

Call for Participation

ACORNS Workshop
Computational Models of Language Evolution, Acquisition and Processing
The workshop is a satellite of Interspeech-2009.

September 11, 2009
Old Ship Hotel, the oldest hotel of Brighton that offers the allure of history
31-38 Kings Road, Brighton, UK

Now that the ACORNS project is approach its completion, the ACORNS consortium plans to bring together a group of outstanding invited speakers and discussants to explore directions for future research in the multidisciplinary field of **computational modeling of language evolution, processing and acquisition**. This event is a follow-up of the successful ACORNS/ESF workshop held in November 2007.

We envisage a meeting of a group of **maximally 50 researchers** from different disciplines who take an interest in investigating language acquisition and processing. The focus is on computational models that enhance our understanding of behavioural phenomena and results of experiments.

A pervasive problem in the multi-disciplinary field of language processing and acquisition is that different disciplines not only favour and exploit different experimental paradigms, but also quite different publication styles and different journals. As a result, information flow across the borders of the disciplines is no more than a trickle, where broad streams would be desirable.

We have designed a programme with four presentations. The first presentation gives an overview of the accomplishments of the ACORNS project; the remaining three presentations address issues in modeling language acquisition, processing and evolution from the perspective of linguistics, biology and computer science. A team of discussants from a range of disciplines will give comments. The public website of the ACORNS project (www.acorns-project.org/documents) provides an up-to-date impression of the results of the ACORNS project.

Prospective participants are invited to send an expression of interest to the organizers (e.denos@let.ru.nl) before July 31. In selecting participants, priority will be given to scientists who submit a position statement with their expression of interest. The statement should address the topics of the workshop. It should be in the Interspeech-2009 format with a maximum of four pages (shorter statements are also welcome).

Workshop participants will receive key papers by the speakers and discussants, as well as the full set of position statements on August 15.

During the workshop, there will be ample time and opportunity for all participants to contribute to the discussions.

The workshop should result in a sketch of future research in language evolution, acquisition and processing during the next five to ten years. To that end the workshop will explore the formation of consortia that can prepare project proposals for EU-funded programmes such as FET, etc. For this reason we have also invited representatives of the major European funding agencies. Finally, the workshop will explore the feasibility of forming a couple of small interdisciplinary teams to prepare papers for journals in a number of disciplines.

Costs: The price for participants is 70 UK pounds; this includes all preparatory materials and a lunch. All payments must be made in cash at the workshop venue.

Programme:

9:00 – 9:30 Registration

9:30 – 10:30 Lou Boves, Scientific Manager of the ACORNS project (www.acorns-project.org)

10:30 – 10:45 Coffee

10:45 – 12:15 Deb Roy, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass

12:15 – 13:15 Lunch

13:15 – 14:45 Friedemann Pulvermüller, MRC Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit, Cambridge, UK

14:45 – 15:00 Tea

15:00 – 16:30 Rochelle Newman, University of Maryland, MD

16:30 – 17:30 Conclusions

Discussants:

Discussants will include:

Ian Howard, Cambridge University

Roger Moore, Sheffield University, UK

Hugo Van hamme, Catholic University Leuven, Belgium

Odette Scharenborg, Radboud University, Netherlands

Additional discussants are being negotiated at this moment. Scientists who would like to participate as a discussant are invited to contact the organizers at the e-mail address shown at the bottom of this message as soon as possible.

Workshop Organisers:

Lou Boves, Elisabeth den Os, Louis ten Bosch (Radboud University)

All questions regarding the workshop and requests for registration with full name, affiliation and e-mail address must be sent to:

e.denos@let.ru.nl