

ISCA Distinguished Lecturer Report (2019-2021)

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The original proposal for the ISCA Distinguished Lecturer visits was to visit South America with the aim of supporting Speech and Language research, and the Maori community in New Zealand with the specific aim of supporting the Maori Language Revitalisation effort. Unfortunately neither of these original trips was possible due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. There was a brief initial trip to speak to some of the project leaders for a recent New Zealand Government grant to Te Hiku Media, but it was not possible to follow up these initial discussions.

One trip to Pakistan was completed as part of the more general role of Distinguished Lecturers to support requests to ISCA for lecturers in under-represented countries. The trip to Pakistan was requested and organised by Professor Tania Habib, Assistant Professor in the Center for Language Engineering University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore. The initial request was to give a Keynote Speech at the 7th International Conference on Language and Technology (CLT20, 19th-21st February 2020). The trip took place from 16th February 2020 to the 22nd February 2020. The following institutes were visited and lectures given.

- **National University for Science and Technology, Islamabad**, hosted by Dr Muhammed Ali Tahir. A talk on *Deep Learning for Speech and Language Processing* was given as well as meeting faculty and the President of NUST to discuss possible collaborations.
- **Center for Language Engineering University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore**, hosted by Dr Tania Habib. A talk to the faculty and students, *Deep Learning for Speech and Language Processing* was given. Additionally a talk to undergraduate students, *AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning*, was also given as a more general overview of current research areas in machine learning and deep learning.
- **Lahore University of Management Sciences**, hosted by Dr Agha Ali Raza. Again the host was interested in *Deep Learning for Speech and Language Processing*.
- **Keynote Speech at CLT20**, hosted by Dr Sarmad Hussain (Conference Chair) and Dr Tania Habib (Technical Committee Chair). The keynote speech was *Low Resource Speech Processing*. In addition there was a lively panel discussion on *NLP Research In Pakistan: Building Synergies and Collaborations*.

The hosts for this trip were incredibly well organised, and very generous with their time. In particular Muhammad Umar Farooq who ensured that the all aspects of the trip ran smoothly, and fabulous locations for dining! It was very unfortunate that the follow-up discussions about collaborations were disrupted by the COVID-19 global pandemic.





CLT20 Attendees



LUMS



NUST Discussions



Guides in Lahore