

Tuesday, 30th May 2000

The first ISCA SALTMIL SIG General Meeting took place in Athens, Greece, on 30th May 2000 at 18:45, as part of the LREC-2000 Satellite WS 9 Workshop Developing Language Resources for Minority Languages: Re-usability and Strategic Priorities.

39 participants registered for the workshop from various countries: Australia (1), Austria (1), Canada (1), Czech Republic (1), Estonia (1), France (2), Germany (1), Greece (3), Italy (2), Japan (1), Korea (1), Malta (1), Netherlands (1), Slovenia (2), Spain (7), Sweden (1), Switzerland (1), UK (3), and USA (8).

Kepa Sarasola (University of the Basque Country) chaired the meeting. He introduced the aims of the SALTMIL SIG and proposed the following agenda for the meeting:

- Presentation of past activities in 1999-2000.
- Proposals for future activities and discussion of them.
- Election of the new SALTMIL committee.

Past activities 1999-2000: It was pointed out that the ISCA board approved the SALTMIL SIG proposal submitted by the Founding Committee Members (Briony Williams (Univ. of Edinburgh), Climent Nadeu (UPC, Barcelona) and Donncha Ó'Cróinín (ITE, Dublin)) and transferred Euro 1000 to the SALTMIL SIG. Funds were deposited on a bank account in Ireland by Donncha Ó'Cróinín. Other activities included creation of the SALTMIL website, the SALTMIL electronic discussion list (at <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/saltmil/>) and the organization of the LREC-2000 Workshop.

Proposed future activities: These included background information and discussion of plans to:

- Maintain a database of active researchers.

- Organize conferences and workshops with a focus on minority languages.
- Intensify international collaboration in education and research.
- Promote active international student exchange.
- Issue a call for the best student project or essay.
- Design and coordinate proposals for joint projects in minority languages.
- Initiate collaboration with the ACL, IEEE, ACM.

Election of the new SALTMIL Committee: Unfortunately, two of the SALTMIL founding members (Briony Williams, Climent Nadeu) resigned as SALTMIL Committee Members. Since Donncha Ó'Cróinín could not be present at the meeting it was decided to fill the positions of the SALTMIL Committee at a later date, eg, through voting on the SALTMIL electronic discussion list.

Discussion: In the discussion that followed, Dafydd Gibbon (University of Bielefeld) pointed out that the recent activities under the COCOSDA project are expected to address explicitly the local languages of Africa. He proposed collaborating on the topic. David Graff (LDC, University of Pennsylvania) offered the LDC infrastructure and experience to enable acquisition of databases through the "Voice of America" broadcasts in minority languages. Funding for such projects at the moment, however, cannot be provided by the LDC itself. Additionally, Jeff Allen (ELRA) offered to distribute any existing minority language resources, and welcomed submissions of such material. Lori Levin (Language Technologies Institute, CMU) offered support to visiting student researchers, through the provision of expertise on the design and implementation of speech processing systems. However, the funding of such activities remains a challenging issue to be addressed in the future.

Minutes prepared by: Bojan Petek, LREC
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

2000 W9 Organizing Committee Member,

Athens, 2nd June 2000