ArabicNLP 2024

The Second Arabic Natural Language Processing Conference

Proceedings of the Conference

August 16, 2024
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Introduction

Welcome to The Second Arabic Natural Language Processing Conference (ArabicNLP 2024), co-located with ACL 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand.

ArabicNLP 2024 is the ninth edition of the WANLP/ArabicNLP meeting series, which has developed a growing reputation as a high quality venue for researchers and engineers working on Arabic NLP, where they share and discuss their ongoing work. The first in the WANLP series was held in Doha, Qatar (EMNLP 2014), followed by Beijing, China (ACL 2015), Valencia, Spain (EACL 2017), Florence, Italy (ACL 2019), online with COLING 2020, online with EACL 2021, then finally a hybrid event in Abu Dhabi, UAE (EMNLP 2022). ArabicNLP 2023 was held last year in Singapore with EMNLP 2023.

For this year’s edition of ArabicNLP, we received a total of 68 main conference submissions and accepted 29 papers (25 long and 4 short), which brings us to an acceptance rate of 42.6%, the lowest to date in the WANLP/ArabicNLP series. All papers submitted to the conference were reviewed by at least three reviewers each. Out of the 68 submitted papers, there were 3 desk rejects.

ArabicNLP 2024 included eight shared tasks with 79 papers (8 overview papers and 71 system descriptions): (1) Arabic Financial NLP (AraFinNLP) with 9 papers, (2) News Media Narratives of the Israel War on Gaza (FIGNEWS) with 17 papers (20 submitted), (3) Propagandistic Techniques Detection in Unimodal and Multimodal Arabic Content (ArAIEval) with 11 papers, (4) Arabic Stance Evaluation (StanceEval) with 13 papers, (5) Arabic Named Entity Recognition (WojoodNER) with 6 papers, (6) Arabic Natural Language Understanding (ArabicNLU) with 3 papers, (7) Nuanced Arabic Dialect Identification (NADI) with 8 papers, and (8) Contemporary Arabic Reverse Dictionary and Word Sense Disambiguation (KSAA-CAD) with 4 papers. The shared task overview and system description papers are included in the proceedings and presented during the conference. None of the shared task papers are counted toward the acceptance rate presented above.

ArabicNLP 2024 also includes an invited talk by Kareem Darwish, titled “BALSAM: Community-Driven Arabic LLM Evaluation”.

We were able to secure sponsorship funding from different institutions, Google, SCAI, Majarra, Arabic AI Center, and Lisan.ai. We used the sponsorship funds to support student registrations. We thank all our sponsors for their generous support and their help in building up the Arabic NLP community.

Finally, we extend our gratitude to everyone who submitted a paper to the conference, and to the Program Committee members for their diligent efforts in providing reviews within a very tight timeframe.

Nizar Habash, General Chair, on behalf of the conference organizers.

Website of the conference: https://arabicnlp2024.sigarab.org
Organizing Committee

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Invited Speaker
Kareem Darwish, QCRI and aiXplain Inc.
Abstract: BALSAM (Benchmarking Arabic LLM Standards and Metrics) is a community-driven consortium bringing together esteemed academic and governmental institutions across the Middle East. BALSAM’s objective is to spearhead the development of a benchmarking platform and the curation of broad domain test sets crucial for benchmarking and evaluating the performance of LLMs for a plethora of Arabic tasks. The talk presents the achievements of the consortium including community contributions, task coverage, platform design, major design decisions, and the road ahead for BALSAM.

Bio: Dr. Kareem Darwish is a principal scientist with a joint appointment at QCRI and aiXplain Inc working on efficient human-in-the-loop ML, speech processing, and Large Language Models (LLMs). Previously, he was the acting research director of the Arabic Language Technologies group (ALT) at the Qatar Computing Research Institute (QCRI) where he worked on information retrieval, computational social science, and natural language processing. Kareem Darwish worked as a researcher at the Cairo Microsoft Innovation Lab and the IBM Human Language Technologies group in Cairo. He also taught at the German University in Cairo and Cairo University.

His research on natural language processing has led to state-of-the-art tools for Arabic processing that perform several tasks such as part-of-speech tagging, named entity recognition, automatic diacritic recovery, sentiment analysis, and parsing. His work on social computing focused on predictive stance detection to predict how users feel about an issue now or perhaps in the future, and on detecting malicious behavior on social media platform, particularly propaganda accounts. His innovative work on social computing has received much media coverage from international news outlets such as CNN, Newsweek, Washington Post, the Mirror, and many others.

Aside from the many research papers that he authored, he also authored books in both English and Arabic on a variety of subjects including Arabic processing, politics, and social psychology. He also has a YouTube channel dedicated to social psychology.
# Table of Contents

**Wikidata as a Source of Demographic Information**  
Samir Abdaljalil and Hamdy Mubarak ......................................................... 1

**Synthetic Arabic Medical Dialogues Using Advanced Multi-Agent LLM Techniques**  
Mariam ALMutairi, Luwah AlKulaib, Melike Yildiz Aktas, Sara A. Alsalamah and Chang-Tien Lu ................................................................. 11

**AuRED: Enabling Arabic Rumor Verification using Evidence from Authorities over Twitter**  
Fatima Haouari, Tamer Elsayed and Reem Suwaileh ................................... 27

**Exploiting Dialect Identification in Automatic Dialectal Text Normalization**  
Bashar Alhafni, Sarah Al-Towaity, Ziyad Fawzy, Fatema Nassar, Fadhl Eryani, Houda Bouamor and Nizar Habash ........................................... 42

**Strategies for Arabic Readability Modeling**  
Juan Pineros Liberato, Bashar Alhafni, Muhamed Osman Al Khalil and Nizar Habash ...... 55

**AREEj: Arabic Relation Extraction with Evidence**  
Osama Rakan Al Mraikhat, Hadi Khaled Hamoud and Fadi Zaraket ...................... 67

**Improving Language Models Trained on Translated Data with Continual Pre-Training and Dictionary Learning Analysis**  
Sabri Boughorbel, Md Rizwan Parvez and Majd Hawasly ................................... 73

**A Context-Contrastive Inference Approach To Partial Diacritization**  
Muhammad ElNokrashy and Badr AlKhamissi .............................................. 89

**AraCLIP: Cross-Lingual Learning for Effective Arabic Image Retrieval**  
Muhammad Al-Barham, Imad Afyouni, Khalid Almubarak, Ashraf Elnagar, Ayad Turky and Ibrahim Abaker Hashem ........................................... 102

**Large Language Models as Legal Translators of Arabic Legislatives: Does ChatGPT and Gemini Care for Context and Terminology?**  
Khadija Ait ElFqih and Johanna Monti ...................................................... 111

**Towards Zero-Shot Text-To-Speech for Arabic Dialects**  
Khai Duy Doan, Abdul Waheed and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed ................................ 123

**Performance Analysis of Speech Encoders for Low-Resource SLU and ASR in Tunisian Dialect**  
Salima Mdhaffar, Haroun Elleuch, Fethi Bougares and Yannick Estève ..................... 130

**Arabic Automatic Story Generation with Large Language Models**  
Ahmed Oumar El-Shangiti, Fakhraddin Alwaigh and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed ............... 140

**AlclaM: Arabic Dialect Language Model**  
Murtadha Ahmed, Saghir Alfasy, Bo Wen, Jamal Addeen, Mohammed Abdelmajeed M. Ahmed and Yunfeng Liu ................................................................. 153

**Data Augmentation for Speech-Based Diacritic Restoration**  
Sara Shatnawi, Sawsan Alqahtani, Shady Shehata and Hanan Aldarmaki ........................... 160

**Out-of-Domain Dependency Parsing for Dialects of Arabic: A Case Study**  
Noor Abo Mokh, Daniel Dakota and Sandra Kübler ........................................ 170
Investigating Linguistic Features for Arabic NLI
Yasmeen Bassas and Sandra Kübler .......................................................... 183

John vs. Ahmed: Debate-Induced Bias in Multilingual LLMs
Anastasiia Demidova, Hanin Atwany, Nour Rabih, Sanad Sha’ban and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed
193

Qalam: A Multimodal LLM for Arabic Optical Character and Handwriting Recognition
Gagan Bhatia, El Moatez Billah Nagoudi, Fakhirddin Alwajih and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed
210

ArabLegalEval: A Multitask Benchmark for Assessing Arabic Legal Knowledge in Large Language Models
Faris Hijazi, Somayah S Alharbi, Abdulaziz A. AlHussein, Harethah Abu Shairah, Reem Alzahrani, Hebah A. Alshamlan, George Turkiiyyah and Omar Knio .......................... 225

CATT: Character-based Arabic Tashkeel Transformer
Faris Alasmary, Orjuwan Zaafranini and Ahmad Ghannam .................................. 250

Picking Up Where the Linguist Left Off: Mapping Morphology to Phonology through Learning the Residuals
Salam Khalifa, Abdelrahim Qaddoumi, Ellen Broselow and Owen Rambow .......... 258

On the Utility of Pretraining Language Models on Synthetic Data
Alcides Alcoba Inciarte, Sang Yun Kwon, El Moatez Billah Nagoudi and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed ................................................................. 265

Benchmarking LLaMA-3 on Arabic Language Generation Tasks
Md Tawkat Islam Khondaker, Numaan Naem, Fatimah Lyba Khan, AbdulRahim A. Elmadany and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed .................................................. 283

From Nile Sands to Digital Hands: Machine Translation of Coptic Texts
Muhammed Saeed, Asim Mohamed, Mukhtar Mohamed, Shady Shehata and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed ................................................................. 298

Event-Arguments Extraction Corpus and Modeling using BERT for Arabic
Alaa Aljabari, Lina Duaibes, Mustafa Jarrar and Mohammed Khalilia .................. 309

Dallah: A Dialect-Aware Multimodal Large Language Model for Arabic
Fakhirddin Alwajih, Gagan Bhatia and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed ....................... 320

QAES: First Publicly-Available Trait-Specific Annotations for Automated Scoring of Arabic Essays
May Bashendy, Salam Albattani, Sohaila Eltanbouly, Eman Zahrani, Hamdo Elhuseyin, Tamer Elsayed, Walid Massoud and Houda Bouamor ........................................... 337

Functional Text Dimensions for Arabic Text Classification
Zeyd Ferhat, Abir Betka, Riyadh Barka, Zineddine Sarhani Kahhou, Selma Boutiba, Mohamed Lakhdar Tiar, Habiba Dahmani and Ahmed Abdelali ......................... 352

ArabicNLU 2024: The First Arabic Natural Language Understanding Shared Task
Mohammed Khalilia, Sanad Malaysha, Reem Suwaileh, Mustafa Jarrar, Alaa Aljabari, Tamer Elsayed and Imed Zitouni .............................................................. 361

Pirates at ArabicNLU2024: Enhancing Arabic Word Sense Disambiguation using Transformer-Based Approaches
Tasneem Wael, Eman Elrefai, Mohamed Makram, Sahar Selim and Ghada Khoriba ........ 372
Upaya at ArabicNLU Shared-Task: Arabic Lexical Disambiguation using Large Language Models
Pawan Kumar Rajpoot, Ashvini Kumar Jindal and Ankur Parikh .................................................. 377
rematchka at ArabicNLU2024: Evaluating Large Language Models for Arabic Word Sense and Location Sense Disambiguation
Reem Abdel-Salam ................................................................. 383

AraFinNLP 2024: The First Arabic Financial NLP Shared Task
Sanad Malaysha, Mo El-Haj, Saad Ezzini, Mohammed Khalilia, Mustafa Jarrar, Sultan Almujiwel, Ismail Berrada and Houda Bouamor ................................................................. 393

SMASH at AraFinNLP2024: Benchmarking Arabic BERT Models on the Intent Detection
Youssef Al Hariri and Ibrahim Abu Farha .............................................. 403

Fired_from_NLP at AraFinNLP 2024: Dual-Phase-BERT - A Fine-Tuned Transformer-Based Model for Multi-Dialectal Intent Detection in The Financial Domain for The Arabic Language
Md. Sajid Alam Chowdhury, Mostak Mahmud Chowdhury, Anik Mahmud Shanto, Hasan Murad and Uday Das ................................................................. 410

AlexuNLP24 at AraFinNLP2024: Multi-Dialect Arabic Intent Detection with Contrastive Learning in Banking Domain
Hossam Elkordi, Ahmed Sakr, Marwan Torki and Nagwa El-Makky .............................................. 415

SemanticCuetSync at AraFinNLP2024: Classification of Cross-Dialect Intent in the Banking Domain using Transformers
Ashraful Islam Paran, Symom Hossain Shohan, Md. Sajjad Hossain, Jawad Hossain, Shawly Ahsan and Mohammed Moshiul Hoque .............................................. 422

SENIT at AraFinNLP2024: trust your model or combine two
Abdelmomen Ben Nasr and Moez Ben HajHmida .............................................. 428

BabelBot at AraFinNLP2024: Fine-tuning T5 for Multi-dialectal Intent Detection with Synthetic Data and Model Ensembling
Murhaf Fares and Samia Touileb .................................................. 433

MA at AraFinNLP2024: BERT-based Ensemble for Cross-dialectal Arabic Intent Detection
Asmaa Ramadan, Manar Amr, Marwan Torki and Nagwa El-Makky .................................................. 441

BFCI at AraFinNLP2024: Support Vector Machines for Arabic Financial Text Classification
Nsrin Ashraf, Hamada Nayel, Mohammed Aldawsari, Hosahalli Lakshmaiah Shashirekha and Tarek Elshishtawy .................................................. 446

dzFinNlp at AraFinNLP: Improving Intent Detection in Financial Conversational Agents
Mohamed Lichouri, Khaled Lounnas and Amziane Mohamed Zakaria .................................................. 450

ArAIEval Shared Task: Propagandistic Techniques Detection in Unimodal and Multimodal Arabic Content
Maram Hasanain, Md. Arid Hasan, Fatema Ahmad, Reem Suwaileh, Md. Rafiul Biswas, Wajdi Zaghouani and Firoj Alam .................................................. 456

MemeMind at ArAIEval Shared Task: Generative Augmentation and Feature Fusion for Multimodal Propaganda Detection in Arabic Memes through Advanced Language and Vision Models
Uzair Shah, Md. Rafiul Biswas, Marco Agus, Mowafa Househ and Wajdi Zaghouani .................. 467

ASOS at ArAIEval Shared Task: Integrating Text and Image Embeddings for Multimodal Propaganda Detection in Arabic Memes
Yasser Alhabashi, Abdullah I. Alharbi, Samar Ahmad, Serry Sibaee, Omer Nacar, Lahouari Ghouti and Anis Koubaa .................................................. 473
NLPColab at FigNews 2024 Shared Task: Challenges in Bias and Propaganda Annotation for News Media
Sadaf Abdul Rauf, Huda Sarfraz, Saadia Ishtiaq Nauman, Arooj Fatima, SadafZiafat SadafZiafat, Momina Ishfaq, Alishba Abdul Suboor, Hammad Afzal and Seemab Latif ............................... 573

Bias Bluff Busters at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Developing Guidelines to Make Bias Conscious
Jasmin Heierli, Silvia Pareti, Serena Pareti and Tatiana Lando ........................................ 580

Ceasefire at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Automated Detection and Annotation of Media Bias Using Large Language Models
Noor Sadiah, Sara Al-Emadi and Sumaya Abdul Rahman ........................................ 590

Sahara Pioneers at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Data Annotation Guidelines for Propaganda Detection in News Items
Marwa N. Solla, Hassan Ali Ebrahem, Alya Muftah Issa, Harmain Harmain and Abdusalam F A Nwesri ................................................................. 601

BiasGanda at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: A Quest to Uncover Biased Views in News Coverage
Blqees Blqees, Al Manar Al Wardi, Malath Nasser Khalfan Al-Sibani, Hiba Salim Mohammed Al-Siyabi and Najma Al Zijdaly .................................................. 609

The CyberEquity Lab at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Annotating a Corpus of Facebook Posts to Label Bias and Propaganda in Gaza-Israel War Coverage in Five Languages
Mohammed H.s. Helal, Radi Jarrar, Mohammed Alkhanaafseh, Abdallah Karakra and Ruba Awadallah ...................................... 614

BSC-LANGTECH at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Exploring Semi-Automatic Bias Annotation using Frame Analysis
Valle Ruiz-Fernández, José Javier Saiz and Aitor Gonzalez-Agirre ............................. 620

GroningenAnnotatesGaza at the FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Analyzing Bias in Conflict Narratives
Khalid Al Khatib, Sara Gemelli, Saskia J. Heisterborg, Pritha Majumdar, Gosse Minnema, Arianna Muti and Noa Visser Solissa ......................... 630

Sina at FigNews 2024: Multilingual Datasets Annotated with Bias and Propaganda.
Lina Duaibes, Areej Jaber, Mustafa Jarrar, Ahmad Qadi and Mais Qandeel ...................... 640

SQUad at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Unmasking Bias in Social Media Through Data Analysis and Annotation
Asmahan Al-Mamari, Fatma Al-Farsi and Najma Al Zijdaly ........................................ 646

JusticeLeague at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: Innovations in Bias Annotation
Amr Khaled Saleh, Huda Mohamed and Hager Sayed ............................................. 651

Amanda Chan, Mai A.Baddar and Sofien Baazaoui .................................................. 656

The Guidelines Specialists at FIGNEWS 2024 Shared Task: An annotation guideline to Unravel Bias in News Media Narratives Using a Linguistic Approach
Ghizlane Bourahouat and Samar M. Amer ............................................. 672

KSAA-CAD Shared Task: Contemporary Arabic Dictionary for Reverse Dictionary and Word Sense Disambiguation
Waad Thuwaini Alshammari, Amal Almazrua, Asma Al Wazrah, Rawan Nasser Almatham, Muneera Alhoshan and Abdulrahman M Alosaimey ........................................ 677
Cher at KSAA-CAD 2024: Compressing Words and Definitions into the Same Space for Arabic Reverse Dictionary
Pinzhen Chen, Zheng Zhao and Shun Shao .................................................. 686

MISSION at KSAA-CAD 2024: AraT5 with Arabic Reverse Dictionary
Thamer Maseer Alharbi ................................................................. 692

ASOS at KSAA-CAD 2024: One Embedding is All You Need for Your Dictionary
Serry Sibaee, Abdullah I. Alharbi, Samar Ahmad, Omer Nacar, Anis Koubaa and Lahouari Ghouti 697

Baleegh at KSAA-CAD 2024: Towards Enhancing Arabic Reverse Dictionaries
Mais Alheraki and Souham Meshoul .................................................. 704

NADI 2024: The Fifth Nuanced Arabic Dialect Identification Shared Task
Muhammad Abdul-Mageed, Amr Keleg, AbdelRahim A. Elmadany, Chiyu Zhang, Injy Hamed, Walid Magdy, Houda Bouamor and Nizar Habash .................................................. 709

Arabic Train at NADI 2024 shared task: LLMs’ Ability to Translate Arabic Dialects into Modern Standard Arabic
Anastasiia Demidova, Hanin Atwany, Nour Rabih and Sanad Sha’ban ................ 729

AlexUNLP-STM at NADI 2024 shared task: Quantifying the Arabic Dialect Spectrum with Contrastive Learning, Weighted Sampling, and BERT-based Regression Ensemble
Abdelrahman Sakr, Marwan Torki and Nagwa El-Makky ........................................ 735

NLP_DI at NADI 2024 shared task: Multi-label Arabic Dialect Classifications with an Unsupervised Cross-Encoder
Vani Kanjirangat, Tanja Samardzic, Ljiljana Dolamic and Fabio Rinaldi .................. 742

ASOS at NADI 2024 shared task: Bridging Dialectness Estimation and MSA Machine Translation for Arabic Language Enhancement
Omer Nacar, Serry Sibaee, Abdullah I. Alharbi, Lahouari Ghouti and Anis Koubaa ........ 748

dzNLP at NADI 2024 Shared Task: Multi-Classifier Ensemble with Weighted Voting and TF-IDF Features
Mohamed Lichouri, Khaled Lounnas, Zahaf Boualem Nadjib and Rabiai Mehdi Ayoub .... 754

ELYADATA at NADI 2024 shared task: Arabic Dialect Identification with Similarity-Induced Mono-to-Multi Label Transformation.
Amira Karoui, Farah Gharbi, Rami Kammoun, Imen Laouirine and Fethi Bougares ........ 758

Alson at NADI 2024 shared task: Alson - A fine-tuned model for Arabic Dialect Translation
Manan AlMusallam and Samar Ahmad .................................................. 764

CUFE at NADI 2024 shared task: Fine-Tuning Llama-3 To Translate From Arabic Dialects To Modern Standard Arabic
Michael Ibrahim ................................................................. 769

StanceEval2024: The First Arabic Stance Detection Shared Task
Nora Alturayeif, Hamzah Luqman, Zaid Alyafeai and Asma Z. Yamani .............. 774

Team_Zero at StanceEval2024: Frozen PLMs for Arabic Stance Detection
Omar Galal and Abdelrahman Kaseb .................................................. 783

ANLP RG at StanceEval2024: Comparative Evaluation of Stance, Sentiment and Sarcasm Detection
Mezghani Amal, Rahma Boujelbane and Mariem Ellouze .................................. 788
dzStance at StanceEval2024: Arabic Stance Detection based on Sentence Transformers
Mohamed Lichouri, Khaled Lounnas, Ouaras Khelil Rafik, Mohamed Abi and Anis Guechtouli
794

SMASH at StanceEval 2024: Prompt Engineering LLMs for Arabic Stance Detection
Youssef Al Hariri and Ibrahim Abu Farha ............................................................. 800

CUFE at StanceEval2024: Arabic Stance Detection with Fine-Tuned Llama-3 Model
Michael Ibrahim .................................................................................................. 807

StanceCrafters at StanceEval2024: Multi-task Stance Detection using BERT Ensemble with Attention Based Aggregation
Ahmed Abul Hasanaath and Aisha Alansari ......................................................... 811

MGKM at StanceEval2024 Fine-Tuning Large Language Models for Arabic Stance Detection
Mamoun Alghaslan and Khaled Almutairy ............................................................ 816

AlexUNLP-BH at StanceEval2024: Multiple Contrastive Losses Ensemble Strategy with Multi-Task Learning For Stance Detection in Arabic
Mohamed Badran, Mo’men Hamdy, Marwan Torki and Nagwa El-Makky ............... 823

Rasid at StanceEval: Fine-tuning MARBERT for Arabic Stance Detection
Nouf AlShenaifi, Nourah Alangari and Hadeel Al-Negheimish ............................ 828

ISHFMG_TUN at StanceEval: Ensemble Method for Arabic Stance Evaluation System
Mustapha Jaballah .................................................. ........................................ 832

PICT at StanceEval2024: Stance Detection in Arabic using Ensemble of Large Language Models
Ishaan Shukla, Ankit Vaidya and Geetanjali Vinayak Kale ..................................... 837

TAO at StanceEval2024 Shared Task: Arabic Stance Detection using AraBERT
Anas Melhem, Osama Hamed and Thaer Sammar ................................................. 842

WojooodNER 2024: The Second Arabic Named Entity Recognition Shared Task
Mustafa Jarrar, Nagham Hamad, Mohammed Khalilia, Bashar Talafha, AbdelRahim A. Elmadany and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed ......................................................... 847

muNERa at WojooodNER 2024: Multi-tasking NER Approach
Nouf M. Alotaibi, Haneen Alhomoud, Hanan Saeed Murayshid, Waad Thuwaini Alshammari, Nouf Alshalawi and Sakhar Alkhereyf .............................................. 858

Addax at WojooodNER 2024: Attention-Based Dual-Channel Neural Network for Arabic Named Entity Recognition
Issam Ait Yahia, Houdaifa Atou and Ismail Berrada ............................................ 867

DRU at WojooodNER 2024: A Multi-level Method Approach
Hadi Khaled Hamoud, Chadi Abou Chakra, Nancy Hamdan, Osama Rakan Al Mraikhat, Doha Albared and Fadi Zaraket ................................................................. 874

Bangor University at WojooodNER 2024: Advancing Arabic Named Entity Recognition with CAMeLBERT-Mix
Norah Alshammari .................................................................................................. 880

mucAI at WojooodNER 2024: Arabic Named Entity Recognition with Nearest Neighbor Search
Ahmed Abdou and Tasneem Mohsen Mahmoud .................................................. 894
Program

Friday, August 16, 2024

09:00 - 09:15  Welcome Speech

09:15 - 10:30  Core Technologies

AREEj: Arabic Relation Extraction with Evidence
Osama Rakan Al Mraikhat, Hadi Khaled Hamoud and Fadi Zaraket

A Context-Contrastive Inference Approach To Partial Diacritization
Muhammad ElNokrashy and Badr AlKhamissi

Picking Up Where the Linguist Left Off: Mapping Morphology to Phonology through Learning the Residuals
Salam Khalifa, Abdelrahim Qaddouni, Ellen Broselow and Owen Rambow

Event-Arguments Extraction Corpus and Modeling using BERT for Arabic
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Exploiting Dialect Identification in Automatic Dialectal Text Normalization
Bashar Alhafni, Sarah Al-Towaity, Ziyad Fawzy, Fatema Nassar, Fadhl Eryani, Houda Bouamor and Nizar Habash

10:30 - 11:00  Coffee Break

11:00 - 11:45  Downstream Applications I

Strategies for Arabic Readability Modeling
Juan Pineros Liberato, Bashar Alhafni, Muhamed Osman Al Khalil and Nizar Habash

Large Language Models as Legal Translators of Arabic Legislatives: Does ChatGPT and Gemini Care for Context and Terminology?
Khadija Ait ElFqih and Johanna Monti

Arabic Automatic Story Generation with Large Language Models
Ahmed Oumar El-Shangiti, Fakhraddin Alwajih and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed

11:45 - 12:30  Multimodality

AraCLIP: Cross-Lingual Learning for Effective Arabic Image Retrieval
Muhammad Al-Barham, Imad Afyouni, Khalid Almubarak, Ashraf Elnagar, Ayad Turky and Ibrahim Abaker Hashem

Towards Zero-Shot Text-To-Speech for Arabic Dialects
Khai Duy Doan, Abdul Waheed and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed
Friday, August 16, 2024 (continued)

Qalam: A Multimodal LLM for Arabic Optical Character and Handwriting Recognition
Gagan Bhatia, El Moatez Billah Nagoudi, Fakhraddin Alwajih and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch Break

14:00 - 14:45 Downstream Applications II

ArabLegalEval: A Multitask Benchmark for Assessing Arabic Legal Knowledge in Large Language Models
Faris Hijazi, Somayah S Alharbi, Abdulaziz A. AlHussein, Harethah Abu Shairah, Reem Alzahrani, Hebah A. Alshamlan, George Turkiyyah and Omar Knio

Benchmarking LLaMA-3 on Arabic Language Generation Tasks
Md Tawkat Islam Khondaker, Numaan Naeem, Fatimah Lyba Khan, AbdelRahim A. Elmadany and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed

From Nile Sands to Digital Hands: Machine Translation of Coptic Texts
Muhammed Saeed, Asim Mohamed, Mukhtar Mohamed, Shady Shehata and Muhammad Abdul-Mageed

14:45 - 15:15 Invited Talk BALSAM – Community-Driven Arabic LLM Evaluation

15:15 - 15:30 Shared Task Overview Boasters

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 - 17:30 Main and Shared Task Posters