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Editorial

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Editorial

I am delighted to introduce the 24th edition of the ITB Journal, the academic journal of the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown. The first paper by Smith and Nolan, explores the contribution of facial expressions improving comprehension and acceptability in sign language avatars. This work deals with Irish Sign Language (ISL) and examines the Deaf community's responsiveness to sign language avatars. The hypothesis is that augmenting an existing avatar with the seven widely accepted universal emotions will make it more human-like and improve usability and comprehension for the ISL user. The authors compare an augmented set of avatar utterances against a baseline set, focusing on two key areas: 1) comprehension and 2) naturalness of facial configuration. The evaluation results reveal that, in a comprehension test, the avatars are lacking various linguistic attributes.

The second paper, by Conor Pyle, characterises serial verb constructions in two dialects of the Western Desert language of Australia, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara. Within a Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) analysis, the paradigm allows the author to look at the constituents for representation of logical structure and marking of macroroles, while finding that core and peripheral argument phrases are marked by case with ergative nominal marking and accusative pronoun marking. Simple verbs use endings for tense, aspect, mood and status and the RRG operator projection shows the nature of linkage between the verbs involved in multi verb structures. Importantly, there is a serial participle marked on the members of these constructions and a finite verb that is typically clause final. These meet the criteria for serial verb constructions and in nuclear junctures there is evidence of sharing of arguments and a single action implied. Serial verbs can form nuclear or clausal cosubordinate nexus junctures.

In the third paper, Judith Gottschalk discusses both macro- and micro-levels of persuasion in data visualizations in persuasive tools for language learning. Her hypothesis is that persuasive data visualizations decrease reading time and increase reading accuracy of graph charts. Based on Tufte's (1983) data-ink maximization principle the paper introduces a framework for persuasive data visualizations on the persuasive micro level that employs a conception of de-emphasizing non-data and emphasizing data-ink, based on Few (2013). Persuasive data visualization for a performance-optimizing tool called Learning Journey Online is presented.

We hope that you enjoy the papers in this issue of the ITB Journal.

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Editor

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