



Proceedings of the Seventh Global Wordnet Conference

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Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure







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The seventh Global Wordnet Conference is organized by the University of Tartu, Institute of Computer Science in co-operation with the Global WordNet Association.

The conference homepage can be found at http://gwc2014.ut.ee/

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Preface

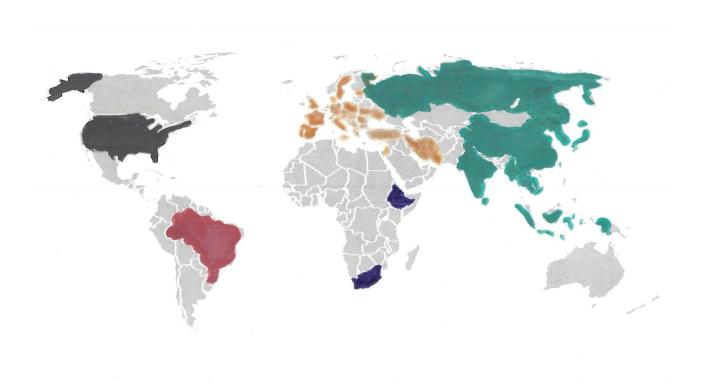
The seventh Global WordNet Conference includes presentations about new wordnets in languages like Amharic, Kurdish and Northern Sotho. The map shows the countries where wordnets are built in the local languages; if one colored in all the regions where these languages are spoken, most of the world would be covered!

Beyond the emergence of new lexical resources, the global wordnet endeavor has generated and facilitated research in linguistics, computational linguistics, psycholinguistics, ontology, lexicology, mathematics and a wide range of practical applications. The presentations in this volume reflect the manifold activities of our thriving global wordnet community.

We are grateful to the colleagues who reviewed submissions and provided constructive criticism as well as to the local organizers who performed uncountable large and small tasks. And we thank all of you present here for making this an exciting meeting.

Tartu, January 2014

Christiane Fellbaum, Piek Vossen, Heili Orav



Invited speaker: Alessandro Lenci

Will Distributional Semantics Ever Become Semantic?

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Abstract

Distributional Semantics (DS) is a rich family of computational models that build semantic representations of lexical items from their statistical distribution in linguistic contexts. DS is currently experiencing an unprecedented fortune with a growing attention not only in computational linguistics, but also in cognitive science and theoretical linguistics. This is proved by the wide range of DS models that have appeared (e.g., vector spaces, Bayesian models, neural networks, etc.), but even more by the increased number of semantic tasks that these models have been applied to.

DS was born to address a specific issue, that is measuring the semantic similarity of lexical items to be used for thesaurus construction or synonym identification. The Distributional Hypothesis, the main theoretical foundation of DS, is in fact a statement about lexical semantic similarity, which is defined in terms of similarity of linguistic contexts. However, human semantic competence well exceeds the ability to judge lexical similarity. Polysemy, compositionality, inference, semantic creativity are only some of the main phenomena that must be part of the agenda of any full-fledged semantic theory. DS aims at becoming a general model for semantic representation and processing, and therefore it must be evaluated with respect to its ability to explain semantic facts like these. What is the current ability of DS to address these issues? To what extent semantic properties can be modeled in terms of distributional semantic similarity, or alternatively, can DS go beyond the mere notion of semantic similarity? What lies beyond its possibilities? Recently, DS has begun to address issues such as compositionality, polysemy, and semantic relations, but lots of questions remain open. The purpose of this talk is to explore the current boundaries of DS and the chances to enlarge them, in particular by finding new synergies with other types of semantic models.

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