

IWCS 2019

**Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on  
Computational Semantics - Student Papers**

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University of Gothenburg  
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**CLASP** centre for  
linguistic theory  
and studies in probability



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## Introduction

Welcome to the 13th edition of the International Conference on Computational Semantics (IWCS 2019) in Gothenburg. The aim of IWCS is to bring together researchers interested in any aspects of the annotation, representation and computation of meaning in natural language, whether this is from a lexical or structural semantic perspective. It embraces both symbolic and machine learning approaches to computational semantics, and everything in between. This is reflected in the themes of the sessions which take place over full 3 days. The programme starts with formal and grammatical approaches to the representation and computation of meaning, interaction of these approaches with distributional approaches, explore the issues related to entailment, semantic relations and frames, and unsupervised learning of word embeddings and semantic representations, including those that involve information from other modalities such as images. Overall, the papers capture a good overview of different angles from which the computational approach to natural language semantics can be studied.

The talks of our three keynote speakers also reflect these themes. The work of Mehrnoosh Sadrzadeh focuses on combination categorial grammars with word- and sentence embeddings for disambiguation of sentences with VP ellipsis. The work of Ellie Pavlick focuses on the evaluation of the state-of-the-art data-driven models of language for what they “understand” in terms of inference and what is their internal structure. Finally, the work of Raffaella Bernardi focuses on conversational agents that learn grounded language in visual information through interactions with other agents. We are delighted they have accepted our invitation and we are looking forward to their talks.

In total, we accepted 25 long papers (51% of submissions), 10 short papers (44% of submissions) and 7 student papers (54% of submissions) following the recommendations of our peer reviewers. Each paper was reviewed by three experts. We are extremely grateful to the Programme Committee members for their detailed and helpful reviews. The long and student papers will be presented either as talks or posters, while short papers will be presented as posters. Overall, there are 7 sessions of talks and 2 poster sessions (introduced by short lighting talks) which we organised according to the progression of the themes over 3 days, starting each day with a keynote talk. The sessions are organised in a way to allow plenty of time in between to allow participants to initiate discussions over a Swedish *fika*.

To encourage a broader participation of students we organised a student track where the papers have undergone the same quality review as long papers but at the same time the reviewers were instructed to provide comments that are beneficial to their authors to develop their work. To this end we also awarded a Best Student Paper Award.

The conference is preceded by 5 workshops on semantic annotation, meaning relations, types and frames, vector semantics and dialogue, and on interactions between natural language processing and theoretical computer science. In addition to the workshops, this year there is also a shared task on semantic parsing. The workshops and the shared task will take place over the two days preceding the conference.

There will be two social events. A reception which is sponsored by the City of Gothenburg will be opened by the Lord Mayor of Gothenburg and will take place on the evening of the second day of the workshops and before the main conference. A conference dinner will take place in Liseberg Amusement Park where participants will also get a chance to try some of their attractions.

IWCS 2019 has received general financial support (covering over a half of the costs) from the Centre for Linguistics Theory and Studies in Probability (CLASP) which in turn is financed by a grant from the Swedish Research Council (VR project 2014-39) and University of Gothenburg. CLASP also hosts the

event. We are also grateful to the Masters Programme in Language Technology (MLT) at the University of Gothenburg, Talkamatic AB and the City of Gothenburg for their financial support.

We very much hope that you will have an enjoyable and inspiring time!

Simon Dobnik, Stergios Chatzikyriakidis, and Vera Demberg

Gothenburg & Saarbrücken

May 2019

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**Invited Speakers:**

Mehrnoosh Sadrzadeh, Queen Mary, University of London

Ellie Pavlick, Brown University

Raffaella Bernardi, University of Trento

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