Joint Workshop on Multiword Expressions and Universal Dependencies (MWE-UD 2024)

Workshop Proceedings

Editors
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Preface

Multiword expressions (mwares) are word combinations that exhibit lexical, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and/or statistical idiosyncrasies (Baldwin and Kim, 2010), such as by and large, hot dog, pay a visit and pull someone's leg. The notion encompasses closely related phenomena: idioms, compounds, light-verb constructions, phrasal verbs, rhetorical figures, collocations, institutionalized phrases, etc. Their behavior is often unpredictable; for example, their meaning often does not result from the direct combination of the meanings of their parts. Given their irregular nature, mwares often pose complex problems in linguistic modeling (e.g. annotation), NLP tasks (e.g. parsing), and end-user applications (e.g. natural language understanding and MT), hence still representing an open issue for computational linguistics (Constant et al., 2017). This joint workshop also marks the 20th anniversary of the mwe workshop series since 2003 (Bond et al., 2003). The organization of the workshops is sponsored by SIGLEX.¹

Universal Dependencies (ud; De Marneffe et al., 2021) is a framework for cross-linguistically consistent treebank annotation that has so far been applied to over 100 languages. The framework aims to capture similarities as well as idiosyncrasies among typologically different languages (e.g., morphologically rich languages, pro-drop languages, and languages featuring clitic doubling). The goal of developing ud was not only to support comparative evaluation and cross-lingual learning but also to facilitate multilingual natural language processing and enable comparative linguistic studies. Starting with the first ud workshop in 2017 (de Marneffe et al., 2017), this joint workshop is the 7th edition in the series.

For the current edition, the mwe and ud communities decided to organize a joint event, the mwe-ud workshop which is part of LREC-COLING 2024. This is a timely collaboration because the two communities clearly have overlapping interests. For instance, while ud has several dependency relations that are intended for annotation of mwares, both annotation guidelines (i.e. is syntactic irregularity and inflexibility or semantic non-compositionality the leading criterion?) and annotation practice (both across treebanks for a single language and across languages) for mwares can be improved (Schneider and Zeldes, 2021). For verbal mwares, the PARSEME corpora for 26 languages provide annotation of mwares consistent with ud annotation (Savary et al., 2023). Both communities share an interest in developing guidelines, data-sets, and tools that can be applied to a wide range of typologically diverse languages, raising fundamental questions about tokenization, lemmatization, and morphological decomposition of tokens. Proposals for harmonizing annotation practice between what has been achieved in PARSEME and ud and expanding PARSEME annotation to non-verbal mwares are also central to the recently started UniDive² cost action (CA21167). UniDive also co-organizes and sponsors this joint workshop.

We are happy to have received 53 submissions, 29 long, 15 short, and 9 non-archival. 19 long, 7 short, and 9 non-archival contributions were selected for presentation at the workshop, bringing the overall acceptance rate for archival papers to 59%. The distribution over tracks is almost even: 8 of 12 archival submissions were accepted for the ud track, 9 of 16 for the mwe track, and 9 of 16 for the mwe+ud track. One long paper was withdrawn after acceptance.

An important theme in both the ud and mwe community is increasing the number of languages and language families that can be used as the object of study, for instance by making annotated data available in a standard format. The current workshop makes a substantial contribution towards that goal, as it includes contributions to Arabic, Hindi, Old Egyptian, Vedic, Northern Kurdish, Slovene, Dutch, Bavarian, South Asian languages, Turkic languages, Gujarati, Saraiki, Swedish, and more. Another important theme for research on mwares has been the question

¹https://siglex.org/
²https://unidive.lisn.upsaclay.fr
of to what extent Large Language Models deal adequately with the idiomatic meaning of multi-word expressions. This workshop also includes several contributions that explicitly deal with this question. Apart from these important and cross-disciplinary themes, there are also contributions on UD addressing such issues as assessing and enhancing the value of UD parsing for applications, improved automatic parsing procedures, and the interface between syntax and morphology. Contributions that are primarily concerned with MWEs address a.o. the role of lexical resources, automatic identification of MWEs, the proper annotation of idiomatic meanings in a corpus with fully structured meaning annotation, annotation in parallel corpora, and cross-lingually consistent annotation of MWEs with word senses. Some of these themes re-occur in the contributions that address both UD and MWEs, such as the interplay of lexicon and corpus annotations, the annotation of multiword functional categories, the annotation of light verb constructions, and the use of UD and MWEs in the task of stance detection.

Archna Bhatia, Gosse Bouma, A. Seza Doğruöz, Kilian Evang, Marcos Garcia, Voula Giouli, Lifeng Han, Joakim Nivre, Alexandre Rademacher.

Acknowledgements

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References


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Keynote Speakers

Natalia Levshina, Radboud University
Harish Tayyar Madabushi, University of Bath
Organized by

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Every Time We Hire an LLM, the Reasoning Performance of the Linguists Goes Up
Harish Tayyar Madabushi

09:50–10:30 Session 1: Oral presentations
09:50–10:10 Assessing BERT’s sensitivity to idiomaticity
Li Liu and Francois Lareau
10:10–10:30 Sign of the Times: Evaluating the use of Large Language Models for Idiomaticity Detection
Dylan Phelps, Thomas M. R. Pickard, Maggie Mi, Edward Gow-Smith and Aline Villavicencio

10:30–11:00 Coffee Break

11:00–12:00 Session 2: Poster presentations

12:00–13:00 Session 3: Oral presentations
12:00–12:20 Universal Feature-based Morphological Trees
Federica Gamba, Abishek Stephen and Zdeněk Žabokrtský
12:20–12:40 Light Verb Constructions in Universal Dependencies for South Asian Languages
Abishek Stephen and Daniel Zeman
12:40–13:00 Strategies for the Annotation of Pronominalised Locatives in Turkic Universal Dependency Treebanks
Jonathan Washington, Çağrı Çöltekin, Furkan Akkurt, Bermet Chontaeva, Soudabeh Esiami, Gulnura Jumalieva, Aida Kasieva, Aslı Kuzgun, Büşra Marşan and Chihiro Taguchi

13:00–14:00 Lunch
**14:00–14:45 Keynote Speaker 2**

Using Universal Dependencies for testing hypotheses about communicative efficiency  
Natalia Levshina

**14:45–15:00 Booster Session: Remote presentations**

**15:00–16:00 Session 4: Oral presentations**

15:00–15:20 To Leave No Stone Unturned: Annotating Verbal Idioms in the Parallel Meaning Bank  
Rafael Ehren, Kilian Evang and Laura Kallmeyer

15:20–15:40 Annotation of Multiword Expressions in the SUK 1.0 Training Corpus of Slovene: Lessons Learned and Future Steps  
Jaka Čibej, Polona Gantar and Mija Bon

15:40–16:00 Ad Hoc Compounds for Stance Detection  
Qi Yu, Fabian Schlotterbeck, Henning Wang, Naomi Reichmann, Britta Stolterfoht, Regine Eckardt and Miriam Butt

**16:00–16:30 Coffee Break**

**16:30–17:20 Session 5: Poster presentations**

**17:20–17:50 Community Discussion**

**17:50–18:00 Closing and Awards**
Posters and Remote Presentations

Automatic Manipulation of Training Corpora to Make Parsers Accept Real-world Text
Hiroshi Kanayama, Ran Iwamoto, Masayasu Muraoka, Takuya Ohko and Kohtaroh Miyamoto

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Cvetana Krstev, Ranka Stanković, Aleksandra M. Marković and Teodora Sofija Mihajlov

Combining Grammatical and Relational Approaches. A Hybrid Method for the Identification of Candidate Collocations from Corpora
Damiano Perri, Irene Fioravanti, Osvaldo Gervasi and Stefania Spina

Multiword Expressions between the Corpus and the Lexicon: Universality, Idiosyncrasy, and the Lexicon-Corpus Interface
Virginica Barbu Mittel, Voula Giouli, Kilian Evang, Daniel Zeman, Petya Osenova, Carole Tiberius, Simon Krek, Stella Markantonatou, Ivelina Stoyanova, Ranka Stanković and Christian Chiarcos