Adam Kilgarriff Prize, 2017

The Adam Kilgarriff Prize was set up in 2016 as a memorial to our multi-talented friend, who contributed so much to the fields of lexicography, corpus linguistics, and NLP. Along with the other Trustees, I'm delighted that the Prize has got off to such a terrific start. Not only did we receive eight excellent applications, but the projects they were based on reflected interesting and original work across the whole spectrum of fields in which Adam himself was engaged. There were submissions in areas as diverse as corpus building, software tools for language research, named entity resources, translation systems, machine learning, and dictionary-creation.

With so many high-quality applications, selecting a winner was a challenging process for the six Trustees, involving several lengthy Skype meetings. But our eventual decision was unanimous, and we're all thrilled that the first Adam Kilgarriff Prize is going to Dr. Paweł Rutkowski. Paweł and his team at the University of Warsaw have been working for over five years on the development of resources for users of Polish Sign Language, including an innovative corpus and a corpus-based dictionary. Dr. Rutkowski explains his project's goals on the last page of this issue. He has accepted an invitation from the organizers of eLex 2017 in Leiden to give one of the keynote talks at the conference, where he will receive the Prize in person from Adam's spouse, Gill Lamden.

We congratulate all the applicants for their impressive submissions, and for making the first iteration of Adam's prize such a success. Finally, I take this opportunity to thank my fellow Trustees for the great care and thoroughness which they devoted to the task of evaluating all the submissions. We are all confident that this year's Adam Kilgarriff Prize has a worthy winner, and we look forward to inviting applications for the 2019 Prize in due course.
Michael Rundell

25th

jubilee issue with a focus on lexicography and computational linguistics

The Corpus of Polish Sign Language and the
Corpus-based Dictionary of Polish Sign Language

Polish Sign Language (polski język migowy, PJM) is a natural visual-gestural language that has evolved within the Polish Deaf community since around 1817, when the first school for the deaf was established in Warsaw. Until recently, PJM was highly understudied from the linguistic perspective, but founding the Section for Sign Linguistics at the University of Warsaw provided a unique opportunity to analyze PJM on the basis of solid empirical data. Established in 2010, this is the first Polish unit specializing in studies on the communication of the Deaf, with the aim to develop — based on a vast corpus of video recordings — a comprehensive grammatical and lexicographic description of PJM.

The PJM Corpus project aims at documenting the language which, despite very limited interest among the hearing majority of Poles, forms an important part of Polish and European linguistic and cultural heritage. The underlying idea is to create a database of richly annotated videos showing sign language utterances, produced by Deaf users of PJM reacting to more than 20 different elicitation tasks, such as retelling the content of picture stories and video clips presented to them during the recording session, naming objects, talking about themselves and their experiences, and discussing various topics pertaining to the Deaf.

The group of PJM Corpus participants is intended to be representative of the Polish signing community: they come from different parts of Poland and their selection has taken into account key sociological variables including age, gender, etc. The raw video material obtained in the recording sessions is further segmented, glossed (lemmatized), transcribed with the HamNoSys transcription symbols, translated into written Polish, and tagged with respect to various grammatical features using the iLex software developed at the University of Hamburg. The annotation conventions that are employed have been designed explicitly for this project.

This extensive set of data has been used as the empirical basis for the *Corpus-based Dictionary*

Paweł Rutkowski, aged 39, is the founder and head of the Section for Sign Linguistics at the University of Warsaw, a general linguist and specialist in natural language syntax, and author of more than a hundred academic publications and textbooks. An alumnus of the University of Warsaw and Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, he has been awarded prizes, grants and scholarships, made research visits to leading European and American universities, and is member of the Polish Council for Sign Language at the Ministry of Family, Labor and Social Policy. Dr Rutkowski is winner of the Adam Kilgarriff Prize, 2017. p.rutkowski@uw.edu.pl

of Polish Sign Language (2016), which is the first dictionary of PJM prepared in compliance with modern lexicographical standards. The dictionary was edited by Joanna Łacheta, Małgorzata Czajkowska-Kisil, Jadwiga Linde-Usiekniewicz and Paweł Rutkowski, and is an open-access publication available freely at http://slownikpjm.uw.edu.pl/en/.

Containing many hours of recorded material elicited from a range of individuals, the corpus makes it possible to ascertain which PJM signs are used by Deaf signers and how. Thanks to that, the dictionary records and describes real usage. The definitions are written in Polish, akin to the defining style in typical monolingual dictionaries, i.e. providing semantic information that is more extensive and precise than customarily provided in bilingual dictionaries. All sentential examples are drawn from authentic signed utterances found in the PJM Corpus. To standardize their appearance the original utterances were re-recorded by Deaf members of the dictionary team.

Another practical application of the project over the last three years concerns the development of multimedia textbook adaptations for schoolchildren with special educational needs (including Deaf and hard-of-hearing), commissioned by the Ministry of Education. These have the form of computer programs offering access to thousands of video files with PJM translations of all texts included in the original textbooks. Such attempts to ensure that the Deaf have equal opportunities to communicate, the right to full participation in social life and appropriate educational opportunities, would have not been possible without the solid linguistic foundations of the PJM Corpus and its derived dictionary. This is why the study of PJM grammar and lexicon is inextricably related to the issue of full linguistic rights of the Deaf minority, which is of particular importance in states such as Poland, where the full-fledged nature of sign language communication has been questioned for decades.

Paweł Rutkowski