## Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence 3230

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# Advances in Natural Language Processing

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#### Preface

EsTAL – España for Natural Language Processing – continued on from the three previous conferences: FracTAL, held at the Université de Franch-Comté, Besançon (France) in December 1997, VexTAL, held at Venice International University, Cá Foscari (Italy), in November 1999, and PorTAL, held at the Universidade do Algarve, Faro (Portugal), in June 2002. The main goals of these conferences have been: (i) to bring together the international NLP community; (ii) to strengthen the position of local NLP research in the international NLP community; and (iii) to provide a forum for discussion of new research and applications.

EsTAL contributed to achieving these goals and increasing the already high international standing of these conferences, largely due to its Program Committee, composed of renowned researchers in the field of natural language processing and its applications. This clearly contributed to the significant number of papers submitted (72) by researchers from (18) different countries.

The scope of the conference was structured around the following main topics: (i) computational linguistics research (spoken and written language analysis and generation; pragmatics, discourse, semantics, syntax and morphology; lexical resources; word sense disambiguation; linguistic, mathematical, and psychological models of language; knowledge acquisition and representation; corpus-based and statistical language modelling; machine translation and translation aids; computational lexicography), and (ii) monolingual and multilingual intelligent language processing and applications (information retrieval, extraction and question answering; automatic summarization; document categorization; natural language interfaces; dialogue systems and evaluation of systems).

Each paper was revised by three reviewers from the Program Committee or by external referees designed by them. All those who contributed are mentioned on the following pages. The review process led to the selection of 42 papers for presentation. They have been published in this volume.

We would like to express here our thanks to all the reviewers for their quick and excellent work. We extend these thanks to our invited speakers, Walter Daelemans and Rada Mihalcea for their valuable contribution, which undoubtedly increased the interest in the conference. We are also indebted to a number of individuals for taking care of specific parts of the conference program. Specially, to Miguel Angel Varó who built and maintained all Web services for the conference.

Finally, we want to thank the University of Alicante, and, specially, the Office of the Vice-President for Extracurricular Activities (*Vicerrectorado de Extensión Universitaria*) and the Department of Software and Computing Systems (*Departamento de Lenguajes y Sistemas Informáticos*) because of their support of this conference.

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