



## NEMLAR Newsletter

News on Arabic language resources and Arabic language technologies

---

### Issue 13

July 2008

#### Newsletter content:

1. MEDAR – a new NEMLAR project
  2. The Mission of MEDAR
  3. The MEDAR flyer
  4. HLT & NLP within the Arabic world
    - a workshop at the LREC 2008 conference
  5. Upcoming events
  6. Join the Network
  7. How to contribute to the Network
- 

#### 1. MEDAR – a new NEMLAR project

MEDAR (Mediterranean Arabic Language and Speech Technology) is a new project supported by the European Commission. The project is running from 2008 until 2010. See: [www.medar.info](http://www.medar.info)

The MEDAR project is implemented by a team of 15 partners representing 9 countries: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, West Bank & Gaza Strip, Denmark, France, Greece, and The Netherlands. MEDAR is formed by the former NEMLAR consortium, and as the NEMLAR project, MEDAR is coordinated by the University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

MEDAR has 4 main objectives:

- 1) Consolidating the **Network** of players in all areas of Arabic HLT.
- 2) Developing the **Cooperation Roadmap** based on a clear picture of the foreseeable technological trends, market potentials, and cooperation possibilities.
- 3) Updating the **Basic Language Resource Kit**: the minimum set of resources and tools necessary for carrying out research and training on LRs and HLT, with a focus on MT and MLIR.
- 4) Supporting the **Development of tools and resources**, in particular MT and MLIR on the basis of partners' technologies and open source code (e.g. Statistical MT, MLIR, and speech recognition) and the framework for their benchmarking.

Dissemination is a very strong component of MEDAR. Dissemination will take place at scientific conferences, at user conferences, at workshops and seminars, through the website and this newsletter etc. We will organize an international conference on Arabic language resources and language technology in 2009, as a follow-up to the conference organized in Cairo 2004.

Please contribute to the dissemination by forwarding this newsletter to colleagues and people with interest in the area.

For more information please visit: [www.medar.info](http://www.medar.info)

Contact: Bente Maegaard (Coordinator) or Dorte Haltrup Hansen,  
Centre for Language Technology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark  
[nemlar@hum.ku.dk](mailto:nemlar@hum.ku.dk)

## 2. The Mission of MEDAR

The development of language resources and tools for the Arabic language is important for the economy in the Arab countries: The industry itself provides new jobs, but more importantly the use of language technology makes administration faster and more efficient.

At the same time it is important for the culture. By focussing on Arabic language technology and making both the technology and content available in Arabic, the use of Arabic will grow. Language technology can also help access information in foreign languages, even without a very good knowledge of these languages. And finally, it can help spread Arabic ideas and culture to non-Arabic languages.

## 3. The MEDAR flyer

Please download the MEDAR flyer: [www.medar.info/MEDAR-flyer.pdf](http://www.medar.info/MEDAR-flyer.pdf)  
and distribute it to make people aware of the existence and the mission of the NEMLAR Network and the MEDAR project.

## 4. HLT & NLP within the Arabic world - workshop at the LREC 2008 conference

MEDAR and prominent researchers in the fields of Arabic HLT held a joint workshop in connection with the LREC 2008 conference.

It is clear from the numerous projects that Arabic has become a major language for HLT. During this workshop we emphasized the need to focus on specific issues that would help citizens living in Arabic countries to have access to information and technologies in their mother tongues.

See the workshop program: [www.lrec-conf.org/lrec2008/IMG/ws/programme/W18.htm](http://www.lrec-conf.org/lrec2008/IMG/ws/programme/W18.htm)

## 5. Upcoming Events

**The Eighth Conference on Language Engineering** will be held on December 17-18, 2008, Cairo, Egypt.

The conference is organized by The Egyptian Society Of Language Engineering (ESOLE).

*Deadlines:* Submission of full papers 16 August 2008, Notification of acceptance of full papers 11 October 2008, Submission of camera ready papers 8 November 2008.

For more info, please visit: [www.esole.org](http://www.esole.org)

**Arabic Natural Language Processing Session (ANLP-ACIT'2008) at the International Arab Conference on Information Technology (ACIT'2008) December 16-18 2008, Hammamet, Tunisia.**  
For more info, please visit: [www.acit2k.org](http://www.acit2k.org)

## 6. Join the Network

NEMLAR started a network for players who want to collaborate for the advancement of Arabic language technology.

All institutions and enterprises are invited to join the network, if you share our mission. By joining you will get access to the newest information about language technology (actors, products, research) for Arabic in the region, you will be able to participate in the surveys and in the creation of the roadmap for cooperation. You may also find new partners and collaborators for your future activities.

Join the network through the website [www.medar.info](http://www.medar.info), and receive the newsletter and other information.

## 7. How to contribute to the Network

Please help by sending us information on coming events, new software, resources, books, papers and journals. We will distribute it via this newsletter and put it on the MEDAR homepage [www.medar.info](http://www.medar.info).

If you wish to contribute to the work of the MEDAR project you please fill in the survey questionnaire about your language resources and/or the industry needs for language resources. You can find a link to the survey questionnaire at: [www.medar.info](http://www.medar.info)

---

To subscribe or unsubscribe to the newsletter, please send an email to: [nemlar@hum.ku.dk](mailto:nemlar@hum.ku.dk)

The newsletter is published by the MEDAR project [www.medar.info](http://www.medar.info) and produced by Centre for Language Technology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Contact: Bente Maegaard (Coordinator of MEDAR) or  
Dorte Haltrup Hansen,  
Centre for Language Technology,  
University of Copenhagen,  
Njalsgade 140 – 142,  
Copenhagen S,  
Denmark  
Tel: +45 35 32 90 74, Fax: +45 35 32 90 89  
[nemlar@hum.ku.dk](mailto:nemlar@hum.ku.dk)