SLT 2018 Special Session - Microsoft Dialogue Challenge: Building End-to-End Task-Completion Dialogue Systems

Call for papers

****

Website: https://github.com/xiul-msr/e2e_dialog_challenge

Date: December 18th, 2018

Venue: Athens, Greece

Submission: https://msrprograms.cloudapp.net/MDC2018

System Submission Deadline: October 25th, 11:59 PM PST

Paper Submission Deadline: November 18th, 11:59 PM PST

****

Description:

There are many virtual assistants commercially available today, such as Apple's Siri, Google's Home, Microsoft's Cortana, and Amazon's Echo. With a well-designed dialogue system as an intelligent assistant, people can accomplish tasks easily via natural language interactions.

In the research community, dialogue system has been well studied for many decades. Recent advance in deep learning has also inspired the exploration of neural dialogue systems. However, it still remains a big challenge to build and evaluate multi-turn task-completion systems in a universal setting.

On one hand, conversational data for dialogue research has been scarce, due to challenges in human data collection and privacy issues. Without standard public datasets, it has been difficult for any group to build universal dialogue models that could encourage follow-up studies to benchmark upon. On the other hand, labeled datasets that are available now, while useful for evaluating partial components of a dialogue system (such as natural language understanding, dialogue state tracking), fail at end-to-end system evaluation. As a thorough evaluation of a dialogue system requires a large number of users to interact with the system at real time.

This workshop introduces a Dialogue Challenge for building end-to-end task-completion dialogue systems, with the hope of encouraging the dialogue research community to collaborate and benchmark on standard datasets and unified experimental environment. The goal of this workshop is to bring together researchers and practitioners in this area, to clarify impactful research problems, share findings from real-world deployments, and generate new ideas for future lines of research. This workshop will include invited talks, contributed work, poster/demo sessions, and open discussion. In these talks,

senior technical leaders from both academia and industry will give insights into real usage and challenges at scale. We will prioritize the papers that propose interesting and impactful contributions. We will end the session with an open discussion, including a panel consisting of academic and industrial researchers.

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Dialogue systems
- Natural language understanding
- Natural language generation
- Dialogue policy Learning
- Reinforcement learning for dialogue
- Dialogue state tracking

Submissions should follow the SLT 2018 requirements and do not exceed 4 pages. Submissions will be evaluated following the SLT 2018 Research Track evaluation criteria.

Invited Speakers:

- Yun-Nung (Vivian) Chen (NTU)
- Dilek Hakkani-Tur (Amazon)
- Gokhan Tur (Uber)

Panel Discussion:

- Alex Acero (Apple)
- Yun-Nung (Vivian) Chen (NTU)
- Jianfeng Gao (Microsoft)
- Dilek Hakkani-Tur (Amazon)
- Gokhan Tur (Uber)

Co-chairs:

- Jianfeng Gao (Microsoft)
- Jingjing Liu (Microsoft)

Organizers:

- Jianfeng Gao (Microsoft)
- Xiujun Li (Microsoft)
- Jingjing Liu (Microsoft)
- Sarah Panda (Microsoft)

- Siqi Sun (Microsoft)
- Yu Wang (Microsoft)

Committee:

- Hao Fang