

## Preface

ICALL – Intelligent Computer-Assisted Language Learning – is an interdisciplinary field whose aim is implementing and deploying applications for language learning based on Language Resources and Natural Language Processing (NLP), thereby opening the way for inclusion of open-ended language analysis and generation functionality in such applications.

Existing NLP tools and resources do not tend to find their way into the language learning classroom, despite their obvious potential uses in language learning. The reasons may be twofold. On the one hand, there is a lack of interested sponsors. On the other hand, there is a general lack of interest in the NLP community in CALL applications. While this situation arguably may have started to change for English, and a small number of other languages in the past ten years, it still holds true for the Nordic languages.

It seems that the few systems that have been developed for ICALL are either copyrighted and restricted by high licensing fees – and hence too expensive for universities and schools – or fall short of the required quality in linguistic or pedagogical functionality.

It is obvious though that ICALL holds a potential for applying NLP tools and NL resources in real-life conditions as opposed to laboratory tests and academic research. ICALL can help popularize NLP tools and NL resources among many users. At the same time, NLP technologies and resources can support teachers, relieving them from tedious tasks that can be modelled and carried out by computers.

This situation calls for a change and the successful first workshop on NLP for CALL (<http://spraakbanken.gu.se/eng/Research/icall/NLP4CALL>) organized in connection with the Swedish Language Technology Conference 2012 in Lund, as well as the recent establishment of the Special Interest Group at North European Association of Language Technology, NEALT SIG-ICALL (<http://spraakbanken.gu.se/eng/Research/icall/SIG-ICALL>), have shown that there is a need for a forum where these issues can be discussed.

In view of that, we took the initiative to gather interested researchers together and discuss experiences, challenges and successes in the area of ICALL development. In the call for papers we invited submissions on topics such as the following:

- research directly aimed at ICALL,
- actual or potential use of existing NLP tools or resources for language learning,
- ongoing development of resources and tools with potential usage in ICALL, either directly in interactive applications, or indirectly in materials, application or curriculum development, e.g. collecting and annotating learner corpora; developing tools and algorithms for readability analysis, selecting optimal corpus examples, etc.

We were especially interested in submissions describing work for Nordic languages.

We received a total of 8 papers, that have undergone blind review by three members of the program committee:

- Toni Badia, UPF, Barcelona
- Lars Borin, University of Gothenburg
- Robert Eklund, Linköping University
- Petter Karlström, Stockholm University
- Sofie Johansson Kokkinakis, University of Gothenburg
- Ola Knutsson, Stockholm University

- Hrafn Loftsson, Reykjavik University
- Montse Maritxalar, University of the Basque country
- Detmar Meurers, University of Tübingen
- Martí Quixal, University of Texas at Austin
- Mathias Schulze, University of Waterloo
- Joel Tetreault, Nuance Communications
- Cornelia Tschichold, Swansea University
- Elena Volodina, University of Gothenburg

Following the reviewers' recommendations, 5 submissions were accepted for presentation at the workshop and inclusion into the workshop proceedings volume, subject to revisions as recommended by the reviewers.

The workshop was opened by an invited talk on *Challenges in ICALL* given by Cornelia Tschichold (Swansea University, UK), followed by two sessions with oral presentations where a range of topics have been introduced. A general discussion concluded the workshop.

*The workshop organizers:*

*Elena Volodina*

*Lars Borin*

*Hrafn Loftsson*

**WS website:** <http://spraakbanken.gu.se/eng/forskning/ICALL/2ndNLP4CALL>

**Acknowledgements:** Financial support for the organization of the workshop has come in part from the NordPlus Sprog program (the project *A System Architecture for Intelligent CALL*), and in part from the University of Gothenburg, through its support of the *Centre for Language Technology*: <http://www.clt.gu.se>