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Editors' Foreword

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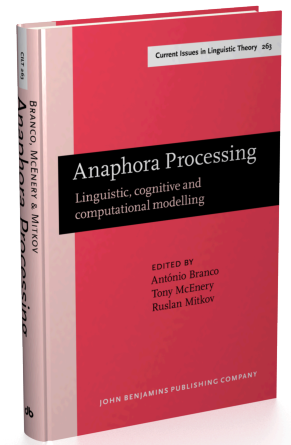

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Anaphora Processing: Linguistic, cognitive and computational modelling
Edited by António Branco, Tony McEnery and Ruslan Mitkov
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EDITORS' FOREWORD

Anaphora is a central topic in the study of natural language and has long been the object of research in a wide range of disciplines such as theoretical, corpus and computational linguistics, philosophy of language, psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology. On the other hand, the correct interpretation of anaphora has played an increasingly vital role in real-world natural language processing applications including machine translation, automatic abstracting, information extraction and question answering. As a result, the processing of anaphora has become one of the most popular and productive topics of multi- and inter-disciplinary research, and has enjoyed increased interest and attention in recent years.

In this context, the biennial Discourse Anaphora and Anaphor Resolution Colloquia (DAARC) have emerged as the major regular forum for presentation and discussion of the best research results in this area. Initiated in 1996 at Lancaster University and taken over in 2000 by the University of Lisbon, the DAARC series established itself as a specialised and competitive forum for the presentation of the latest results on anaphora processing, ranging from theoretical linguistic approaches through psycholinguistic and cognitive work to corpus studies and computational modelling. The series is unique in that it covers anaphora from such a variety of multidisciplinary perspectives. The fourth Discourse Anaphora and Anaphor Resolution Colloquium (DAARC'2002) took place in Lisbon in September 2002 and featured 44 state-of-the-art presentations (2 invited talks and 42 papers selected from 61 submissions) by 72 researchers from 20 countries.

This volume includes extended versions of the best papers from DAARC'2002. The selection process was highly competitive in that all authors of papers at DAARC'2002 were invited to submit an extended and updated version of their DAARC'2002 paper which was reviewed anonymously by 3 reviewers, members of a Paper Selection Committee of leading international researchers. It is worth mentioning that whilst we were delighted to have so many contributions at DAARC'2002, restrictions on the number of papers and pages which could be included in this volume forced us to be more selective than we would have liked. From the 44 papers presented at the colloquium, we had to select the 20 best papers only.

The book is organised thematically. The papers in the volume have been topically grouped into three sections:

(i) Computational treatment (6 papers)
(ii) Theoretical, psycholinguistic and cognitive issues (7 papers)
(iii) Corpus-based studies (7 papers)

However, this classification should not be regarded as too strict or absolute, as some of the papers touch on issues pertaining to more than one of three above topical groups.

We believe this book provides a unique, up-to-date overview of recent significant work on the processing of anaphora from a multi- and inter-disciplinary angle. It will be of interest and practical use to readers from fields as diverse as theoretical linguistics, corpus linguistics, computational linguistics, computer science, natural language processing, artificial intelligence, human language technology, psycholinguistics, cognitive science and translation studies. The readership will include but will not be limited to university lecturers, researchers, postgraduate and senior undergraduate students.

We would like to thank all authors who submitted papers both to the colloquium and to the call for papers associated with this volume. Their original and revised contributions made this project materialise.

We would like to express our gratitude to all members of the DAARC programme committee as well as the members of this volume's paper selection committee. Without their help, we would not have been able to arrive at such a high quality selection. The following is a list of those who participated in the selection process for the papers in this volume:

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