher-order logics) few implementations exists and their performance is currently inadequate.

These problems are not insurmountable, and TALARIS members are actively investigating ways of overcoming them. For a start, logics such as higher-order logic, description logic and hybrid logic are nowadays thought of as various fragments of (or theories expressed in) first-order logic. That is, first-order logic provides a unifying framework that often allows transfer of tools or testing methodologies to a wide range of logics. For example, the hybrid logics used in TALARIS (which can be thought of as more expressive versions of description logics) make heavy use of optimization techniques from first-order theorem proving.

3.5. Empirical Studies

Keywords: *computational logic*, *computational semantics*, *empirical studies*, *inference*, *knowledge representation*, *linguistic resources*, *logic engineering*.

The role of empirical methods (model learning, data extraction from corpora, evaluation) has greatly increased in importance in both linguistics and computer science over the last fifteen years. TALARIS members have been working for many years on the creation, management and dissemination of linguistic resources reusable by the scientific community, both in the context of implementation of data servers, and in the definition of standardized representation formats like TAG-ML. In addition, they have also worked on the applications of linguistic ideas in multimodal settings and multimedia.

Such work is important to our scientific goals. As we said above, one of the most important points that needs to be understood about logical inference is how its use can be minimized and intelligently guided. Ultimately, such minimization and guidance must be based on empirical observations concerning the kinds of problems that arise repeatedly in natural language applications.

Finally, is should be remarked that the emphasis on empirical studies lends another dimension to what is meant by inference. While much of TALARIS's focus is on symbolic approaches to inference, statistical and probabilistic methods, either on their own or blended with symbolic approaches, are likely to play an increasingly important role in the future. TALARIS researchers are well aware of the importance of such approaches and are interested in exploring their strengths and weaknesses, and where relevant, intend to integrate them into their work.

4. Application Domains

4.1. Modular Grammar Building

The development of large scale grammars is a complex task which usually involves factorising information as much as possible. While good grammar writing and factorisation environments exist for "non tree grammars" (e.g., HPSG, LFG), this is not the case for "tree based grammars" such as TAG, Interaction Grammars or Tree Description Grammars. The Extended Metagrammar Compiler (XMG) developed at TALARIS remedies this shortcoming while additionally providing a clean and modular way to describe several linguistic dimensions thereby supporting the production of tree grammars with semantic information[1].

4.2. Referential Expressions

TALARIS has a longstanding interest in the semantics and the processing of referential expressions. In recent years, an extensive corpus annotation has been carried out on 5.000 definite descriptions[2]; an algorithm for generating bridging definite descriptions has been specified and implemented which illustrates the interaction of realisation and inference[3]; a constraint based algorithm for definite description has been proposed which differs from the standard one in that it uses constraints to produce a minimal description[4]; and a shallow anaphora resolver for French has been developed and evaluated within the national evaluation campaign MeDIA.

4.3. Surface Realization

The tree adjoining grammar for French developed by TALARIS associates with each NL expression not only a syntactic tree but also a semantic representation. Interestingly, the semantic calculus used is reversible in that the association between strings and semantic representations is non-directional (declarative). We put this feature to work and have been working over the years towards developing a surface realiser for French called GenI[5]. At present GenI is the only surface realiser available for French. Current work concentrates on improving both coverage and efficiency.

[1] [47], [49], [48], [50], [46], [51], [53], [78], [75], [76], [77], [65], [74]
[2] [69], [73], [70], [72], [71], [68], [62], [63]
[3] [79], [64], [66], [41]
[4] [54], [41]
[5] [67], [61]

4.4. Textual Entailment Recognition

In essence, the textual entailment recognition task is an inference task, namely deciding whether the information contained in a given text T_1 can be inferred from the information provided by another text T_2.

It is crucial to be able to answer this question. One important characteristic of natural language is the large number of ways in which it can express the same information. Many natural language processing applications like question answering, information retrieval, generation, and anaphora resolution need to deal with this diversity efficiently and accurately, and recognising textual entailments is a key step towards this.

Textual entailment recognition is a difficult task. The approach we are experimenting with is to encode lexical information as a description logic ontology (or a hybrid logic theory) and then to use logical inference to compute the result.

4.5. Computational Logics and Computational Semantics.

Members of TALARIS have long actively proposed and developed the idea of using inference (and in particular, using computational tools like model builders and theorem provers) as an integral part of different tasks in computational semantics, mainly during semantic construction[6]. The book "Representation and Inference for Natural Language: A First Course in Computational Semantics"[7] by Patrick Blackburn and Johan Bos is nowadays an important reference in this area.

4.6. Hybrid Automated Deduction

TALARIS's main contribution in this topic has been the design of resolution and tableaux calculi for hybrid logics, calculi that were then implemented in the HyLoRes and HTab theorem provers. For example, TALARIS members have proved that the resolution calculus for hybrid logics can be enhanced with optimisations of order and selection functions without losing completeness. Moreover, a number of 'effective' (i.e., directly implementable) termination proofs for the hybrid logic $\mathcal{H}(@)$ has been established, for both resolution and tableaux based approaches, and the techniques are being extended to more expressive languages. Current work includes adding a temporal reasoning component to the provers, extending the architecture to allow querying against a background theory without having to explore again the theory with each new query, and testing the hybrid provers performance against dedicated state-of-the-art provers from other domains (firs-order logic, description logics) using suitable translations.

Moreover, we are interested in providing a range of inference services beyond satisfiability checking. For example, the current version of HyLoRes and HTab includes model generation (i.e., the provers can generate a model when the input formula is satisfiable).

We have also started to explore other decision methods (e.g., game based decision methods) which are useful for non-standard semantics like topological semantics. The prover HyLoBan is an example of this work.

4.7. Multimedia

MLIF (Multi Lingual Information Framework) is intended to be a generic ISO-based mechanism for representing and dealing with multilingual textual information. A preliminary version of MLIF has been associated with digital media within the ISO/IEC MPEG context and dealing with subtitling of video content, dialogue prompts, menus in interactive TV, and descriptive information for multimedia scenes. MLIF comprises a flexible specification platform for elementary multilingual units that may be either embedded in other types of multimedia content or used autonomously to localise existing content.

[6] [42], [44]
[7] [45]

5. Software

5.1. AGREE

AGREE (Asynchronous Grounding of REferential Expressions) is a set of modules that manage the grounding process at the reference level. It contains an interpretation evaluation module that construes understanding judgments made by the system and those manifested in the dialogue by the user, a dialogue module that maintains a coherent state of the dialogue (adjacency pairs), and a generation module (GenI) in order to produce paraphrases of the understood referents. The whole system has been implemented in Java and uses the same semantic/referential representation that was used in the MEDIA project.

Version: 0.1
License: GPL
Last update: 2008-11-12
Web site: http://www.loria.fr/~denis/grounding.html
Authors: Alexandre Denis
Contact: Alexandre Denis

5.2. The eXtended Meta-Grammar (XMG) Compiler and Tools

A metagrammar compiler generates automatically a grammar from a reduced description called a MetaGrammar. This description captures the linguistic properties underlying the syntactical rules of a grammar. Various past and present TALARIS members have been working on metagrammar compilation since 2001 and several tools have been developed within this framework starting with the MGC system of Bertrand Gaiffe (now of ATILF, *Analyse et Traitment Informatique de la Langue Francaise*, a Nancy-based CNRS unit) to the newly developed XMG system of Crabbé et al.

The XMG system is a 2nd generation compiler that proposes (a) a representation language allowing the user to describe in a factorised and flexible way the linguistic information contained in the grammar, and (b) a compiler for this language (using a Warren Abstract Machine-like architecture). An innovative feature of this compiler is the fact that it makes it possible to describe several linguistic dimensions, and in particular it is possible to define a natural Syntax/Semantics interface within the Metagrammar.

The compiler actually supports two syntactic formalisms (Tree Adjoining Grammars and Interaction Grammars) and the description both of the syntactic and of the semantic dimension of natural language. The generated grammars are in XML format, which makes them easy to reuse. Plug-ins have been realised with the LLP2 parser, with Eric de la Clergerie's DyALog parser and with the GENI generator. Future work will deal with the modularisation and the extension of XMG to define a library of languages describing linguistic data allowing the user to describe his own target formalism.

Developed under the supervision of Denys Duchier, the XMG compiler is the result of an intensive collaboration with CALLIGRAMME. It has been implemented in Oz/Mozart and runs under the Linux, Mac, and Windows platforms. It is available with tools easing its use with parsers and generators (tree viewer, duplicate remover, anchoring module, metagrammar browser).

The system is currently being used and tested by Owen Rambow (University of Columbia, USA) and Laura Kallmeyer (University of Tuebingen, Germany).

Version: 1.1.4
License: CeCILL
Last update: 27/09/2005
Web site: http://sourcesup.cru.fr/xmg/
Documentation: http://sourcesup.cru.fr/xmg/#Documentation
Authors: Benoit Crabbé, Denys Duchier, Joseph Le Roux, Yannick Parmentier
Contact: Benoit Crabbé, Yannick Parmentier

5.3. Frolog

Frolog is a dialogue system based on current technology from computational linguistics, artificial intelligence planning, and theorem proving. It implements a text adventure game engine that uses natural language processing techniques to analyse the player's input and generate the system's output.

The Frolog core is implemented in Prolog and Java, but it uses external tools for the most heavy-loaded tasks. It performs syntactic analysis of the input based on an English grammar developed using XMG and computes a flat semantic representation using the Tulepa parser. It then uses the constructed semantic representation and an off-the-shelf planner to interpret the player's intention and change the world model accordingly. The world is modelled as a knowledge base in description logics, and accessed using the Description Logic theorem prover RACER. Finally, the results of the action, or descriptions of objects, are generated automatically, using the GENI generator.

Frolog is intended to serve as a laboratory in order to test pragmatic theories about the phenomenon of accommodation. It is also result in the first integrated system to use SEMTAG (the LORIA toolbox for TAG-based Parsing and Generation).

Version: 1.0
License: GPL
Last update: 2008-11-07
Authors: Luciana Benotti, Alejandra Lorenzo, Laura Perez
Contact: Luciana Benotti

5.4. GenI Generator

The GENI generator is a successor of the InDiGen generator. Also based on a chart algorithm, it is implemented in Haskell (one of the leading functional programming languages available nowadays) and aims for modularity, re-usability and extensibility. The system is "stand-alone" as we use the Glasgow Haskell compiler to obtain executable code for Windows, Solaris, Linux and Mac OS X.

The GENI generator uses efficient datatypes and intelligent rule application to minimise the generation of redundant structures. It also uses a notion of polarities as a means, first, of coping with lexical ambiguity and second, of selecting variants obeying given syntactic constraints.

The grammar used by the GENI generator is produced using the MetaGrammar Compiler and covers the basic syntactic structures of French as described in Anne Abeillé's book "An Electronic Grammar for French".

The system can process the output of the XMG Metagrammar compiler mentioned above.

Version: 0.8
License: GPL
Last update: 2005-10-17
Web site: http://wiki.loria.fr/wiki/GenI
Documentation: http://wiki.loria.fr/wiki/GenI/Manual
Project(s): GENI
Authors: Carlos Areces, Claire Gardent, Eric Kow
Contact: Claire Gardent

5.5. HyLoRes, a Resolution Based Theorem Prover for Hybrid Logics

HYLORES is a resolution based theorem prover for hybrid logics (it is complete for the hybrid language H(@,↓), a very expressive but undecidable language, and it implements a decision method for the sublanguage H(@)). It implements a version of the "given clause" algorithm which is the underlying framework of many current state of the art resolution-based theorem provers for first-order logic; and uses heuristics of order and selection function to prune the search space on the space of possible generated clauses.

HYLORES is implemented in Haskell, and compiled with the Glasgow Haskell compiler (thus, users need no additional software to use the prover). We have also developed a graphical interface.

The interest of HYLORES is twofold: on one hand it is the first mature theorem prover for hybrid languages, and on the other, it is the first modern resolution based prover for modal-like languages implementing optimisations and heuristics like order resolution with selection functions.

Version: 2.5
License: GPL
Last update: 2008-12-01
Authors: Carlos Areces, Daniel Gorín and Juan Heguiabehere
Contact: Carlos Areces

5.6. HTab, a Tableau Based Theorem prover for Hybrid Logics

The main goal behind HTAB is to make available an optimised tableaux prover for hybrid logics, using algorithms that ensure termination. We ultimately aim to cover a number of frame conditions (i.e., reflexivity, symmetry, antisymmetry, etc.), as far as we can ensure termination. Moreover, we are interested in providing a range of inference services beyond satisfiability checking. For example, the current version of HTAB includes model generation (i.e., HTAB can generate a model from a saturated open branch in the tableau).

HTAB and HYLORES are actually being developed in coordination, and a generic inference system involving both provers is being designed. The aim is to take advantage of the dual behaviour existing between the resolution and tableaux algorithms: while resolution is usually most efficient for unsatisfiable formulas (because a contradiction can be reported as soon as the empty clause is derived), tableaux methods are better suited to handle satisfiable formulas (because a saturated open branch in the tableaux represents a model for the input formula).

Version: 1.3.5
License: GPL
Last update: 2008-12-01
Authors: Carlos Areces, Guillaume Hoffmann
Contact: Guillaume Hoffmann

5.7. HyLoBan, a Game Based Theorem Prover for Topological Hybrid Logics

HYLOBAN is a game-based prover, resulting from a direct implementation of Sustretov's game-based proofs of the PSPACE-completeness of the hybrid logics of T0 and T1 topological spaces. The interest of this approach is that termination is guaranteed and in addition the underlying game-based architecture is of independent interest; its disadvantage is that (at present) it is still extremely inefficient.

Version: 0.2
License: GPL
Last update: 2008-12-01
Authors: Carlos Areces, Guillaume Hoffmann, Dmitry Sustretov
Contact: Guillaume Hoffmann

5.8. hGEN, a Random Formula Generator

hGen is a random CNF (conjunctive normal form) generator of formulas for sublanguages of H(@, $\downarrow$, A, P). It is an extension of the latest proposal of Patel-Schneider and Sebastiane, nowadays considered the standard testing environment for classical modal logics. The random generator is used for assessing the performance of different provers.

Version: 1.1
License: GPL

Last update: 2008-12-01
Authors: Carlos Areces, Daniel Gorín, Juan Heguiabehere and Guillaume Hoffmann
Contact: Carlos Areces

5.9. SynLex: Extracting a Syntactical Lexicon from the LADL Tables

Maurice Gross' grammar lexicon contains extremely rich and exhaustive information about the morphosyntactic and semantic properties of French syntactic functors (verbs, adjectives, nouns). Yet its use within natural language processing systems is still restricted.

The aim of our work is to translate this information into a format which is more suitable for use by NLP systems and also compatible with the state of the art practice in lexical data representation.

The lexicon should assign to each verb a set of subcategorisation frames. Frames are defined by a list of atoms (e.g., A0 V A1) representing the verb and its arguments, and by a list of atoms/feature structure pairs specifying the feature values associated with each of these atoms.

Two sets of subcategorisation lexicons (called LADL-SynLex and NLP-SynLex) were extracted from the LADL tables. The current SynLex contains the LADL- and NLP-SynLex lexicons for the LADL-tables 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14 and 16 which amounts to roughly 2.000 verb usages. Work is underway to process the remaining available tables which should yield a description of roughly 6.500 verbs.

SynLex is the result of joint work between TALARIS, ATILF and CALLIGRAMME[8]. It is currently being validated using the Sylva web service and will be made available in 2009.

Last update: 2005-10-14
Web site: Not yet available
Project(s): SynLex
Authors: Claire Gardent, Guy Perrier, Bruno Guillaume, Ingrid Falk
Contact: Claire Gardent

5.10. MEDIA

In the framework of the MEDIA project, software has been developed to process transcriptions of a spoken dialogue corpus and to provide a semantic representation of their task-related content. This software contains a tokeniser, a LTAG parser (LLP2), a LTAG grammar, an OWL ontology and a set of rules in description logic, and works together with a reasoner such as RACER. The current version contains a reference resolution module (anaphora and deixis) which is based on the referential domains theory. The package also contains ways to project the semantic form (referentially solved) into the MEDIA formalism and to evaluate the accuracy of the representation using a test corpus. The whole system has been implemented in Java and communicates with other modules using TCP/IP.

Version: 0.5
License: GPL
Website: http://www.loria.fr/~denis/media.html
Last update: 12/11/2008
Project(s): MEDIA
Authors and Contact: Alexandre Denis

5.11. Nessie

Nessie is a semantic construction tool written in OCaml. It takes a lexicon and a syntax tree as input and produces a semantic representation taking the form of a simply typed lambda term. Simply typed lambda calculus is used not only as the target language, but also as the glue language for assembling the representations provided by the lexicon.

[8] [59], [56]

This tool has been successfully used in several applications, the most notable of which being the computation of discourse semantics according to two different theories, namely the compositional DRT (Muskens 95) and the compositional treatment of dynamicity (de Groote 2006).

Future developments of Nessie may include using richer typing systems, and interfacing it with inference and rewriting tools to simplify the representations it produces.

Last update: 2008-11-14
Authors: Sébastien Hinderer
Contact: Sébastien Hinderer

5.12. DeDe Corpus

DeDe is a corpus of roughly 50.000 words where around 5.000 definite descriptions have been annotated as coreferential, contextually dependent, non referential or autonomous. The corpus consists of articles from the newspaper *Le Monde* and is annotated with Multext-based morphosyntactic information[9].

Authors: Claire Gardent, Hélène Manuelian
Web site: Distributed by the CNRTL http://www.cnrtl.fr/
Contact: Claire Gardent

5.13. SemFRaG

A TAG grammar developed with the XMG metagrammar compiler and which describes both the syntax and the semantics of natural language expressions. Syntactically, the grammars covers the TSNLP testsuite and work is in progress to acquire an equivalent semantic coverage. Used both for parsing and for generation.

Authors: Claire Gardent, Benoit Crabbé
Contact: Claire Gardent

6. New Results

6.1. Introduction

To structure our discussion of the new results for TALARIS in 2008, we shall discuss the four main themes in turn:

- Computational Semantics
- Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics
- Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation,
- Multilinguality for Multimedia

6.2. Computational Semantics

The Computational Semantics group in TALARIS focuses on two main points:

- The development of a computational infrastructure for the semantic processing of French
- The interfacing of natural language processing (NLP) systems with knowledge based inference

The bulk of the work in these area is led by Claire Gardent, who guides the work of Marilisa Amoia, Paul Bedaride, Ingrid Falk, Eric Kow, Yannick Parmentier, Sylvain Schmitz, and Fabienne Venant. In addition, Patrick Blackburn and Sébastien Hinderer work on computational semantics (though applications in French are not the focus of their work). Many of the tools produced by Computational Semantics group are used by other TALARIS researchers, notably from the Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics group.

[9] [62]

6.2.1. Computational Semantics for French

In 2008, work focused on further developing and evaluating NLP resources and tools for the semantic treatment of French and English. The resources worked on include a synonym lexicon for French, a syntactic lexicon for French and a TAG grammar for English. The tools that were developed are a Named entity recogniser (NER) for French and a semantic role labeler for English. In what follows, we describe each of these results in more details.

6.2.1.1. A synonym lexicon for French.

To reason about the meaning of text, lexical semantic knowledge is necessary and in particular, knowledge about synonyms (to detect that two sentences carry the same meaning, it is necessary to be able to detect synonymous words). Together with ATILF, we initiated the MISN CPER operation Syn2 whose aim is to merge 5 synonym dictionaries on the basis of the TLFi definitions. We defined a method which uses gloss-based similarity measures to group synonyms in a principled way, defined a gold standard for evaluation and evaluated the performance (precision and recall) of various similarity measures and different levels of pre-processing on the TLFi definitions. The best method yields an F-measure of 0.76% thereby indicating a reasonably reliable methods (likewise agreement between human annotator neighbours 80%). Current and future work focuses on (i) further improving the methods, (ii) applying it to other available synonym lexicons in order to improve coverage and (iii) linking the synonyms set thus found within a Wordnet like structure thereby providing better support for inference in NLP.

6.2.1.2. A syntactic verb lexicon for French.

A verbal syntactic lexicon lists for each verb the type and the number of its arguments. Such a lexicon is required for any NLP application involving either parsing or generation. Over the last three years, TALARIS has worked on extracting such a lexicon from a large scale linguistic resource manually developed under Maurice Gross' guidance namely, the LADL tables [10]. However it is clear that the extracted lexicon is imperfect. We therefore carried out an evaluation of this lexicon using corpus based methods and computing precision (percent of correct entries wrt a gold standard) and recall (percent of gold standard entries present in the extracted lexicon). The results [11] show that SYNLEX has a low precision but reasonably good recall thus suggesting that manual validation is a good way to clean up the lexicon and thereby produce a reasonably extensive and correct resource. To this end, we worked with CALLIGRAMME within the MISN CPER operation BDSyn to develop a webservice supporting the validation of the lexicon entries by multiple annotator [32]. Within the ANR project passage, we furthermore worked on extracting probabilistic information needed to guide parsing. That is, we extracted for each verb/frame present in Synlex (and in corpus), a probability based on corpus frequency. In future, we plan to use this probability information in conjunction with the validated synlex lexicon to acquire semantic verb classes and more generally, to build a verbnet like resource for French as required by semantic parsing and more specifically, semantic role labelling.

6.2.1.3. A Tree Adjoining Grammar for English.

To parse and generate sentences a grammar is required. CALLIGRAMME and TALARIS have been developing over the last 5 years medium size grammars for French using the XMG grammar writing environment developed by Denys Duchier, Yannick Parmentier and Joseph LeRoux. The TALARIS grammar SEMFRAG is a Tree Adjoining Grammar augmented with a unification based compositional semantics. A distinguishing feature of SEMFRAG is its reversibility: the grammar can be used with a parser to derive the semantic representation of a sentence or conversely, with a realiser to produce the sentences associated by the grammar with a given meaning. In [12], we show that the type of semantics used in SEMFRAG obey some general principles which are common to other types of unification based semantics such as the glue semantics used in Lexical Functional Grammar and make it easier to integrate the required semantic information in a large scale grammar. [21] shows how to use these principles to reformulate the semantic dimension of SEMFRAG in a more general and compact way. XMG was furthermore used to reimplement the XTAG grammar (a TAG grammar for English) developed by the University of Pennsylvania.

[10] [57], [58], [60]
[11] [52]
[12] [55]

6.2.1.4. Named entity recognition.

In collaboration with the DFKI (Saarbruecken), we adapted a named entity recogniser (NER) originally developed for English to French. The NER is a hybrid system which combine symbolic chunking and statistical learning to detect the names of places, persons and organisations in running text. Current results indicate an F-measure of 85% on the Frantext corpus but a low learning curve (out of domain names remains hard to recognise). We are currently working on improving both the chunking and the learning modules.

6.2.1.5. Semantic role labelling.

One step towards recovering the meaning of a text consists in identifying predicates and their arguments. Semantic role labelling (SRL) aims to identify for each verb (or noun) present in a text, its argument and the relation holding between verb and argument. We developed a state of the art hybrid SRL system which achieves 79% F measure on the Propbank data, the gold standard used in evaluation campaign. The system [31] differs from existing one in that it uses symbolic rewriting rules to map syntactic structures to predicate/arguments ones. We intend to exploit the rewriting system further to derive from the syntactic structure, representations that are closer to real meaning representation. Eventually, the aim is to develop a state of the art entailment recognition system based on principled linguistics.

6.2.1.6. Natal workshop.

The 3 day Natal workshop gathered students and researchers from Nancy, Saarbruecken and neighbouring areas (Paris, Tuebingen) around two NLP themes namely, tree based grammars for French and German and error mining in grammars and lexicon. The workshop gathered around 30 participants from France and Germany.

6.3. Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation

The Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation focuses on two main points:

- The theoretical study of hybrid logic (propositional, first-order, and higher-order) and the implementation of efficient proof methods for them.
- Investigating other logics of relevance to natural language and knowledge representation, notably memory logics, dedicated planning methods, and discourse representation theory (DRT).

The bulk of the work in this area is conducted by Carlos Areces, Patrick Blackburn, Dmitry Sustretov, Guillaume Hoffmann, Daniel Gorín and Sergio Mera. The inference methods studied by this group are relevant to the work of the Computational Semantics group and the Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics group, in particular the work of Luciana Benotti on presupposition and information accommodation (which makes heavy used of description logic and planning) and Paul Bedaride's work on textual entailment (which explores the use of description and hybrid logics).

6.3.1. Automated Theorem Proving for Hybrid Logics

Over the last year this area has been extensively developed several directions. On the one hand, HyLoRes, the resolution based theorem prover for hybrid logics, has finally arrived to a very stable stage of development. It has a modular architecture, it has been extensively tested, and it has a graphical interface. However the main focus was to develop it to use parallel resolution algorithms.

On the other hand we have included a number of important optimizations into HTab, the tableaux based prover for hybrid logics. Actually, preliminary tests show that HTab outperforms (the non parallel version of) HyLoRes, and the state of the art description logic provers FaCT and Pellet when tested over hybrid logic formulas. We are currently comparing HTab with the parallel version of HyLoRes on a machine with multiple cores. As expected, by taking advantage of parallelization, HyLoRes can outperform HTab when tests are sufficiently difficult.

Another important aim during this year was the development of inference services beyond satisfiability checking. Both HyLoRes and HTab currently includes model generation (i.e., they can generate a model when the input formula is satisfiable).

After our experience in designing and developing HyLoRes and HTab, we are currently in the process of drawing the main lines of a new system that we call InToHyLo. InToHyLo is actually an integrated collection of tools that work in collaboration to offer a varied spectrum of inference services for different hybrid logics. The main inference task addressed by InToHyLo will be satisfiability checking, but the system will also be able to offer more varied and complex services, like model generation, model checking, bisimulation checking and instance retrieval. Initially, InToHyLo was created from the integration of HyLoRes and HTab, and this is what we are going to discuss in detail below. But in the future we will consider the addition of other tools (like the HyLoBan for topological semantics). The core idea behind InToHyLo is to take advantage of the inherent dual behavior existing between the resolution based and the tableaux based calculi: while the resolution method performs better on unsatisfiable formulas, the tableau method performs better on satisfiable formulas.

Our first step will be to transform HyLoRes and HTab into server applications, while HyLoRun will act as a client application which will connect to the provers submitting queries and displaying the results. HyLoRun will detect whether HyLoRes and/or HTab are running as servers and connect to them using either HTTP or TCP services. This architecture is the one used by some description logic provers and we believe that it has some important benefits:

1. To start with, the different components of InToHyLo (currently, the two provers and the front-end) can evolve independently without interfering with applications making use of them, as long as the communication protocols are maintained. In addition, new inference tools can be added as additional servers and only the front-end will need to be modified to offer these additional services.
2. Secondly, and as we will further explain later, we want to investigate ways in which the two provers can collaborate while working in a given problem. With this idea in mind, we want the provers to be able to exchange information (i.e., partial results) in a manner that is transparent to the user.
3. But the most important reason for choosing this architecture is that it lets us implement a notion of 'proof state'. This idea is again a fundamental characteristic of description logic provers: the user should be able to 'load' a problem into the system, and then query it for answers. Perhaps many different queries will be posed to the prover about the same problem, and the prover can take advantage of previous results to answer future queries.

6.3.2. Distributed Testing

Exploring the effect of different optimizations in the behaviour of the theorem provers developed by the team is a complex task. One tool which is extensively used in the field is to use a random formula generator that can generate formulas according to different parameters that can tune the expected complexity of determining whether the formula is satisfiable or not. These tests provide extremely useful statistical data about the behaviour of the provers over different kinds of formulas. The main drawback of such tests is that they are very time consuming. To be statistically relevant, the provers have to be ran over thousands of formulas, and when each single formula becomes non trivial (say taking a couple of minutes of CPU time), running a single test might take over a week.

To solve this problem we developed during 2008 a distributed testing framework that takes advantage of the Grid5000 (https://www.grid5000.fr). As every single run of a prover on a random formula is independent of each other, we can farm out each individual test to multiple machines in the grid obtaining a linear speed up (on the number of grid nodes used). By using this technique, testing time has been reduced manyfold.

This work has been done in the framework of the project PARLO, from the MISN TALC.

6.3.3. Representing State Evolution

When we are interested languages as tools for modeling behaviour, it is natural to look for extensions which are able to capture some notion of state. Good examples of such logics are the different epistemic logics with dynamic operators (often called Dynamic Epistemic Logics), which model the evolution of knowledge by accessing and changing the model structure through logic operators. Many other examples exist in the literature: update logics, XCTL, the freeze operator, etc.

We have investigated a new family of logics, which we call memory logics, to capture some common features which are shared by logics like the ones we just mentioned. The aim is to define a general framework where we can study how to add explicit state to a model, and how to access and modify it via logical operators. In a number of publications during this year we have investigated the expressive power of memory logics, the complexity of their satisfiability problem, and we have developed tableaux and model checking algorithms.

6.3.4. Higher Order Hybrid Logics

Higher Order Logic is a classical formalism for natural language semantics semantics. In previous years, we have investigated how the addition of hybrid operators in the classical framework of higher order logics can improve language modelling[13].

This year we have taken up again this issue and we are currently working in a sound and complete axiomatization for higher order hybrid logics. We expect to obtain a general completeness result (i.e., covering extensions of the basic axiomatization with pure formulas and existential saturation rules) as it is the case for first-order hybrid logics. Such a result would be of interesting when providing semantics for different natural language phenomena (e.g., time and aspect) which assume special conditions on their formal models.

6.4. Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics

The Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics group in TALARIS focuses on two main themes:

- The study of grounding, mutual understanding, and collaboration.
- The study of presupposition and information accommodation for a planning-based perspective.

The bulk of the work in this area is conducted by Patrick Blackburn, Alexandre Denis, Luciana Benotti, Matthieu Quignard, Daniel Coulon and Carlos Areces. The group is making increasingly heavy use of the tools provided by the Computational Semantics group (notably the GENI generator, XMG based grammars, and the SEMCONST grammar constructor), a trend that is likely to continue. In addition, the group is making increasing use of a inference tools, which leads to links with the themes explored by the the Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation group.

6.4.1. Grounding and Mutual Understanding

One of the most difficult problems in discourse is guaranteeing mutual understanding. Early AI approaches to dialog (that is, work from the 1970s and 1980s) tended to ignore the problem: such models assumed perfect understanding or had very crude models of repair. From a theoretical perspective such approaches are very bad. Dialog is essentially one long mutual effort at negotiating and checking understanding. Moreover, from a practical perspective such a model leads to inflexible dialogue systems.

One of the major successes of the group over the past two years has been to develop and implement a detailed computational model of the process of *grounding*, that is, the exchange of signals that takes place during the process of accepting/rejecting dialog. A notable feature of this model is that it offered an approach to deal with situations where the evidence of understanding has itself been misunderstood. The most detailed presentation of this work can be found in the Alexander Denis's recently finished PhD thesis [12]. This work will form the basis for the team's further work on implementing robust dialogue systems.

6.4.2. Presupposition and Information Accommodation

A pervasive feature of the way we use natural language is the heavy use made of inference to smooth the process on communication. We don't have to spell everything out: we rely on the fact that the people we talk with have lots of knowledge and experience that lets them find their way to the correct interpretation. For example, when giving people instructions, we typically don't give all the details: if we ask someone to make a salad, we typically don't tell them that they should wash the lettuce as a part of this process. We rely on the fact that people can successfully "fill in" such tacit actions. The study of such linguistic inferences belongs to the area known as pragmatics, and in particular, the study of presupposition and accommodation.

[13] [43]

Giving an explicit computational model of part of this process is the underlying idea of Luciana Benotti's PhD thesis; for some her her recent work on this topic see [19]. Taking as her starting point a text adventure game called FrOz that made use of Description Logic inference tools, she added planning capability to it (yielding FrOzA, or FrOz Advanced system). The use of planning techniques enables the game dialogue system to "fill in" tacit action required by the players instructions, which results in far more natural, and linguistically plausible interactions. This work is currently being extended by Luciana Benotti and Patrick Blackburn. A reimplementation, called Frolog, of this system is nearing completion. This reimplementation allows all language processing and inference and planning tasks to be handed over to external modules so that the ideas can be applied in more sophisticated settings.

6.5. Multilinguality for Multimedia

Work in this domain is primarily carried out by Samuel Cruz-Lara, Nadia Bellelem, Lotfi Bellelem and Ingrid Falk. This is the most applied part of the TALARIS team. Their work centers around:

- MLIF (the Multi Lingual Information Framework) a generic ISO-based mechanism for representing and dealing with multilingual textual information.
- The W3C's SMIL (Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language), which allows an author to describe the temporal behaviour of a multi-media presentation.

This has been a successful year for the group. Moreover, it has been a year in which this group has become increasingly integrated with the rest of TALARIS, which is highly desirable and points the way to the future.

The first development is that Samuel Cruz-Lara successfully applied for and ITEA2 project called SEMby-SEM, which stand "Services management by Semantics". The goal of the SEMbySEM project is to develop a new open source supervision system adapted to the increasing complexity of "systems of systems". This new supervisions system will be based on the extensive use of semantic technologies (notably ontologies). Pleasingly, this project has led to a close collaboration with the Computational Semantics part of the TALARIS team. Ingrid Falk's PhD thesis is being jointly supervised by Claire Gardent and and Samuel Cruz-Lara, and it builds a bridge between semantics and multimedia.

In addition, the team recently received notification that it has succeeded in obtaining a second ITEA2 project called METAVERSE. This project, which deals with the links between real and virtual worlds, will further increase the coherence of the TALARIS team, as there are clear links between this work and the work of the Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics component of TALARIS, links that are already being explored. This project will start in 2009.

7. Other Grants and Activities

7.1. Introduction

The following section lists the projects and collaborations that TALARIS is involved in at international, European, national, and local levels. Each is classified according to which of the four major TALARIS themes (that is: Computational Semantics; Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics; Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation; and Multilinguality for Multimedia) it mainly contributes towards. In some cases the work contributes to several themes.

7.2. International level

7.2.1. InSeDiSy: Inference Services for Dialogue Systems

Theme: Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation; Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics

Description: This is a small pilot project carried out with the University of Buenos Aires to investigate the use of inference services for dialogue systems. The TALARIS team is involved because of its work in both areas.

Administrative context: MINCYT (Argentinian Minstery of Science and Technology), CNRS, INRIA

Period: start 2008-01 / end 2010-01

Contact: Carlos Areces

Partner(s): University of Buenos Aires

7.2.2. MICROBIO: Merging, InduCing and Reasoning with Ontologies in BIOinformatics

Theme: Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation

Description: The MICROBIO project deals with mining bioinformatics documents, and in particular, with the problem of matching genes with relevant bibliographic information. The TALARIS team is involved because of its work with ontologies and Description Logic.

Administrative context: STIC AmSud

Web site: http://www.microbioamsud.net/

Period: start 2008-01 / end 2010-01

Contact: Carlos Areces

Partner(s): Facultad de Matemática, Astronomía y Física. Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina; INCO, Facultad de Ingeniería, Universidad de la República del Uruguay; Institut Pasteur de Montevideo, Uruguay; MoDyCO (Modéles, Dynamiques, Corpus) UMR 7114 CNRS, Université Paris X, Nanterre, France; Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Faculdade de Informatica, Brasil; Universidad de Concepción, Chile;

7.2.3. Nancy TEI-host

Theme: Computational Semantics; Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics; Multilinguality for Multimedia

Description: On January 1st, 2005, Nancy became the fourth host of the TEI consortium (Text Encoding Initiative - http://www.tei-c.org). This resulted from the wish of ATILF, Loria (TALARIS) and INIST to act together in their contribution to standardisation activities for the encoding of textual information. In this context, TALARIS is particularly active in the domains of spoken corpora, terminology and dictionary encoding techniques.

Contact: Mathieu Quignard

Period: start 2008-01 / no fixed end-date

Partner(s): ATILF, INIST

7.3. European Level

7.3.1. AMIGO: Ambient Intelligence for a Networked Home Environment

Theme: Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics

Description: The European AMIGO Project (which came to an end in early 2008) focused on the design of middleware architecture supporting an optimal interoperability between devices and services for home care and family life. The participation of TALARIS was motivated by the design of an enhanced multimodal fusion module, which would extend the one designed in the early OZONE project (voice + 2D paths on a tablet PC) to process 3D pointing gestures. Although 2D and 3D devices provides more or less the same type of information (2D paths on a projection screen or display) and the same communicative intention (designation), the introduction of 3D gestures in our multimodal fusion required deep changes in our fusion algorithms.

Administrative context: IST European Program

Web site: http://www.extra.research.philips.com/euprojects/amigo

Period: start 2004-09-01 / end 2008-02-28

Contact: Matthieu Quignard

Partner(s): Philips Research (Eindhoven)

7.3.2. SEMbySEM: Services management by Semantics

Theme: Multilinguality for Multimedia

Description: The goal of the SEMbySEM project is to develop a new open source supervision system adapted to the increasing complexity of "systems of systems". This new supervisions system will be based on the extensive use of semantic technologies (notably ontologies). It will provide a set of tools allowing the set up of dedicated supervision systems according to the various stakeholders' needs and domain knowledge.

The TALARIS team's contribution to this project will center on providing language technology for developing, maintaining, and enriching ontologies and on developing ISO standards for multilingual user interfaces.

Administrative context: ITEA2 07021

Web site: http://www.itea2.org/public/project_leaflets/SEMbySEM_profile_oct-08.pdf

Period: start 2008-07-31 / end 2010-12-31

Contact: Samuel Cruz-Lara

Partner(s): Finnish partners: Identoi, LogiNets, Oliotalo, VTT; French partners: Thales (Project Leader), ArcInformatique, CityPassenger, LISSI (Université de Paris 12), LIG (IMAG GRenoble); Spanish partners: Trimek, DataPixel, SQS, CBT, Innovalia; Turkish partners: AGM Lab, METU.

7.4. National Level

7.4.1. CCCP-Prosodie

Theme: Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics; Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation

Description: The goal of CCCP-Prosodie is to empirically investigate the functioning of online communities (such as Wikipedia), and particular to link their activities and their use of language (as recorded in such corpora as email exchanges, for example). The TALARIS team is involved in this project for three reasons: to provide Natural language processing tools, to design an annotation scheme capable of dealing with information from both the social sciences (sociology and economics) and the humanities (psychology and ergonomics), and to provide help with inference technology.

Administrative context: ANR CONTINT

Web site: Not yet in place.

Period: start 2008-01-12 / end 2011-31-06

Contact: Mathieu Quignard

Partner(s): Institut Télécom, UTC Compiégne, UNSA (Univ. Nice Sophia-Antipolis), Univ. de Versailles St-Quentin

7.4.2. Passage

Theme: Computational Semantics

Description: The PASSAGE project has two main aim. The first is to improve the robustness and precision of existing computational grammars for French, and to use them on large corpora (corpora containing several million words). The second is to exploit the result syntactical analyzes to create richer linguistic resources (such as Treebanks) for the French language.

Administrative context: ANR MDCA

Web site: http://atoll.inria.fr/passage/home-fr.html

Period: start 2007-01-01 / end 2009-31-12

Contact: Claire Gardent

7.4.3. Rhapsodie

Theme: Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics; Computational Semantics

Description: The goal of this project is to provide a reference corpus for French which links syntactic and prosodic annotation. TALARIS is involved because of its experience in this area, and also to provide help on normalisation and integration with the TEI initiative.

Administrative context: ANR Corpus SHS

Web site: http://rhapsodie.risc.cnrs.fr/fr/index.html

Period: start 2008-01-01 / end 2011-31-06

Contact: Mathieu Quignard

Partner(s): Modyco, Ircam, Lattice, ERSS, LPL

7.4.4. Rhapsodis

Theme: Discourse, Dialogue and Pragmatics; Computational Semantics

Description: The aim of this project is to improve speech recognition performance by incorporating semantic and syntactic information into the recognition process. The TALARIS team is aims to provide suitable semantic and syntactic input.

Administrative context: ARC INRIA

Web site: http://rapsodis.loria.fr

Period: start 2008-01-01 / end 2009-31-12

Contact: Claire Gardent

Partner(s): ATILF, PAROLE, IRISA (Texmex), CEA (Metiss)

7.5. Local Level

7.5.1. Align

Theme: Discourse, dialogue and pragmatics

Description: The Align project deals with the problem of semi-automatically aligning written transcription of speech with the sound signal. In addition, it addresses the problems raised by anonymisation (suppressing proper names, for example, to ensure anonymity of the participants).

Administrative context: CPER MISN-TALC

Web site: http://www.loria.fr/~cerisara/TALC/index.html

Period: 2008-01-01 / end 2009-12-3

Contact: Matthieu Quignard

Partner(s): ATILF, PAROLE

7.5.2. BDSyn

Theme: Computational Semantics

Description: This project is intended to develop and validate a web-server for the syntactic lexicon. Carried out in collaboration with the Orpailleur project, tha TALARIS contribution is to provide and organise the necessary lexical resources.

Administrative context: CPER MISN-TALC

Web site: http://www.loria.fr/~guillaum/BDSyn/

Period: 2007-04-01 / end 2008-12-31

Contact: Claire Gardent

7.5.3. Parlo

Theme: Logics for Natural Language and Knowledge Representation

Description: The Parlo project investigates methods for parallel inference and distributed testing for hybrid logic. During 2008 we implemented a distributed testing platform on python which we are actively using in the GRID5000. The TALARIS team is involved in this project because hybrid logic is central to its research efforts.

Administrative context: CPER MISN-TALC

Period: 2008-06 / end 2008-12

Contact: Carlos Areces

7.5.4. Reco

Theme: Computational semantics

Description: The goal of the Reco project is to adapt software for named entity recognition developed at the DFKI in Saarbrücken for French. This project forms part of the TALARIS teams goal of developing a complete range of of software and resources for natural language processing for French.

Administrative context: CPER MISN-TALC

Web site: http://www.loria.fr/~gardent/talc/

Period: 2008-01-01 / end 2009-12-31

Contact: Claire Gardent

7.5.5. Syn2

Theme: Computational Semantics

Description: The Syn2 project deal with the problems raised by merging the information contained in seven different different syntactic lexicons for French. The TALARIS team is involved in this project because the basic methodology used is an extension of previous work by TALARIS team members.

Administrative context: CPER MISN-TALC

Web site: http://www.loria.fr/~guillaum/BDSyn/

Period: 2007-04-01 / end 2008-12-31

Contact: Claire Gardent

8. Dissemination

8.1. PhD Theses

- Marilisa Amoia defended her University of the Saarland PhD thesis entitled *Reconnaissance d'implications textuelles Ã forte composante linguistique*, supervised by Claire Gardent, on 7 November 2008.
- Alexander Denis defended his University of Nancy 1 (UHP) PhD thesis entitled *Robustesse dans les systèmes de dialogue finalisé : modélisation etévaluation du processus d'ancrage pour la gestion de l'incompréhension Surface realisation: ambiguity and determinism*, supervised by Laurent Romary and Matthieu Quignard, on 24 October 2008.
- Sébastien Hinderer defended his University of Nancy 1 (UHP) PhD thesis entitled *Automatisation de la construction sémantique dans le lambda-calcul simplement typé avec plusieurs types de base*, supervised by Patrick Blackburn, on 21 October 2008.

8.2. Service to the Scientific Community

- Carlos Areces
  - Member of the Management Board of the Association of Logic, Language and Information, 2005–2008.
- Patrick Blackburn
  - Member of the INRIA Nancy-Grand Est steering committee.
  - Member of the Management Board of the Association of Logic, Language and Information, 2005–2009.
  - Liason officer for the *Erasmus Mundus* Masters in *Language and Communication Technology*.
- Samuel Cruz-Lara
  - Samuel Cruz-Lara: Person in charge, at the national level, of the reception of Mexican students in the "Professional Licences of Computer Science".
- Christine Fay-Varnier
  - Vice president of the Council of studies and university life of the INPL.
  - Representative of the INPL for the steering committee TICE (Information and Communication Technology for Education) for Nancy University.
- Claire Gardent
  - Member of the nominating committee of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics (EACL)
  - Member of the LORIA steering committee.
  - Coordinator of the theme TALC (Computational Linguistics and Computational Approaches to Knowledge) for the CPER-MISN (National and Regional Research Funding).
  - Organiser of the LORIA seminar on Computational Linguistics.
  - Member of the recruiting committee for short term posts at INRIA Lorraine/LORIA.
- Matthieu Quignard
  - Coordinator for TEI Nancy (Text Encoding Initiative, Nancy branch) concerning spoken corpus annotation normalisation.

- Fabienne Venant
  - Member of the Administrative Council of ATALA, the French national organisation for computational linguistics (see http://www.atala.org/).

8.3. Editorial and Program Committee Work

- Carlos Areces:
  - Editor of the *Journal of Logic, Language, and Information*, 2005 – Present.
  - Editor of *Journal of Applied Logic*, 2004 – Present.
  - Member of the FOLLI Editorial Board for the series of books in Logic Language and Information to be published with Springer-Verlag as Lecture Notes in Computer Science (LNCS) and/or Lecture notes in Artificial Intelligence (LNCS/LNAI).
  - Member of the Program Committee of the Workshop on Complexity, Expressibility, and Decidability in Automated Reasoning (CEDAR08), Sydney, Australia.
  - Member of the Program Committee of the 18th European Conference on Artiï¬¬cial Intelligence, ECAI 2008, Patras, Greece.
  - Member of the Program Committee of the 2008 International Workshop on Description Logics (DL2008), Dresden, Germany.
  - Co-chair of the Program Committee of the Advances in Modal Logic Workshop (AiML), Nancy, France.
- Patrick Blackburn:
  - Chief Editor of the *Journal of Logic, Language, and Information*, 2002 – Present.
  - Editor of the *Review of Symbolic Logic*, from 2007 – Present.
  - Editor of the *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic, 2005 – Present.*
  - Subject Editor (Logic and Language) for the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
  - Foreign Correspondent of *Logique et Analyse*.
- Claire Gardent
  - Program Chair for the 12th Conference of the European Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics, Athens, Greece, June 2009.
  - Program Chair for the 8th Tree Adjoining Grammar workshop, Tuebingen, June 2008.
  - Member of the FOLLI Editorial Board for the series of books in Logic Language and Information to be published with Springer-Verlag as Lecture Notes in Computer Science (LNCS) and/or Lecture notes in Artificial Intelligence (LNCS/LNAI).
  - Member of the Program Committee for ACL-08 (Association for Computational Linguistics), Columbus, Ohio, USA, June 15 - 20, 2008. and Logic, a sub-area within Semantics.
  - Member of the Program Committee for COLING 2008 (Computational Linguistics).
  - Member of the Program Committee for CICLing-2008, 9th International Conference on Computational Linguistics and Intelligent Text Processing, Haifa, Israel, February 2008.
  - Member of the Program Committee for INLG 2008 (International conference on natural language generation), June 12-14, Ohio, USA.
  - Member of the Program Committee for the 5th International Workshop on Constraints and Language Processing (CSLP2008)
  - Member of the Program Committee for the 6th edition of the Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC 2008),Marrakech (Morocco),

- Member of steering committee for l'école Logique et Sémantique du Langage Naturel, Toulouse.
- Member of the Program Committee for TALN (Traitement automatique des langues), Avignon, June 2008.
- Member of the Program Committee for the 1er congrés mondial de linguistique francaise (CMLF 2008)

8.4. Invited presentations

- Carlos Areces:
  - One week course on "Advanced Hybrid Logics" at the Department of Computer Science, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
  - One week course on "Automated Deduction" at the "Escuela de Vernao de Rio Cuarto", Rio Cuarto, Argentina.
  - One week course on "Computational Logics" at the ESSLLI 2008, Hamburg, Germany.
- Patrick Blackburn:
  - One week course on "Advanced Hybrid Logics" at the Department of Computer Science, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.
  - One week course on "Computational Semantics" at the "Escuela de Vernao de Rio Cuarto", Rio Cuarto, Argentina.
  - One week course on "Computational Logics" at the ESSLLI 2008, Hamburg, Germany.

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