

Preface

The annual conference on Text, Speech and Dialogue (TSD), which originated in 1998, constitutes a recognized platform for the presentation and discussion of state-of-the-art technology and recent achievements in natural language processing. It has become a broad interdisciplinary forum, interweaving the topics of speech technology and language processing. The conference attracts researchers not only from Central and Eastern Europe but also from other parts of the world. Indeed, one of its goals has always been to bring together NLP researchers with various interests from different parts of the world and to promote their mutual cooperation. One of the ambitions of the conference is, as its title says, not only to deal with dialogue systems but also to improve dialogue between researchers in the two areas of NLP, i.e., between ‘dialogue’ and ‘speech’ people. Moreover, the TSD 2015 conference was partially organized at the new learning and research center of the University of West Bohemia in Plzeň (Pilsen), which was opened last year. This center, named NTIS (New Technologies for the Information Society), is a European project under the Operational Program ‘Research and Development for Innovations,’ aiming at establishing a European Center of Excellence at the Faculty of Applied Sciences of the University of West Bohemia. A new building was constructed for use by NTIS, housing offices and laboratories with total area of 12 thousand sq. meters. However, top-level research must always be coupled with education. Thus, new lecture rooms and laboratories for students’ use were built there and the project goal is to improve the quality and to increase the number of graduates choosing to continue their careers in research and development.

The TSD 2015 conference was the 18th event in the series of the International Conferences on Text, Speech and Dialogue supported by the International Speech Communication Association (ISCA) and the Czech Society for Cybernetics and Informatics (ČSKI). The conference was held partially in the Parkhotel and Congress Center Pilsen, the largest hotel center in West Bohemia, with a capacity for 2000 people, and partially directly in the above-mentioned new building of the Faculty of Applied Sciences of the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen on September 14–17, 2015, immediately after the famous conference Interspeech 2015 in Dresden. Like its predecessors, TSD 2015 highlighted to both the academic and scientific world the importance of text and speech processing and its most recent breakthroughs in current applications. Both experienced researchers and professionals, as well as newcomers to text and speech processing, interested in designing or evaluating interactive software, developing new interaction technologies, or investigating overarching theories of text and speech processing, found in the TSD conference a forum to communicate with people sharing similar interests.

This volume contains a collection of submitted papers presented at the conference. Each of them was thoroughly reviewed by three members of the conference reviewing team consisting of more than 60 top specialists in the conference topic areas. A total of 67 accepted papers out of 138 submitted, altogether contributed by 152 authors and

co-authors, were selected by the Program Committee for presentation at the conference and for publication in this book. Theoretical and more general contributions were presented in common (plenary) sessions. Problem-oriented sessions as well as panel discussions then brought together specialists in narrower problem areas with the aim of exchanging knowledge and skills resulting from research projects of all kinds.

Last but not least, we would like to express our gratitude to the authors for providing their papers on time, to the members of the conference reviewing team and the Program Committee for their careful reviews and paper selection, and to the editors for their hard work preparing this volume. Special thanks are due to the members of the Local Organizing Committee for their tireless effort and enthusiasm during the conference organization. We hope that you benefited from the event and that you also enjoyed the social program prepared by members of the Local Organizing Committee.

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