

SIGDial Business Meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> September 2005  
Lisbon, 6<sup>th</sup> SIGDial Workshop

1. The meeting was opened by the President at 18:15

2. Agenda (see the slides) was agreed.

3. Report of the SIG and its events (see the slides)

- 400 members, from 38 different countries
- SIGDial officers: David Traum (President), Wolfgang Minker (Vice-president), Kristiina Jokinen (Secretary), board members: Jan Alexandersson, Susan McRoy, Michael McTear, Alex Rudnicky, Ronnie Smith, Jan van Kuppevelt
- Activities: SIGDial workshop in Boston, USA April 2004 and 7 endorsed dialogue related workshops (see the slides)
- concerning the endorsed workshops, it was asked if the papers presented in the workshops were also available for SIGDial members. At the moment this is not the case, but could of course be possible in the future.
- The 7<sup>th</sup> SIGDial workshop will be held in Sydney, together with the COLING/ACL conference. The chair of the workshop will be announced soon – this is one of the vice-president's duties.
- A handbook for organising SIGDial workshops is being compiled by Ronnie Smith. Contributions are welcome.

4. Upcoming elections

The president, vice-president, secretary, and three members of the board will be elected for the next two-year period 2006-2007 (the elected president will appoint three further members to the board). The current elects can run for candidacy. Details of the elections will soon be sent to the list. After the call for nominations for candidacy, about one month will be allowed for electronic elections.

5. Discussion on the question: should the SIGDial workshop be a conference?

- The group that attends the workshops is not necessarily a coherent group, but depends on where the workshop is co-located
- Workshops related to ACL are different from those co-located with ISCA: more discourse-related topics in the workshops co-located with ACL and more speech-related papers in the workshops co-located with ISCA
- It would be good to have a workshop as a satellite event rather than a regular workshop in ACL
- Is a 2-day workshop enough? – Should there be more parallel sessions so as to accommodate all the good papers?
- Maybe a 3-day workshop when co-located with ISCA, since the participant numbers seem to peak at those times (Aalborg, Lisbon)
- Umbrella workshop for different specialty topics?
- Recommendation: poll question to the members about conference vs. workshop

## 6. Open floor

- Commercial industry support might bring in more visibility to the SIG. For instance, sponsorship from Microsoft provided the invited speakers and the reception for this workshop.

- Various sponsorship information and tips should be included in the workshop handbook

- We could establish formal relations with companies, educational authorities etc.

- To encourage industry, there could be demos-sessions that interests industry.

Usually companies want to sell, so their interests lie in the new ideas that have potential for business. Attendance to the SIGDial workshops has so far required kind-hearted companies but there should also be something to offer to them, real-world solutions, not only speculative work. Maybe we could also get invited speakers from the industry or with a company background, such as Jim Larson or Roberto Pieraccini.

- On the other hand, considering e.g. the speech synthesis SIG, big companies already have their own special groups, so what is the meaning of the SIG from the industry point of view?

- And what is the function of SIGDial? Only to endorse workshops? Or to hold a separate conference and produce independent publications? If a separate event, the workshop faces two alternatives: either a competition or suppression with respect to another event. Maybe it's better to consider an alternative: a separate workshop in an isolated location so as to encourage ideas rather than produce another conference publication. The young researchers' roundtable is a good idea, but perhaps there is also a need for the mature researchers' roundtable.

- One also has to think if the work is led by research or by industry. It must be noted that it's not necessarily the case that industrial organizations are not present in the workshop because more interesting research is being done somewhere else. Quite contrary, there are special industrial forums where the companies can meet (potential) customers which are important for their business. Is SIGDial a useful forum to meet industrial customers? And does it want to be such?

7. The meeting was closed at 19:15.

Kristiina Jokinen  
Secretary of SIGDial