

Preface

This book includes the papers presented at the fifth International Conference on Application of Natural Language to Information Systems (NLDB 2000) which was held in Versailles (France) on June 28-30. Following NLDB'95 in Versailles, NLDB'96 in Amsterdam, NLDB'97 in Vancouver, and NLDB'99 in Klagenfurt, NLDB 2000 was a forum for exchanging new research results and trends on the benefits of integrating Natural Language resources in Information System Engineering.

Since the first NLDB workshop in 1995 it has become apparent that each aspect of an information system life cycle may be improved by natural language techniques: database design (specification, validation, conflict resolution), database query languages, and application programming that use new software engineering research (natural language program specifications). As information systems are now evolving into the communication area, the term databases should be considered in the broader sense of information and communication systems. The main new trend in NLDB 2000 is related to the WEB wave: WEB querying, WEB answering, and information retrieval.

Among 47 papers submitted from 18 countries, the program committee selected 29 papers to be presented during the conference. Besides these regular papers, two invited talks (given by Pr. Reind P. van de Riet and Pr. Maurice Gross), and a set of posters and demonstrations are also included in these proceedings.

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We would also like to thank the secretaries and the PhD students of the PRiSM laboratory who put all their competence, enthusiasm, and kindness into making this meeting a real success.

January 2001

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