LREC 2022
13th International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation

Introduction by Nicoletta Calzolari
Chair of the 13th edition of LREC, ELRA Honorary President

Welcome to the 13^{th} edition of LREC in Marseille, first time an LREC in France! It will be a big emotion to welcome so many of you at the Opening session, finally meeting again so many colleagues and friends!

We will enjoy together not only the conference but also the special atmosphere of Marseille and the wonderful view of the Mediterranean and the city from the Palais du Pharo.

The previous LREC, that didn't happen, would have been an occasion to celebrate the 25^{th} anniversary of ELRA. We will celebrate this time the next 25 years. We are proud that ELRA is a mature association. And LREC too: LREC started in 1998, 24 years ago, and now it is one of the most successful conferences of the field.

A major novelty in the organisation of LREC: the involvement of many colleagues.

LREC is probably the most influential ELRA achievement, and the service with the greatest impact on our community. Also through LREC, ELRA contributes to shape our field, making the Language Resources and Evaluation field a scientific field in its own right.

This time we decided, in the ELRA Board and the LREC Program Committee, it was time to start changing the way in which LREC is organised and managed. In addition to the usual Program Committee we decided to involve in the management and decision process many colleagues, as is done in all major conferences.

We thus recruited 3 Workshop chairs, 2 Tutorial chairs and for the main conference 69 Area chairs. It was important for me to try to convey to them the "spirit" of LREC. LREC seeks to: increase representation among under-resourced languages, value all types of contributors to the field (corpus creators, algorithm developers, technology evaluators, program managers), reduce barriers to new participants, encourage meaningful scientific participation among industrials, and otherwise provide opportunities to those who might otherwise be silenced. To pay proper attention to these issues is a distinguishing feature of LREC.

Area chairs' suggestions about acceptance were then analysed by the Program Committee. I was acting in a double role, as General chair and Program chair,

a big task (in about 3 months I exchanged almost 2700 mails mainly with Area chairs) and a big responsibility.

Continuing in the change, I think that next time we must also have 3 Program chairs.

Some LREC2022 figures

2022 figures are similar to those of 2020.
We received 50 Workshop proposals, and 12 Tutorials. Out of these 38 Workshops and 9 Tutorials were accepted.

We received 1302 submissions, of which 45 were Desk rejected or Withdrawn before reviewing. We thus had 1257 submissions to review.

A very large part of our community was involved in the reviewing effort, to be able to assign few papers per reviewer. We recruited 1628 colleagues to be part of the Scientific Committee, out of which 1401 were assigned submissions to review. Many more were invited but many refused or didn't answer. Finding reviewers is becoming a quite difficult task, good reviewers even more.

Few reviewers did not complete the task. For this I asked the Area chairs to have some emergency reviewers.

Area chairs analysed more than 3845 reviews (some tracks had 4 reviewers per paper) and made suggestions of acceptance/rejection. After that the LREC Program Committee arrived at the final decisions in a face to face meeting.

Despite all our efforts, we know that both the reviewing and the decision (meta-reviewing) phases are exposed to various possible problems, from subjectivity to actual mistakes, and we apologise for these.

As a result of reviewing and meta-reviewing we have now in the program 804 papers, of which 156 onsite Orals, 416 onsite Posters, and 232 Remote.

We have broken the record of registrations, almost 1600 in this moment (with 942 attending in person, quite many), probably more at the end.

All these figures have a clear significance. The field of Language Resources and Evaluation is very alive and constantly flourishing.

LREC2022 as a hybrid event

Another major change is that we decided to organise LREC2022 as a hybrid event.

We all know that the value of LREC is not only in listening to the papers, but in the networking, the face to face interactions in the crowded poster sessions, the exchange of ideas, also the gathering in the social events. For all these reasons we, as Program Committee, decided to try to privilege onsite participation. But obviously because of Covid we had to allow also for remote participation.

Most probably this is a change that will remain in the future, also after Covid. I think we must reassess how to organise big conferences. Allowing for remote participation will make our conferences more inclusive, allowing participation also to those who for any reason are not able to travel.

Because of this this year in addition to the usual Oral and Poster sessions the Program is composed also or the Remote only sessions.

I must say that the organisation of a hybrid conference is much more demanding, not only for the local organisation but also for the scientific aspects. Until the last moment in fact there have been, as expected, changes in attendance (in person or remote, in both directions) which caused quite a number of changes in the organisation of the programs.

LREC2022 Proceedings

Because of the remote participation, also the Proceedings are organised slightly differently. The Proceedings in fact reflect the program, with the usual in person Oral and Poster sessions, following the timetable of the Program.

This time they are followed by the Remote only sessions, organised on the basis of the 22 Tracks. This Remote sessions contain remote Orals and Posters together: this is in line with what we always say, that the distinction between oral and poster is not based on the value of the paper but is based on their being better suited for one or the other mode of presentation.

As we did last time, we decided to print all the Proceedings using START, both the main conference and the workshops, so that it is straightforward to have all of them in the ACL Anthology.

LREC2022 acceptance rate: a motivated choice for an inclusive conference

The LREC2022 acceptance rate is 61.75%, similar to previous years. We are well aware that this is higher than in many other major conferences. But we think that we need conferences of both types. For LREC, as I always state, this is a carefully reasoned decision. For us it is important to try to provide a comprehensive picture of the field and to show how it is evolving. This implies

not only to look for new methodologies but also to cover how various methods or resources are able to spread, for which purposes, usages, applications and for which languages. Multilingualism – and equal treatment of all languages – is an essential feature of LREC, as it is the attempt of putting the text, speech and multimodal communities together as well as academics and industrials. LREC values topics – such as Less-resourced languages or Infrastructural issues, strategies and policies – that may not easily find proper venues in other big conferences. Research is strongly affected also by infrastructural (meta-research) activities, really needed for our field to progress.

LREC wants to be an "inclusive" conference: this is for us a very important feature.

What is interesting is that quality and influence is not undermined by our acceptance rate: in 2021 Google Scholar Metrics h5-index, LREC ranks 6^{th} of the big conferences/journals in Computational Linguistics.

More popular topics in LREC2022

This time we had 22 Areas and authors were asked to select a main and a secondary. Submissions to the areas gives us an indication of the current interests of our participants.

By large the most popular areas (more than 100 submissions) are:

- Corpora and Annotation (including Tools, Systems, Treebanks)
- Information Extraction and Information Retrieval (including NER, QA, Text Mining, Document Classification, Text Categorisation)
- Areas with 50 or more submissions are:
- Applications involving LRs and Evaluation (including applications in specific domains)
- Less-Resourced/Endangered Languages
- Dialogue, Conversational Systems, Chatbots, Human-Robot Interaction
- Speech Resources and Processing (including Phonetic Databases, Phonology, Prosody)
- Statistical Methods and Machine Learning for Language Technologies (including Language Models)
- Multilinguality and Machine Translation (including Speech-to-Speech translation)

- Evaluation and Validation Methodologies
- Opinion Mining, Sentiment Analysis, Emotion Recognition/Generation
- Multimodality and Cross-modality (including Sign Languages, Vision and other modalities) and Multimedia
- Social Media Processing
- Statistical Methods and Machine Learning for Language Technologies (including Language Models)

While the areas that this time attracted less attention are:

- Natural Language Generation (including Summarization)
- Lexicons (also WordNet, FrameNet, Multimodal and Sign Language lexicons, etc.)
- Semantics (including Distributional Semantics, Word Sense Disambiguation, Coreference, etc.)
- Language Resources and Evaluation for Psycho-linguistics, Cognitive Linguistics and Linguistic Theories
- Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage
- Discourse and Pragmatics
- Parsing, Tagging, Grammar, Syntax, Morphology
- Language Resource Infrastructures, Standards for LRs, Metadata, Policy issues, Ethics, Legal Issues
- Reproduction of Research Results in Science and Technology of Language

LREC Proceedings in Thomson Citation Index and SCOPUS
I remind that since 2010 the LREC Proceedings have been accepted for inclusion in CPCI (Thomson Reuters Conference Proceedings Citation Index). From 2018 the LREC Proceedings are also indexed by SCOPUS (Elsevier). These are important achievements, providing a better recognition to all LREC authors and useful in particular for young colleagues.

LREC and LRE Journal (Springer)
I also mention that substantially extended versions of papers selected by reviewers as the most appropriate will be considered for publication in a special issue of the Language Resources and Evaluation Journal published by Springer (a SCI-indexed journal).

Acknowledgments
As usual, I want to thank here all those who have made this LREC2022 possible.

I express my deepest gratitude to the new Chairs that we introduced this time: to the Workshop and Tutorial chairs and to the Area chairs. They all did a tremendous job.

As usual, I thank the old time friends of the Programme Committee: with them we went through the suggestions of the other chairs to make the final decisions. I wish to thank each of them, the new ones: Frédéric Béchet and Philippe Blache, and obviously the "old" ones: Khalid Choukri, Chris Cieri, Thierry Declerk, Hitoshi Isahara, Bente Maegaard, Joseph Mariani, Jan Odijk, Stelios Piperidis. A particular thanks goes to Thierry Declerk, who helped me in the preparation of the program, and to Khalid Choukri, who has worked for the preparation of the Proceedings in START. I am very grateful to Frédéric Béchet and Philippe Blache, chairs of the Local Committee, who dealt not only with local matters but also with matters of the hybrid organisation.

I thank the ELRA Association: LREC is a major service from ELRA to all the community. The ELRA Board members contributed to the change in the organisation and helped also in suggesting names of chairs for the various Areas.

I thank the two institutions that always dedicate a great effort to LREC: ELDA in Paris and ILC-CNR in Pisa. I am very proud of the work of Sara Goggi and Hélène Mazo, and I thank them for their dedication and competence in managing the many tasks they have in their hands. And I add my thanks to many other colleagues of the two institutions who contributed in different ways, and in particular to Victoria Arranz, Roberto Bartolini, Lucille Blanchard, Francesca Frontini, Valérie Mapelli, Monica Monachini, Vincenzo Parrinelli, Valeria Quochi, Caroline Rannaud, Mickaël Rigaud, Alexandre Sicard, Kamelia Yahiaoui.

I express my deep gratitude to the local authorities and to the sponsors that have generously helped with financial support.

Also on behalf of the Program Committee, I praise our impressively large Scientific Committee. They did a great job, most of them on time.

I thank the Workshop and Tutorial organisers, who enrich LREC with so many interesting events. I hope the hybrid organisation will work with them too.

I thank the Catalyst company that helped us in the organisation of the hybrid event.

The biggest thanks goes to all the LREC authors, who provide the "substance" to LREC, and give us such a broad picture of the field. I am looking forward meeting many of you in Marseille.

And this time again I can thank all the LREC participants, both the remote and the onsite ones. I am so glad to meet so many of you soon. I really hope this LREC will open new research paths and new exciting work for many of you, also profiting of the many contacts you will have.

Marseille, with its special light, will be a fantastic Mediterranean location for LREC2022.

I welcome you at LREC2022, and with all the Programme Committee I hope you have fruitful contacts and find interesting and valuable presentations at the conference and readings in the LREC2022 Proceedings.

Enjoy LREC2022 in Marseille!

Nicoletta Calzolari
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