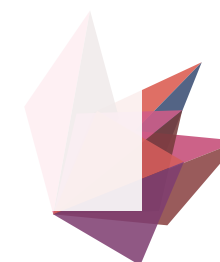
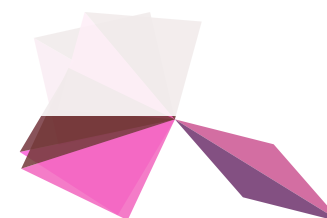
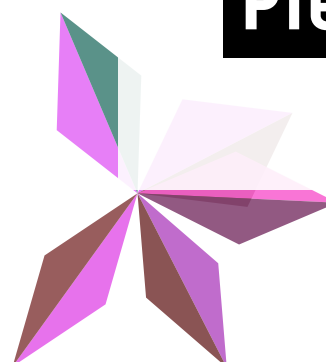
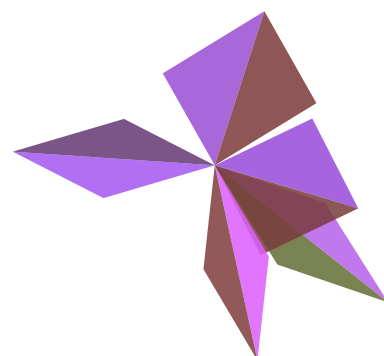
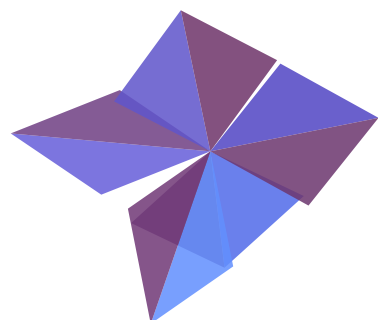
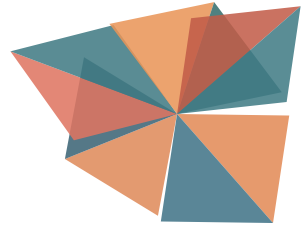


Semantic Models  
for Question Answering

**Piero Molino**





# Question Answering

**Query** = Natural Language Question

**Result** = Exact Answer or Short Passage

Q: Who's the adoptive son of Julius Cesar?

A: Here we see Brutus, the adoptive son of Julius Cesar, hitting him with a dagger



# Non-factoid QA

## Factoid

Who, Where, When

Answers are **Named Entities**, **dates** or **numbers**

Needs **structured data** or **extraction** from unstructured data

## Non-factoid

Causation, manner, reason

Answers are **sentences** or **paragraphs**

Needs **NLP** for question-answer **similarity**



# Outline

Introduction and Motivation

Distributional Semantics

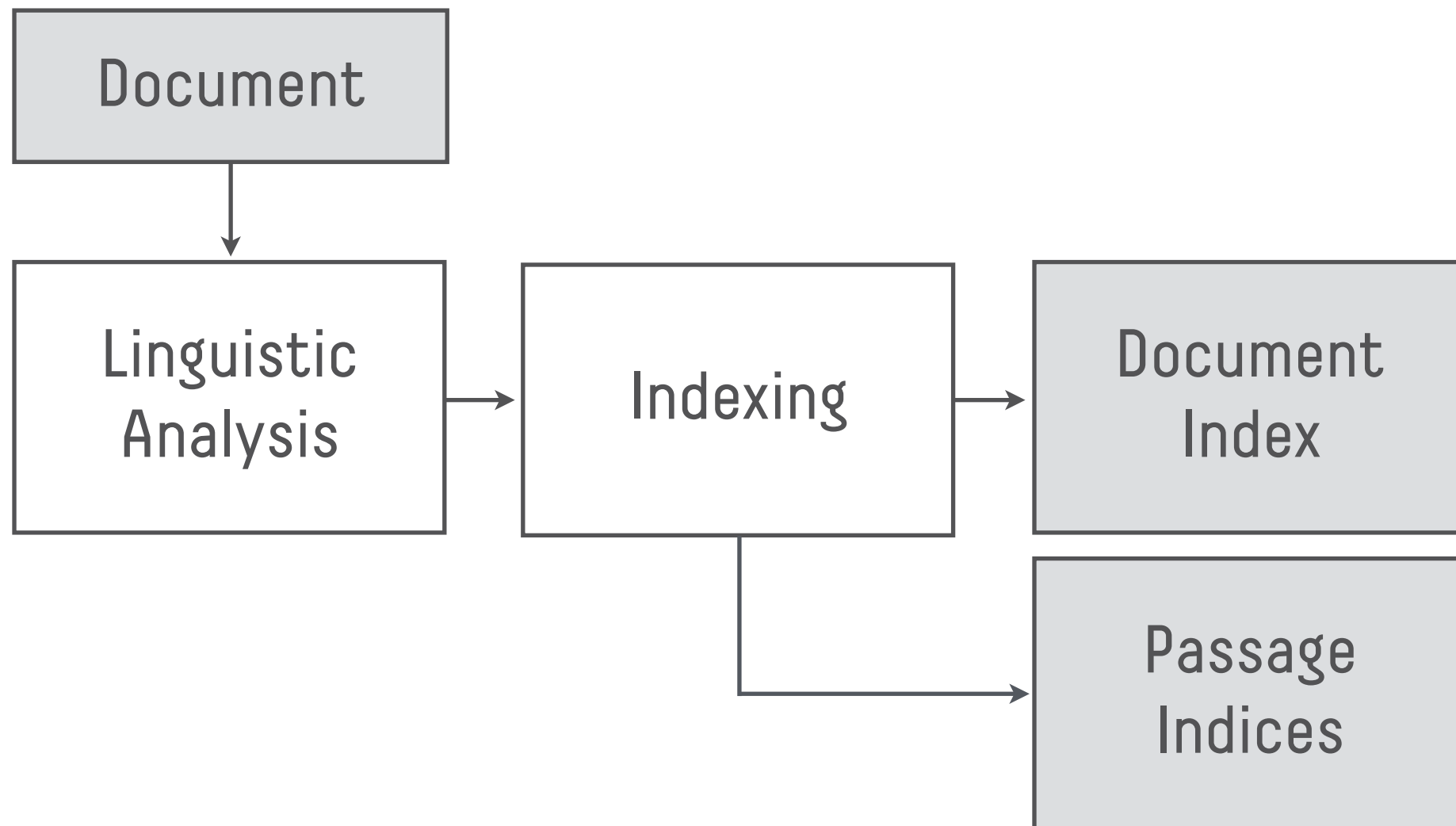
Yahoo! Answers Experiment

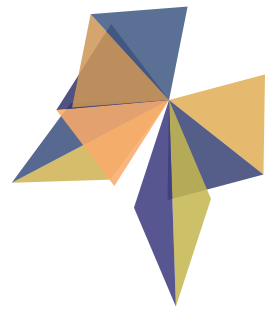
"Who Wants to Be Millionaire?" Experiment



# General Architecture

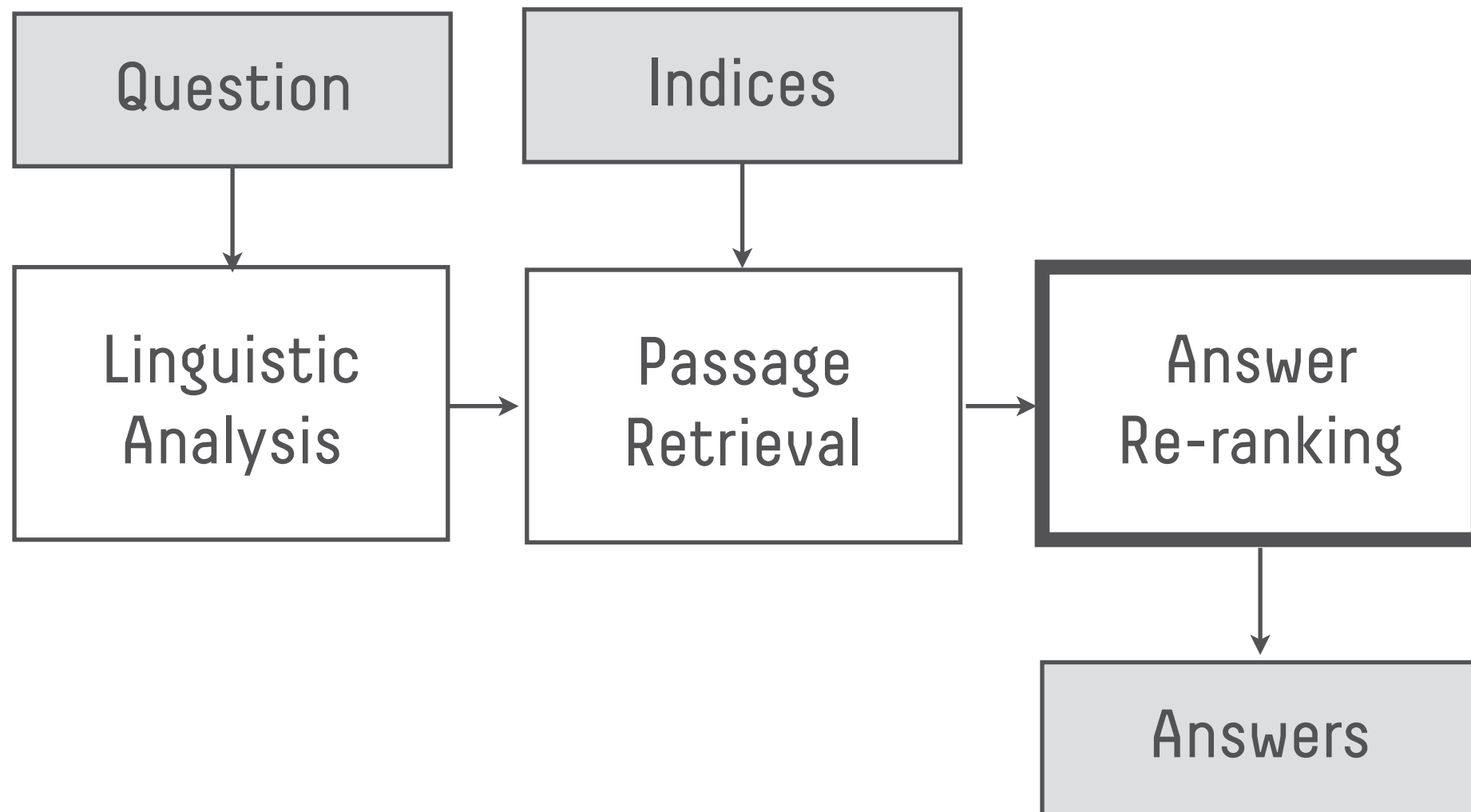
## Indexing





# General Architecture

## Retrieval





# Learning to Rank

**Learn** the Ranking Function from Question-Answer

Represent Question-Answer pair as a datapoint with

**Question specific** and **Answer specific** features  
(length, category, type of origin document, ...)

**Question-Answer features** (different similarity  
measures, TFIDF, BM25, N-gram overlap, Machine  
Translation, syntactic similarity, ...)



# Why semantics?

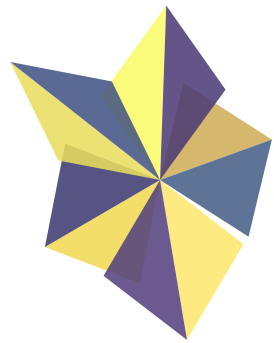
Some questions do not share even a **single word** with the answer

Q: Which beverages contain alcohol?

A: Wine makes you drunk

Ranking answers according to their **semantic similarity** with the question can overcome the problem





# Distributional Semantic Models

Exploit **latent** or **explicit concepts** rather than words

## Tasks:

semantic text similarity

synonyms detection

query expansion

topic identification

...

## Models:

Latent Semantic Analysis

Random Indexing

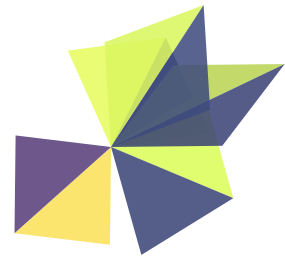
Continuous Skip-gram Model

Non-negative Matrix

Factorization

Latent Dirichlet Allocation

Explicit Semantic Analysis



# Research Questions

**RQ1** Are the distributional semantic representations good representations for the meaning of questions and answers?

**RQ2** Can distributional semantic representations be combined with other criteria in order to obtain a better ranking of the answers?



# Distributional Semantic Models

Represent words as points in a geometric space

**Do not require** specific text operations (corpus / language independent)

Widely used in IR and Computational Linguistic

Never been used for answer re-ranking



# Distributional Semantic Models

memory floppy\_disk  
ram chip disk hard\_disk  
software printer  
computer  
workstation  
os pc device  
operating\_system  
linux mouse  
tux mice rat  
penguin rabbit  
dog animal  
cat monkey insect



# Insight

**Semantic similarity between Question and Answer**

**Computed with Distributional Semantic Models**

**Used as re-rank feature**



# Co-occurrence Matrix

Term-term co-occurrence matrix: contains the co-occurrences between terms within a prefixed distance

	dog	cat	computer	animal	mouse
dog	0	4	0	2	1
cat	4	0	0	3	5
computer	0	0	0	0	3
animal	2	3	0	0	2
mouse	1	5	3	2	0



# Approximations

**TTM:** Term-Term co-occurrence Matrix

**Latent Semantic Analysis (LSA):** TSVD of the co-occurrence matrix

**Random Indexing (RI):** based on the Random Projection

**Latent Semantic Analysis over Random Indexing (LSARI)**

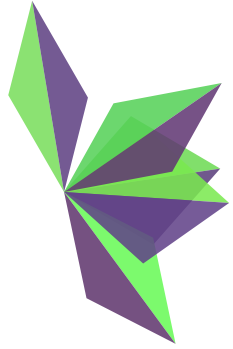
**Continuous Skip-gram Model (CSGM):** based on neural networks



# Latent Semantic Analysis

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \boxed{M} & = & \boxed{U} & \boxed{\begin{array}{c} \sigma_i \\ \hline \Sigma \end{array}} & \boxed{V^T} \\ m \times n & & m \times m & m \times n & n \times n \end{array}$$
  
$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \boxed{\tilde{M}} & = & \boxed{U_k} & \boxed{\begin{array}{c} \Sigma_k \\ \hline \end{array}} & \boxed{V_k^T} \\ m \times n & & m \times k & k \times k & k \times n \end{array}$$



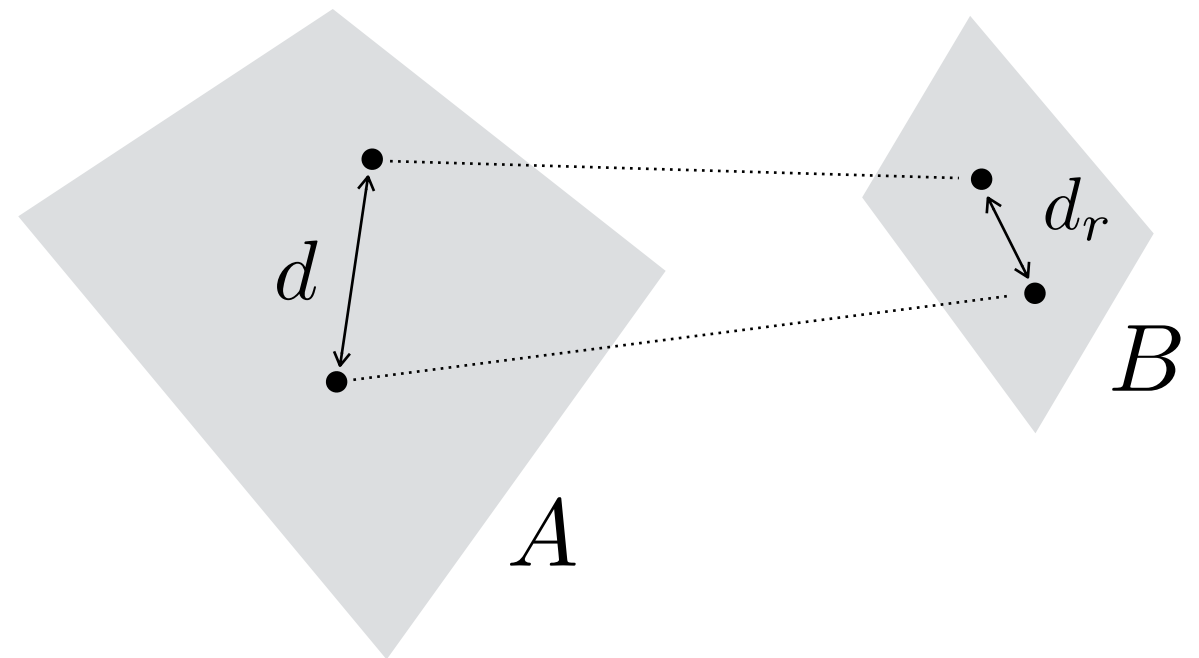


# Random Indexing

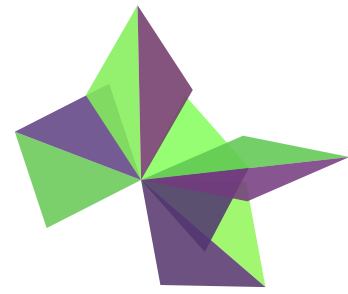
Locality-sensitive hashing  
method which **approximate**  
the **distance** between points

**B** preserves the euclidean  
distance between points in **A**  
(Johnson-Lindenstrauss  
lemma)

$$B^{n,k} \approx A^{n,m} R^{m,k} \quad k \ll m$$



$$(1 - \epsilon)d_r(v, u) \leq d(v, u) \leq (1 + \epsilon)d_r(v, u)$$

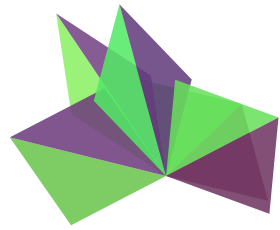


# Random Indexing

## Construction

**Generate** and **assign** a Context Vector to each context element (e.g. document, passage, term, ...) with  $K$  random values in  $\{-1, 0, +1\}$  with **enforced sparsity**

Term Vector is the **sum** of the Context Vectors of all contexts in which the term **occurs**



# Random Indexing

## Example

Dataset: I drink **wine**

You drink **wine** and beer

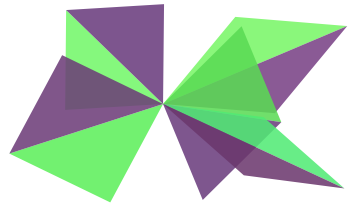
### Context Vectors

i	1	0	0	0	0	-1	0
drink	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>wine</b>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
you	0	-1	0	0	0	0	1
and	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
beer	-1	0	0	0	1	0	0

### Term Vector for **wine**

$$1 \cdot \text{cv}_i + 2 \cdot \text{cv}_{\text{drink}} + 1 \cdot \text{cv}_{\text{you}} \\ + 1 \cdot \text{cv}_{\text{and}} + 1 \cdot \text{cv}_{\text{beer}}$$

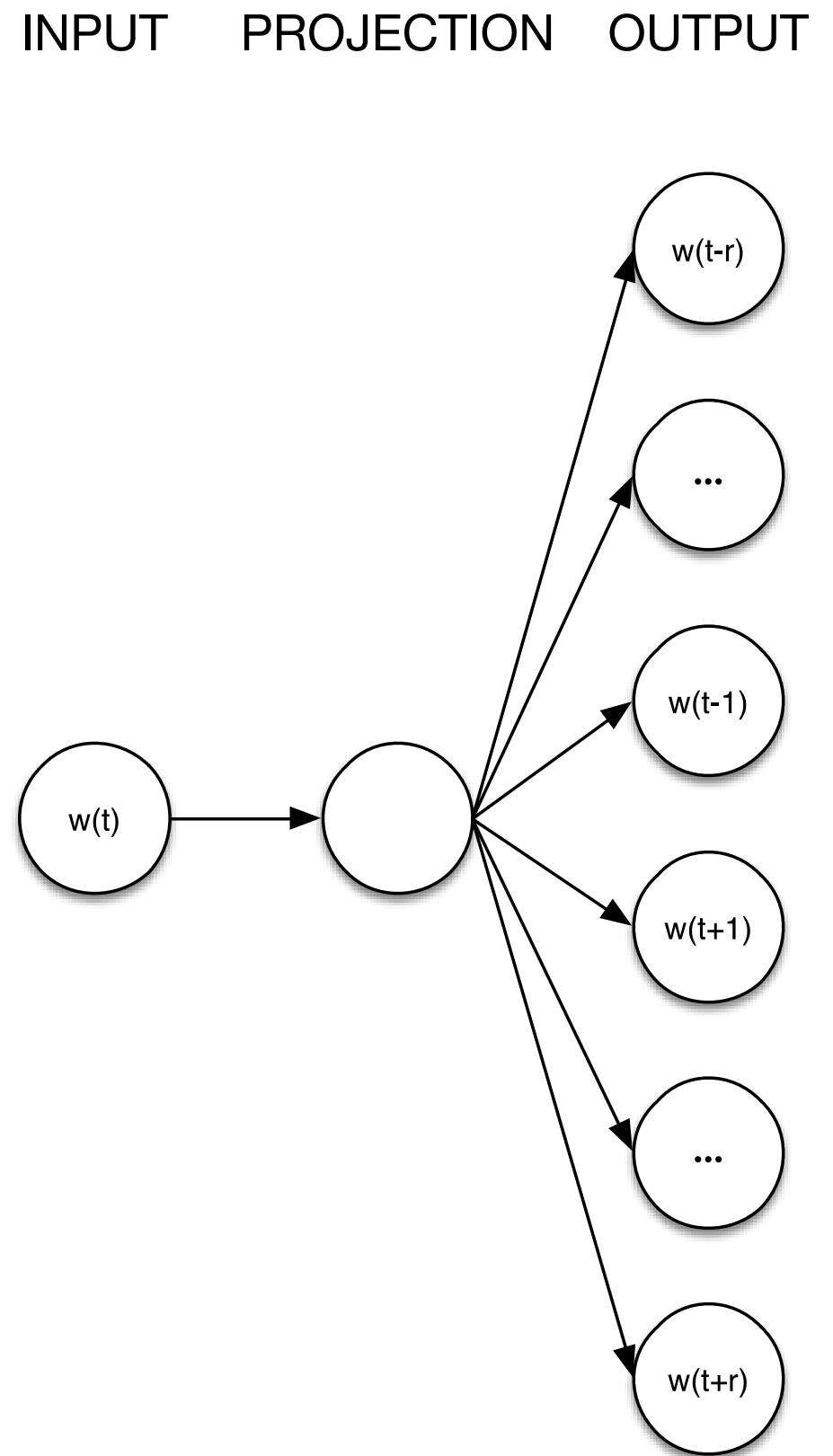
$$\text{wine} \quad | \quad 0 \quad | \quad -1 \quad | \quad 2 \quad | \quad 0 \quad | \quad 1 \quad | \quad -1 \quad | \quad 1$$

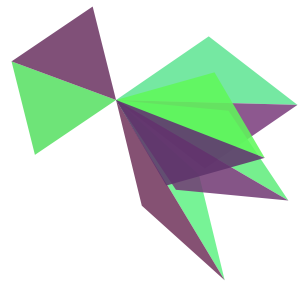


# Continuous Skip-gram

Feedforward Neural Network without hidden layer

Iterates over the words in the dataset, each word  $w(t)$  is an input to a log-linear classifier with a continuous projection layer

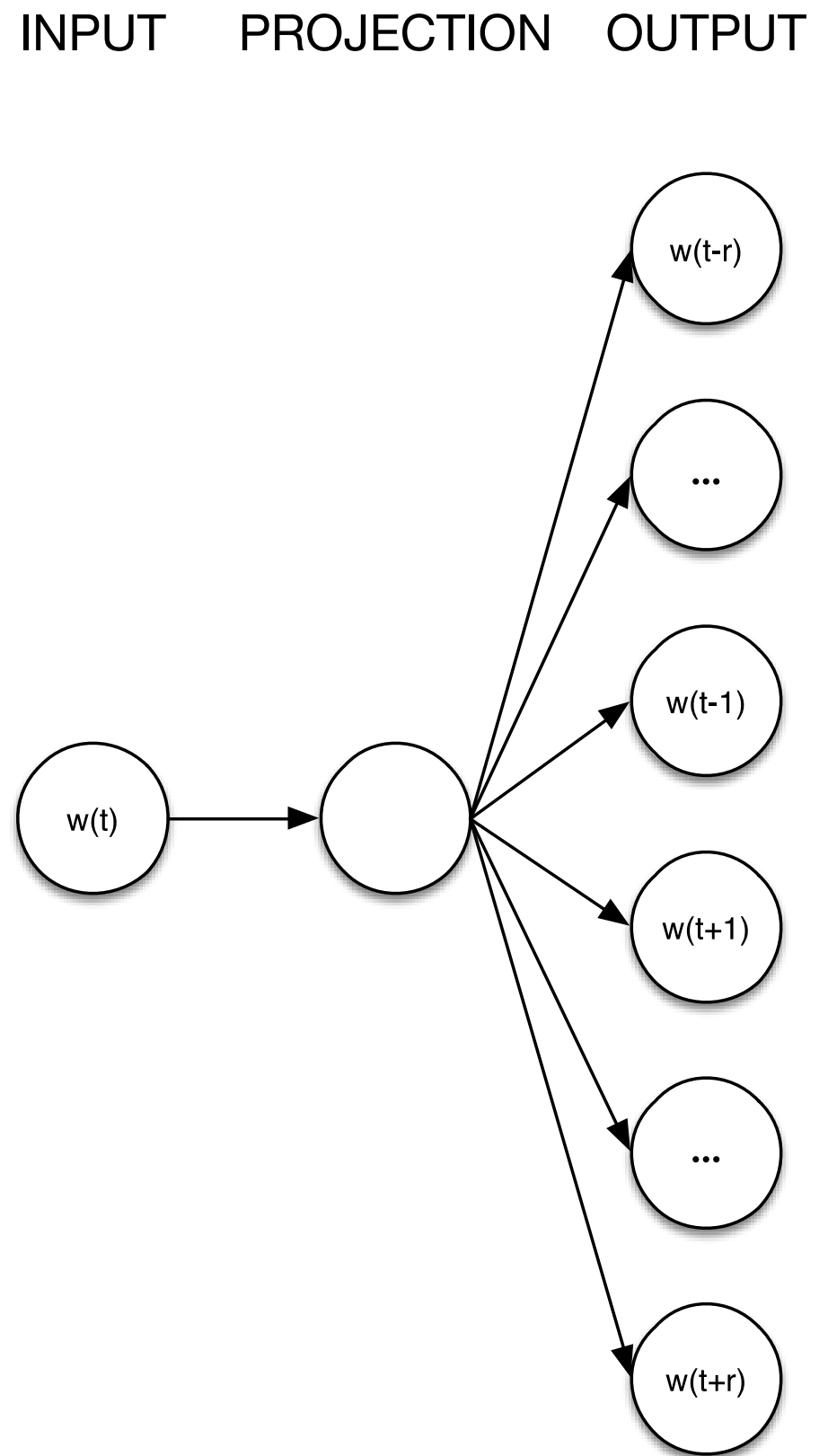


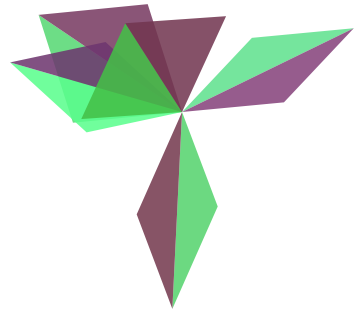


# Continuous Skip-gram

The output is a prediction of the words within a certain range before and after the input word

$c$  is the fixed range before and after a word, a value  $r$  is obtained picking randomly a value between  $[1, c]$





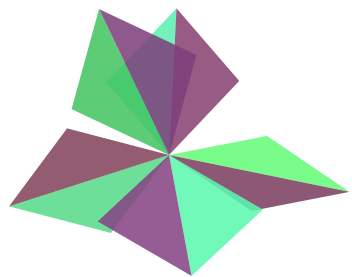
# Compositionality

We need a method to represent question and answers, as they are **composed** by more than one term

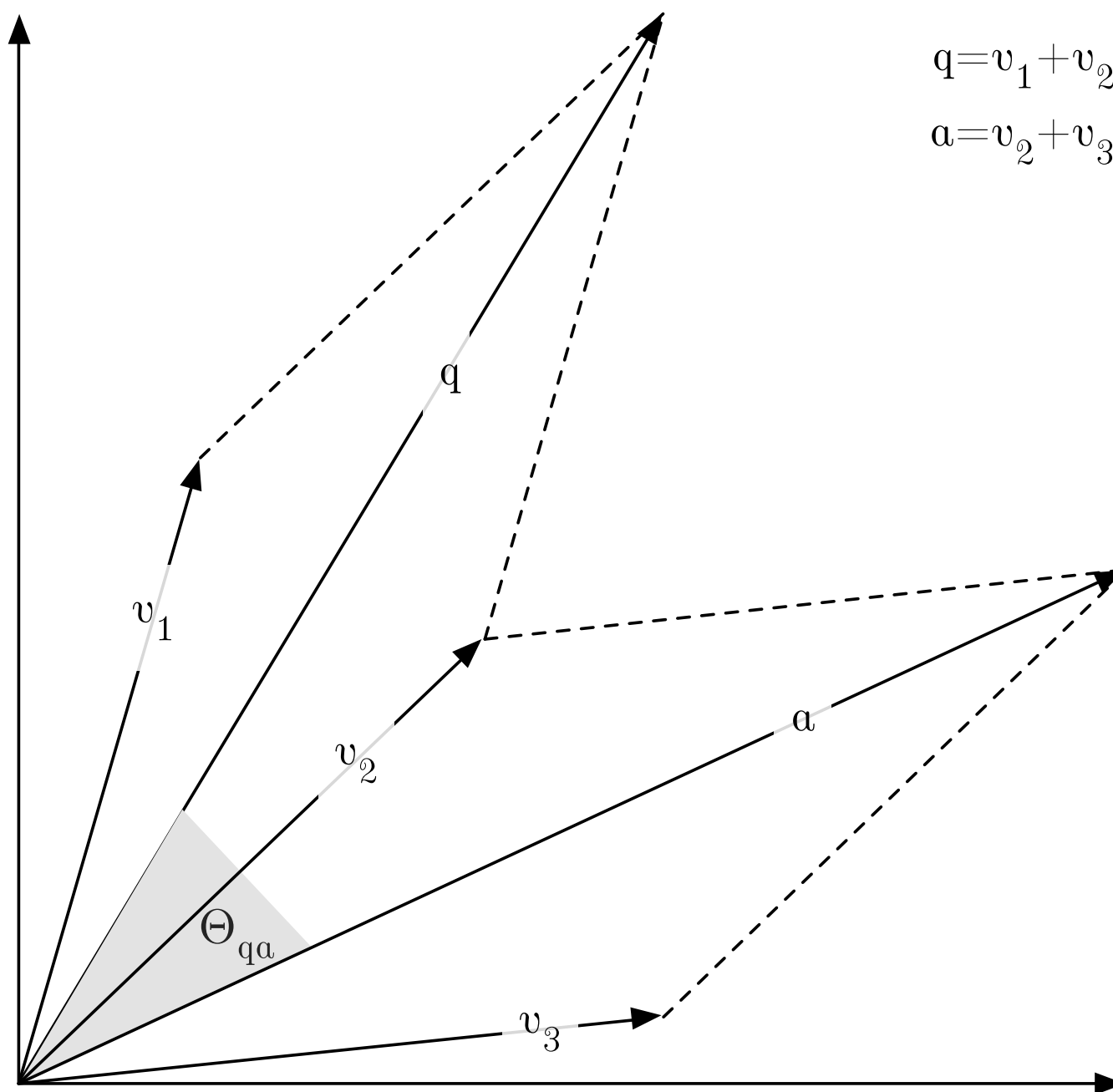
**Addition (+)**: sum of all the vectors of the terms in the question or answer

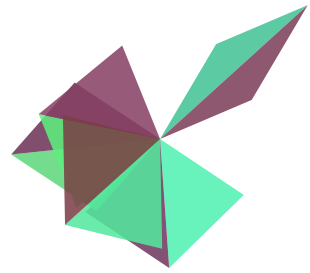
Compute the **cosine similarity** between the summed vectors

Other operators can be used (product, max, min, convolution, ...) with no clear advantage



# Compositionality





# Yahoo! Answers Experiment

Best answer prediction on Yahoo! Answers data

2 Datasets

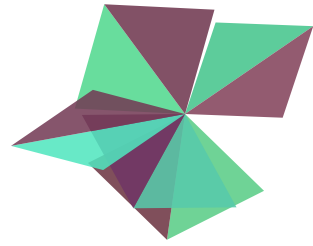
~220 features from different families:

textual / content based

user based

network based





# Lexicalizations

Different **lexicalization chains** (term, stem, lemma, lemma+pos, named entity, dependency, semantic role, supersense)

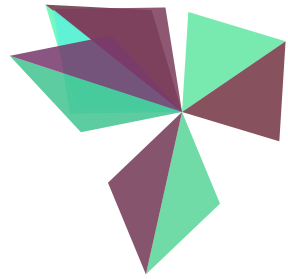
E.g. John plays piano

**term, length 2:** john-plays, plays-piano

**lemma, length 1:** john, play, piano

**dependency (lemma), length 2:** john-(subj)->play, piano-(dobj)-> play

**semantic role (supersense), length 2:** noun.person-A0->verb.perform,  
noun.artifact-A1->verb.perform

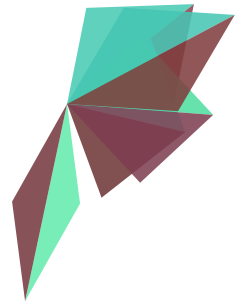


# Textual features

**Linguistic similarity** (Overlap, Frequency, Density, Machine Translation, Length and Exact Sequence for all lexicalizations)

**Text quality** features (Visual Properties, Readability, Informativeness)

**Distributional Semantics** (LSA, RI, RILSA, CSGM on Wikipedia and answer corpus)



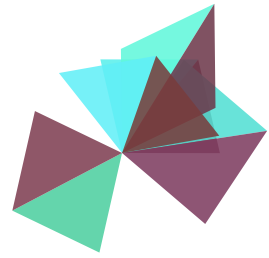
# User features

## User profile

Question and answers **counts and ratios**

Question and answers **counts and ratios per category**

**Behavior** (engagement)



# Network Features

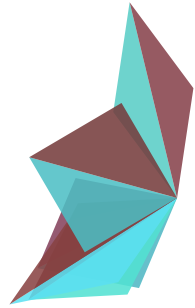
**In-degree, Hits authority and PageRank**

on 3 different networks:

**Asker-Replier**

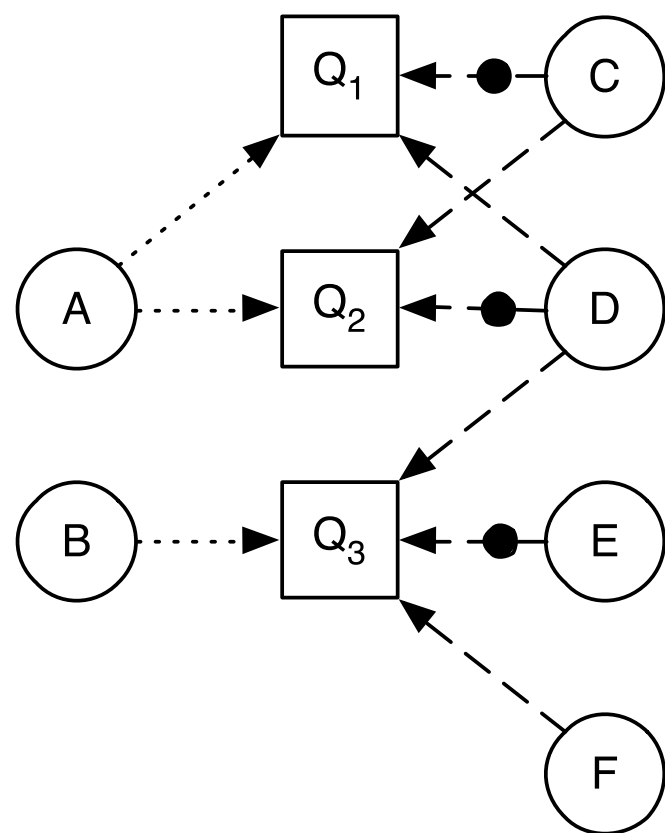
**Asker-Best-Answer**

**Competition-Based-Expertise**

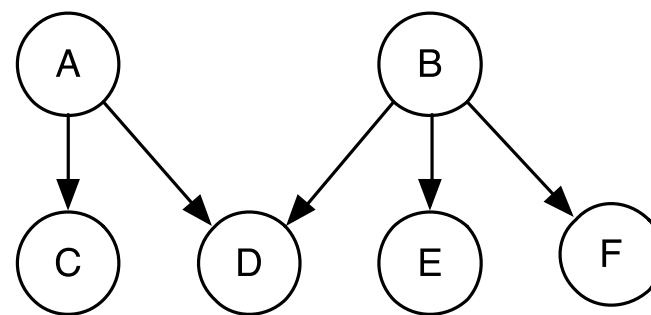


# Network Features

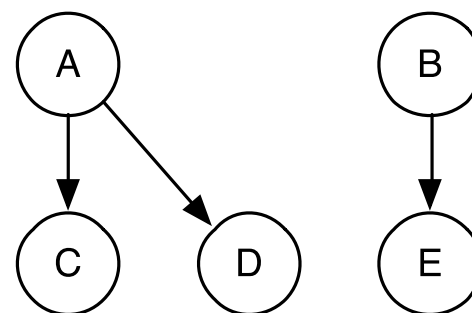
Question Answering Network



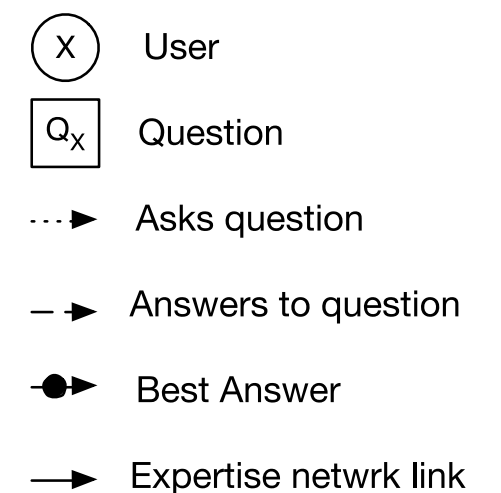
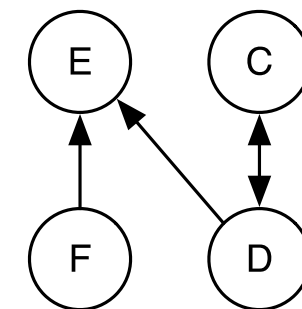
Asker-Replier Network

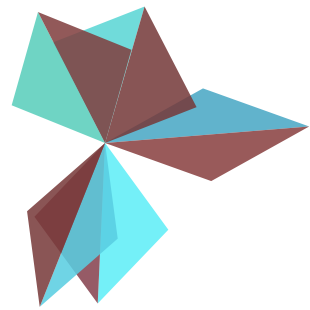


Asker Best Answer Network



Competition-Based Expertise Network





# Experimental Setting

Learning to Rank algorithm: **Random Forests**

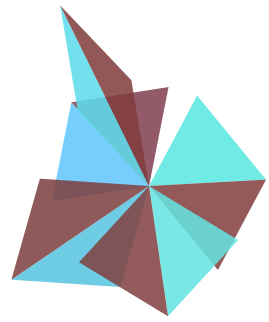
Measures: **P@1, MRR, NDCG**

$$P@1 = rel_1$$

$$RR = \frac{1}{\text{rank}(BA)}$$

$$DCG_k = \sum_{i=1}^k \frac{2^{rel_i} - 1}{\log_2(i + 1)}$$

$rel_i$  is an indicator function returns 1 if the answer in the  $i^{th}$  position is the best answer



# Dataset 1

**Yahoo! Answers 2011 English questions**

>7M questions >39M answers >6M users

Questions are clustered with k-means in **4 clusters**

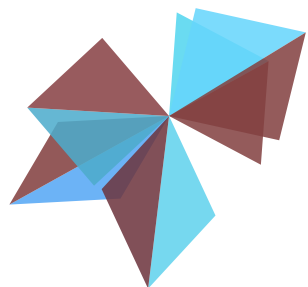
factual-information seeking (31%)

subjective-information seeking (32%)

social discussion (10%)

poll-survey (27%)

70-10-20 split based on timestamp



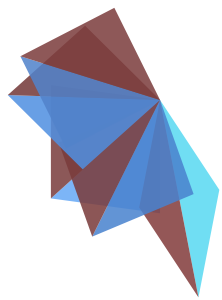
# Results

Features	P@1	MRR	DCG
BM25	0.4143	0.5532	0.6567
Agichtein et al. [2008]	0.5243	0.6375	0.6962
<b>tq</b>	0.5305	0.7016	0.7655
ls	0.5143	0.6921	0.7613
ds	0.4782	0.6760	0.7564
u	0.5218	0.7009	0.7757
n	0.4527	0.6645	0.7484
<b>tq+u</b>	0.6201	0.7597	0.8260
tq+n	0.5862	0.7366	0.8080
tq+ds	0.5536	0.7144	0.7910
tq+ls	0.5515	0.7129	0.7897

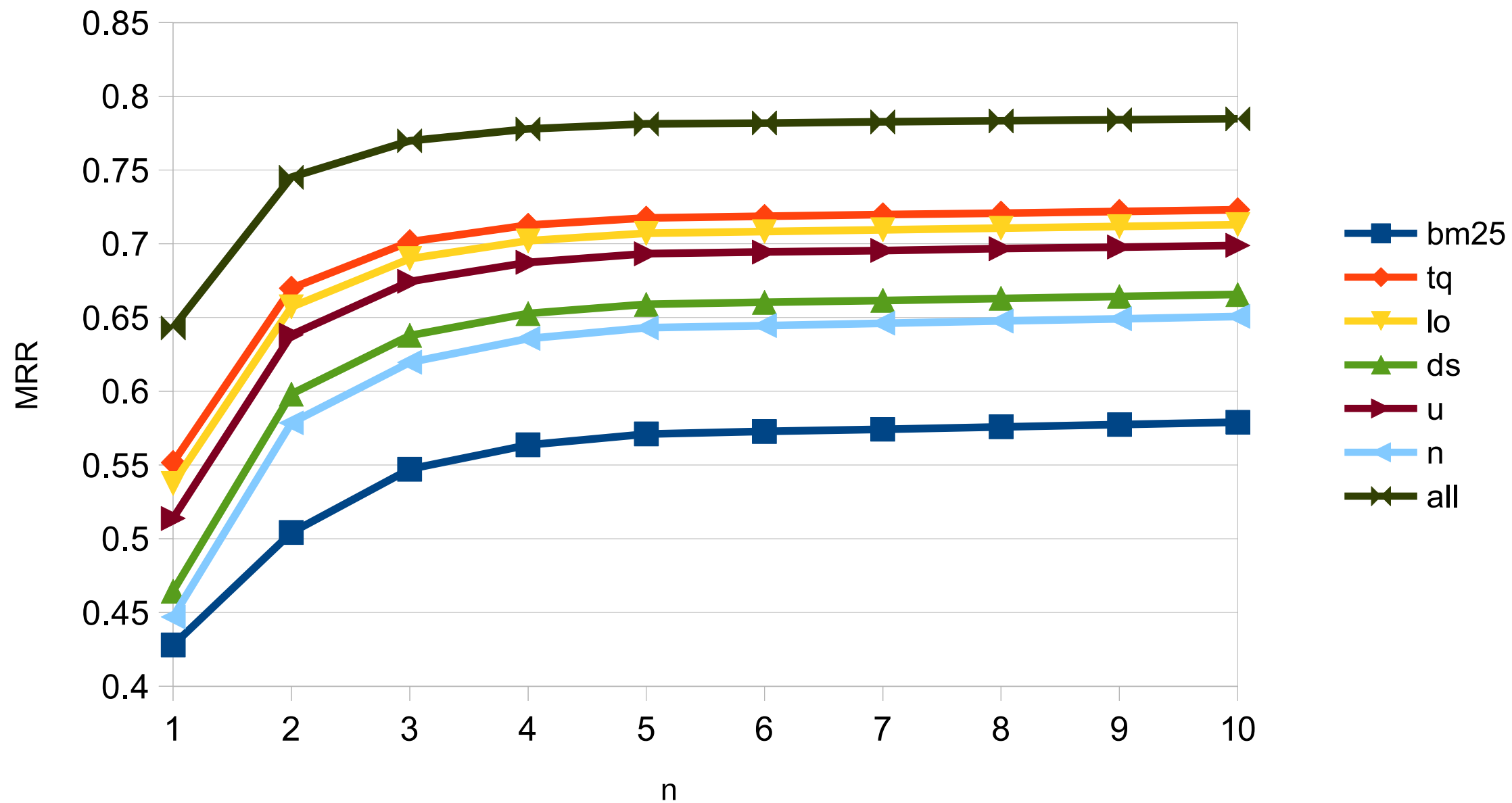
<b>tq+u+n</b>	0.6416	0.7742	0.8370
tq+u+ds	0.6210	0.7606	0.8266
tq+u+ls	0.6199	0.7597	0.8260
tq+lo+ds	0.5519	0.7143	0.7901
<b>tq+u+n+ds</b>	0.6450	0.7752	0.8379
tq+u+n+ls	0.6414	0.7739	0.8368
<i><b>all</b></i>	0.6471	0.7798	0.8389

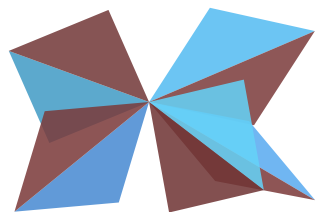
**tq** text quality   **ls** linguistic similarity   **ds** distributional semantics   **u** user   **n** network



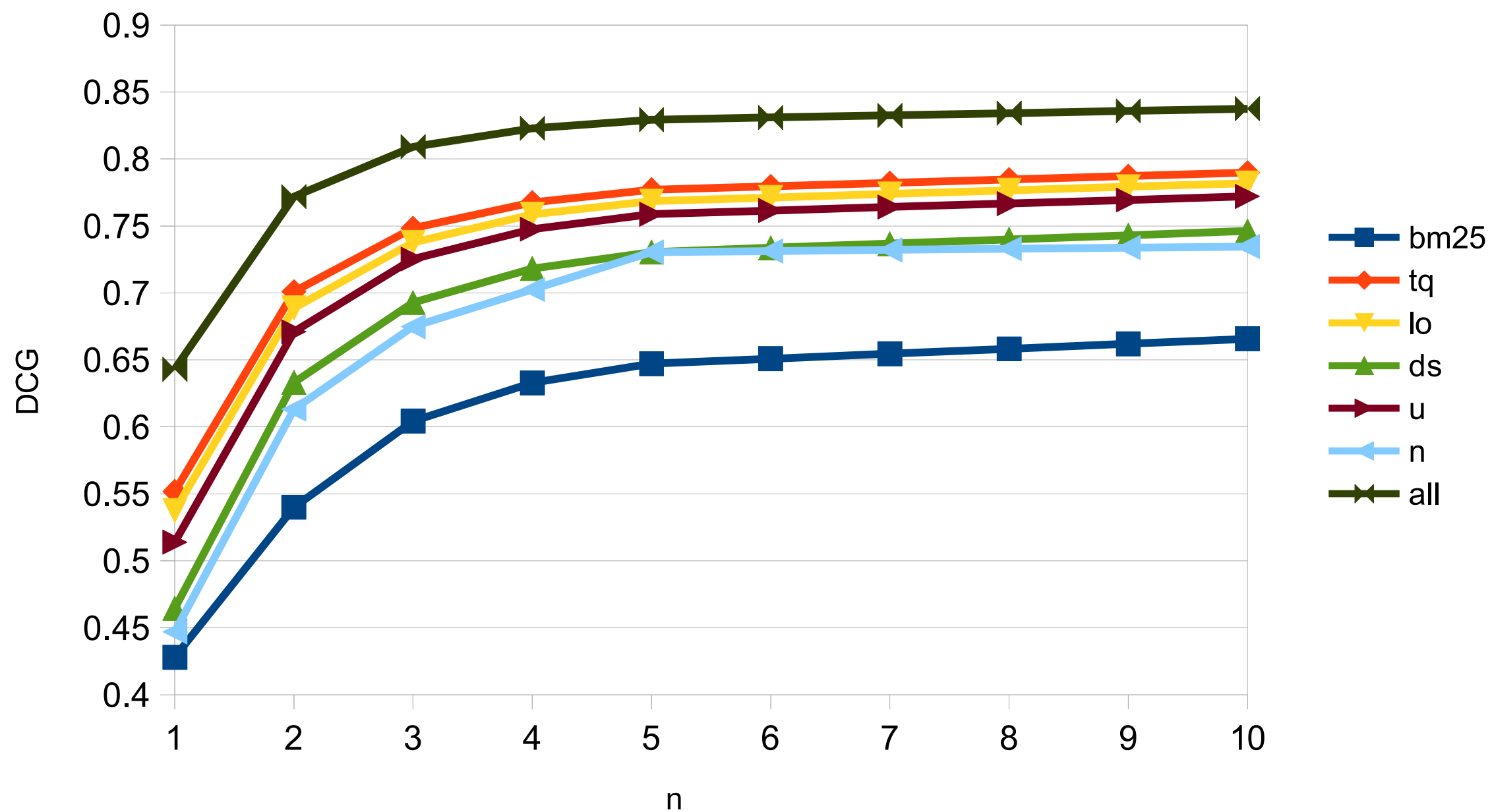


# MRR trends





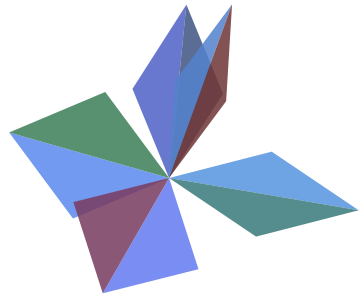
# NDCG trends





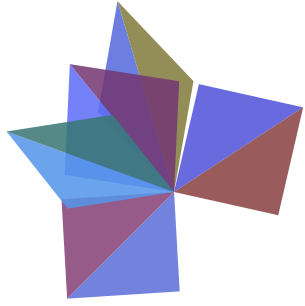
# Feature Ablation

Feature	$-\Delta$		
<b>tq:</b> Preposition Count	0.049	<b>tq:</b> Conjunctions Count	0.035
<b>tq:</b> Verbs not in Question	0.045	<b>tq:</b> Capitalized Words Count	0.035
<b>tq:</b> Nouns not in Question	0.045	<b>tq:</b> “To be” Count	0.035
<b>tq:</b> Unique Words in Answer	0.043	<b>ls:</b> Lemma Overlap	0.034
<b>tq:</b> Pronouns Count	0.042	<b>ls:</b> Stem Overlap	0.034
<b>tq:</b> Punctuation Count	0.039	<b>ls:</b> Term Overlap	0.032
<b>tq:</b> Average Words per Sentence	0.039	<b>tq:</b> Auxiliary Verbs Count	0.034
<b>ds:</b> Random Indexing on Yahoo! Answers	0.039	<b>ls:</b> Super-senses BM25	0.031
<b>ls:</b> Super-senses Overlap	0.038	<b>n:</b> Indegree on CBEN	0.030
<b>tq:</b> Adjectives not in Question	0.036	<b>u:</b> Answerer’s Best Answer Ratio	0.030



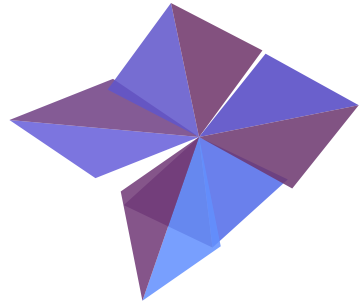
# Distributional Features

Feature	Rank
ds: Random Indexing on Yahoo! Answers	8
ds: Continuous Skip-gram Model on Yahoo! Answers	30
ds: LSA on Wikipedia	37
ds: LSA after Random Indexing on Wikipedia	38
ds: Continuous Skip-gram Model on Wikipedia	39
ds: Random Indexing on Wikipedia	40
ds: LSA after Random Indexing on Yahoo! Answers	89
ds: LSA on Yahoo! Answers	90



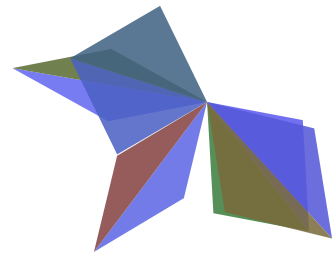
# Network Features

Feature	Rank
<b>n:</b> Indegree on CBEN	19
<b>n:</b> Hits on CBEN	32
<b>n:</b> Indegree on ABAN	101
<b>n:</b> Hits on ABAN	108
<b>n:</b> Indegree on ARN	161
<b>n:</b> Hits on ARN	164
<b>n:</b> PageRank on ARN	170
<b>n:</b> PageRank on CBEN	183
<b>n:</b> PageRank on ABAN	184



# Clusters

	<b>Factual</b>	<b>Subjective</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Poll</b>
tq	<b>0.7329</b>	<b>0.7242</b>	0.6676	0.6762
ls	0.7243	0.7117	0.6482	0.6350
ds	0.6873	0.6732	0.6371	0.6492
u	0.7221	0.7118	<b>0.6724</b>	<b>0.6878</b>
n	0.7003	0.6953	0.6132	0.6214
all	0.8053	0.7892	0.7502	0.7638



# Dataset 2

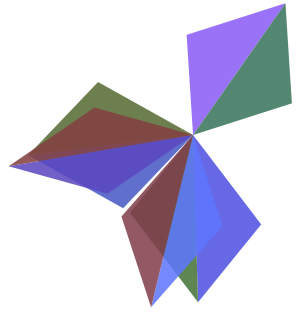
**Yahoo! Answers Manner questions**

142K questions and 771K answers

Match the regular expression

how (to | do | did | does | can | would | could | should),  
and have at least four words

No information about the users

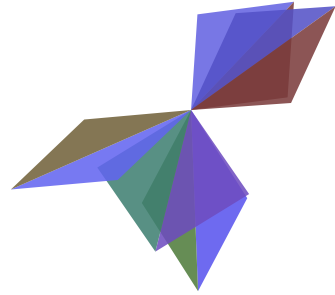


# Results

Features	P@1	MRR	DCG
BM25	0.4112	0.5606	0.6121
Surdeanu et al. [2011]	0.5091	0.6465	-
Hieber and Riezler [2011]	0.4844	0.6676	-
ds	0.6118	0.7689	0.8198
ls	0.618	0.7717	0.8236
<b>tq</b>	0.6245	0.7857	0.8352
ds+ls	0.618	0.7721	0.8236
<b>ds+tq</b>	<b>0.6532</b>	0.7920	0.8421
ls+tq	0.6401	0.7855	0.8352
<b>ds+ls+tq</b>	<b>0.6532</b>	<b>0.7922</b>	<b>0.8425</b>

**tq** text quality   **ls** linguistic similarity   **ds** distributional semantics

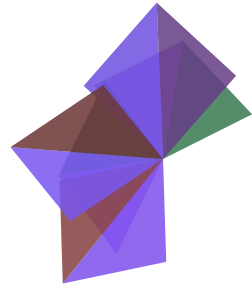




# Different Ranking Algorithms

	LR	RankSVM	ListNet	RF
Manner	0.6952	0.7683	0.7520	<b>0.7922</b>
Factual	0.7407	0.7774	0.7626	<b>0.8059</b>
Subjective	0.7183	0.7640	0.7411	<b>0.7898</b>
Discussion	0.6881	0.7256	0.7059	<b>0.7508</b>
Poll	0.7027	0.7286	0.7312	<b>0.7644</b>
All	0.7165	0.7491	0.7466	<b>0.7798</b>

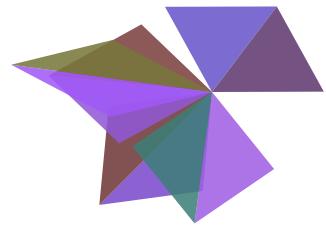
**LR** Logistic Regression   **RF** Random Forests



# Research Questions

**RQ3** To what extent can a QA system be designed in a language-independent way, by preserving its effectiveness?

**RQ4.** Is it possible to develop an artificial player for the "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" game able to outperform human players?



# Who Wants to Be Millionaire?

50:50



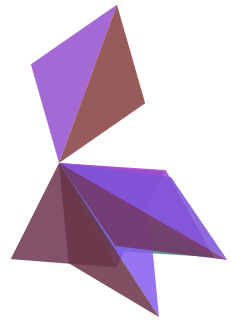
**Who directed Blade Runner?**

**A Harrison Ford**

**B Ridley Scott**

**C Philip Dick**

**D James Cameron**

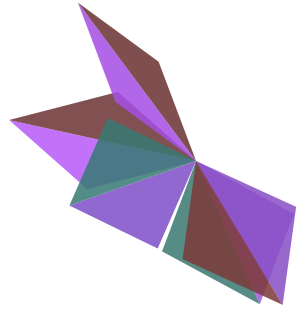


# Who Wants to Be Millionaire?

4 possible answers to each question

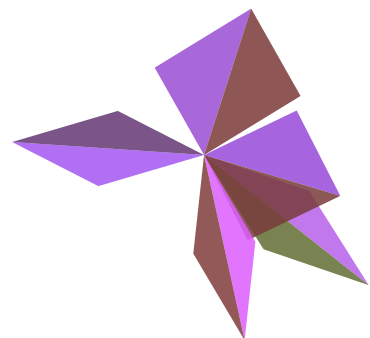
Choose a possible answer according to the results of a QA system

Answers are paragraphs obtained from Wikipedia or triples from DBpedia

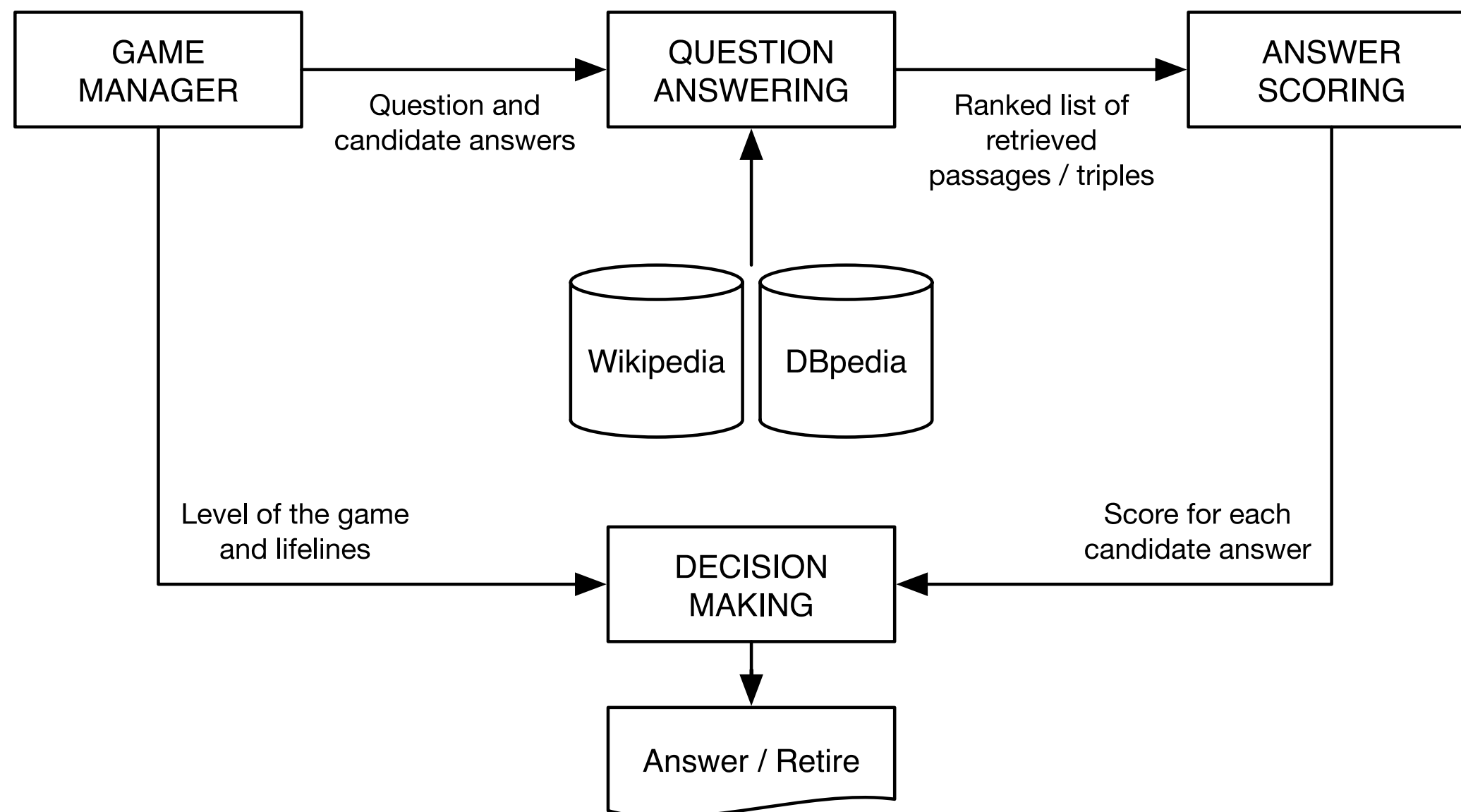


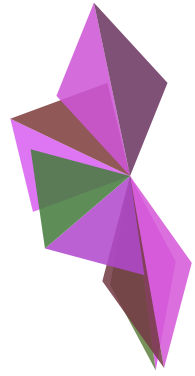
# Answers example

Article Title	Passage Text	Score
Ridley Scott	Sir Ridley Scott (born 30 November 1937) is an English film director and producer. Following his commercial breakthrough with Alien (1979), his best-known works are the sci-fi classic Blade Runner (1982) and the best picture Oscar-winner Gladiator (2000).	0.532
Blade Runner	Blade Runner is a 1982 American dystopian science fiction action film directed by Ridley Scott and starring Harrison Ford, Rutger Hauer, and Sean Young. The screenplay, written by Hampton Fancher and David Peoples, is loosely based on the novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? by Philip K. Dick.	0.510
Blade Runner	Director Ridley Scott and the film's producers "spent months" meeting and discussing the role with Dustin Hoffman, who eventually departed over differences in vision. Harrison Ford was ultimately chosen for several reasons.	0.500
Blade Runner	The screenplay by Hampton Fancher was optioned in 1977. Producer Michael Deeley became interested in Fancher's draft and convinced director Ridley Scott to film it.	0.490
Blade Runner	Interest in adapting Philip K. Dick's novel Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? developed shortly after its 1968 publication. Director Martin Scorsese was interested in filming the novel, but never optioned it.	0.120



# Artificial Player Architecture





# Decision Making

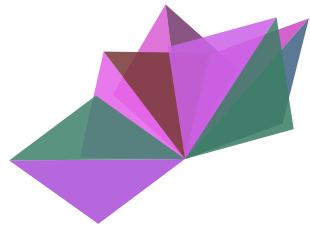
Conservative **heuristic rules** to manage the situations where:

the **maximum confidence** for the four answers is low

there is **no confidence** at all in the answers (when the passages are not helpful)

the **difference** between the **maximum confidence** and the **second best confidence** is not large enough

Decide if to use a “lifeline”, to answer directly or to retire



# Answer selection

## Criteria

*Levenshtein*

*Longest Common Subsequence*

*Term Overlap*

*Exact Substring*

*Density*

*Distributional similarity*

## Parameters

number of passages

level of lexicalization

stopword removal

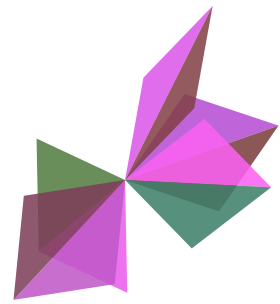
score of the passages

question expansion

**Example feature:** *TermOverlap* (2, Lemma, Yes, Yes, Yes)

Combination of **1200 features** with Random Forests



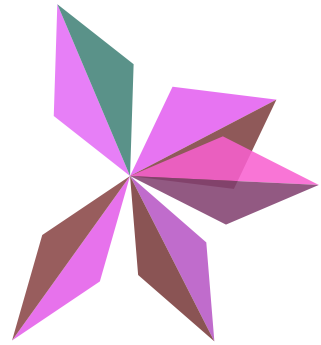


# Experimental Setting

1960 Italian and 1960 English questions from the official WWBM board games, 5-fold cross validation

98 humans 20 questions each (only Italian)

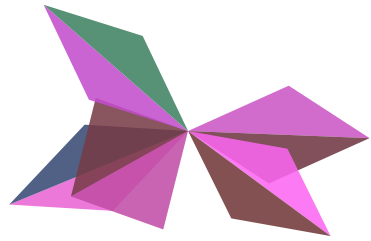
Test the **accuracy** of the Answer Scoring



# Google Baselines

1. Query **Google** and take **top 30 snippets**
2. Multiply the **number** of times the **answer occurred** in each snippet with the **inverse of the rank** of the snippet

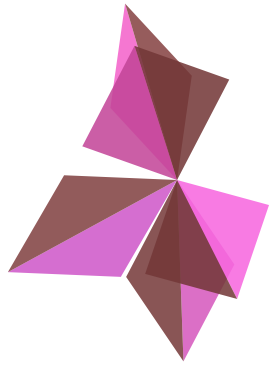
**Google Wikipedia Baseline:** limit the results to Wikipedia articles for fair comparison



# Best Single Criteria Italian

Rank	Criterion	P	Lex	S	SW	QE	Accuracy
1	Overlap	25	ST	Y	Y	N	64.29%
2	Overlap	25	LEM	Y	Y	N	64.29%
3	Density	3	KWD	Y	N	Y	64.03%
4	Density	30	ST	Y	Y	N	64.03%
5	Density	30	LEM	Y	Y	N	64.03%
6	Overlap	20	ST	Y	Y	N	63.78%
7	Overlap	20	LEM	Y	Y	N	63.78%
8	Overlap	30	ST	Y	Y	N	63.78%
9	Overlap	30	LEM	Y	Y	N	63.78%
10	Density	20	ST	Y	Y	N	63.27%
11	Density	20	LEM	Y	Y	N	63.27%
12	Density	25	KWD	Y	Y	N	63.01%
13	Overlap	15	ST	Y	Y	N	62.76%
14	Overlap	15	LEM	Y	Y	N	62.76%
15	Overlap	20	ST	N	Y	N	62.76%

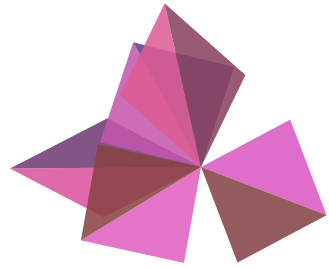
**ST** stem   **LEM** lemma   **KWD** keyword   **S** score   **SW** stopword   **QE** question expansion



# Best Single Criteria English

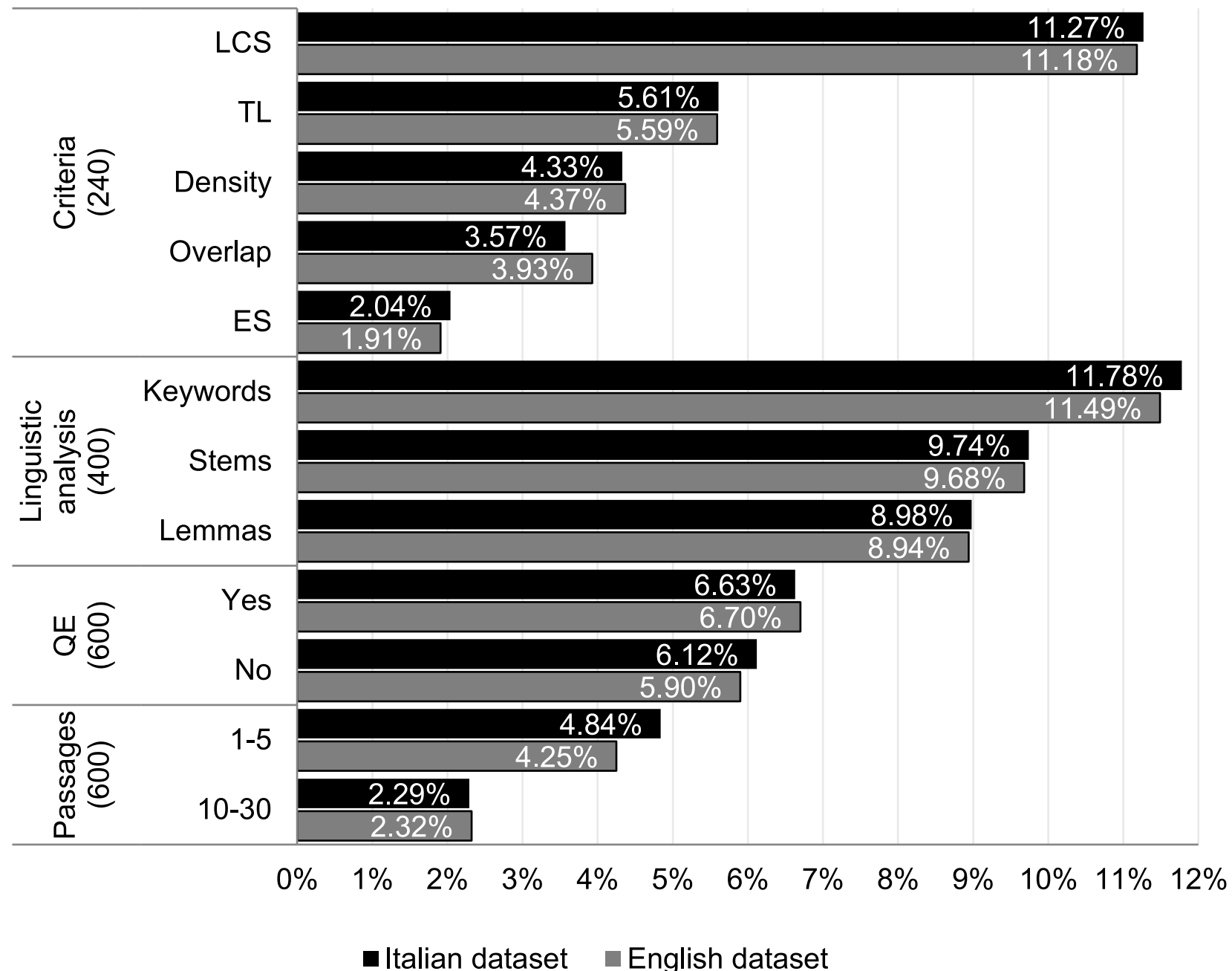
Rank	Criterion	P	Lex	S	SW	QE	Accuracy
1	Overlap	25	LEM	Y	Y	N	59.47%
2	Overlap	25	ST	Y	Y	N	59.38%
3	Density	3	KWD	Y	N	Y	59.26%
4	Overlap	20	ST	Y	Y	N	59.22%
5	Density	30	ST	Y	Y	N	59.08%
6	Density	30	LEM	Y	Y	N	59.08%
7	Overlap	30	ST	Y	Y	N	58.99%
8	Density	20	ST	Y	Y	N	58.84%
9	Overlap	15	LEM	Y	Y	N	58.72%
10	Density	25	KWD	Y	Y	N	58.37%
11	Overlap	30	LEM	Y	Y	N	58.35%
12	Density	20	LEM	Y	Y	N	58.21%
13	Overlap	20	LEM	Y	Y	N	58.14%
14	Overlap	20	ST	N	Y	N	57.99%
15	Overlap	15	ST	Y	Y	N	57.97%

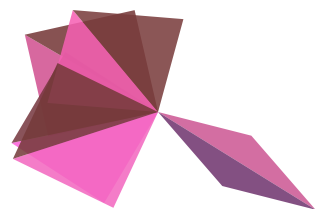
**ST** stem   **LEM** lemma   **KWD** keyword   **S** score   **SW** stopword   **QE** question expansion



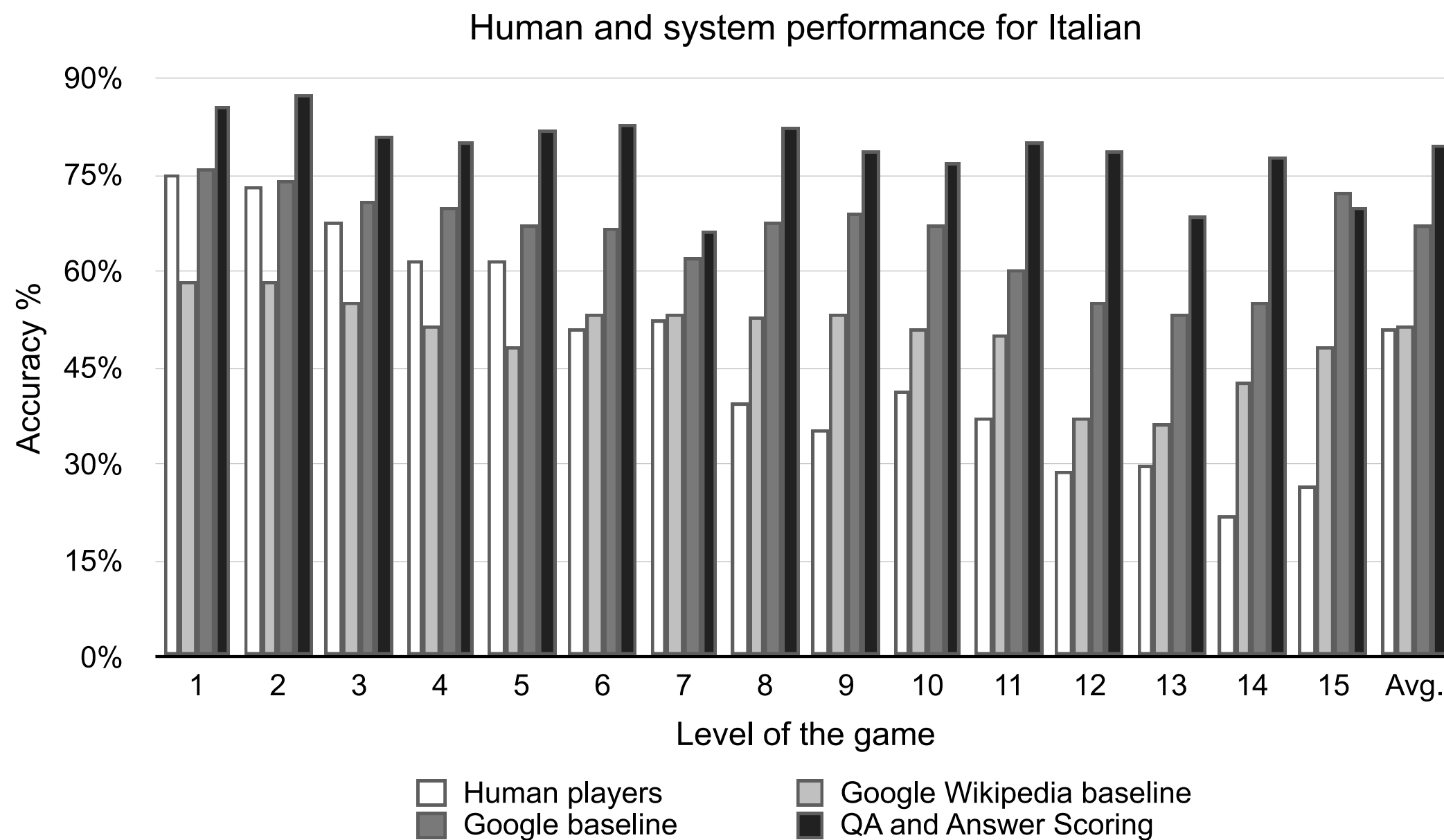
# Feature Groups Ablation

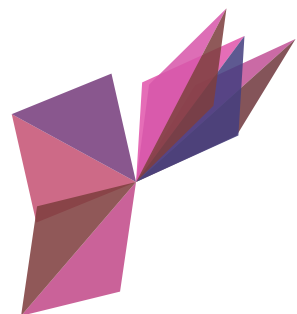
## Decrease of accuracy



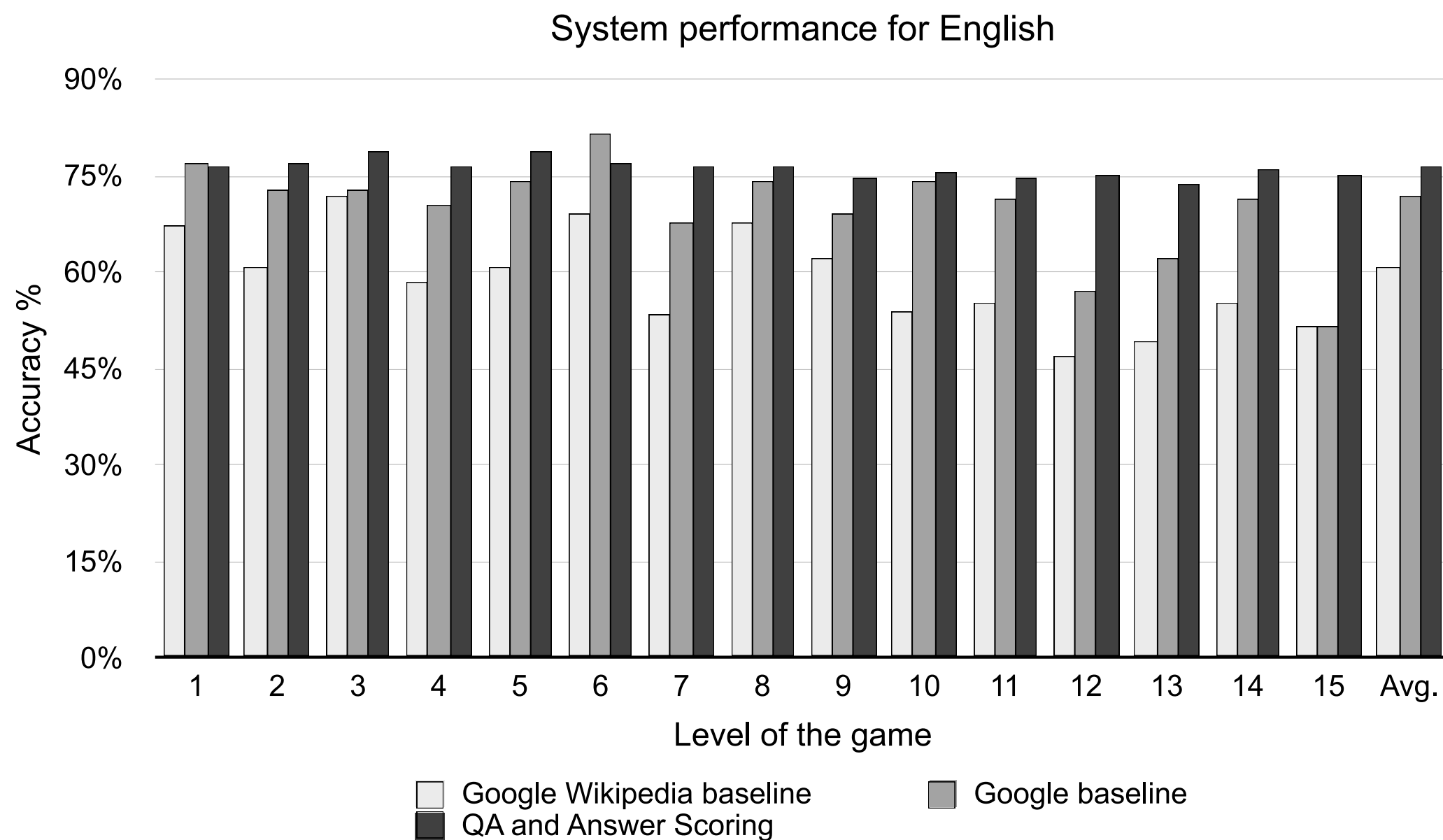


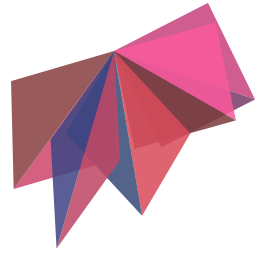
# Accuracy Italian





# Accuracy English





# Gameplay Experiment

35 human players, 325 matches without overlapping questions for the same player

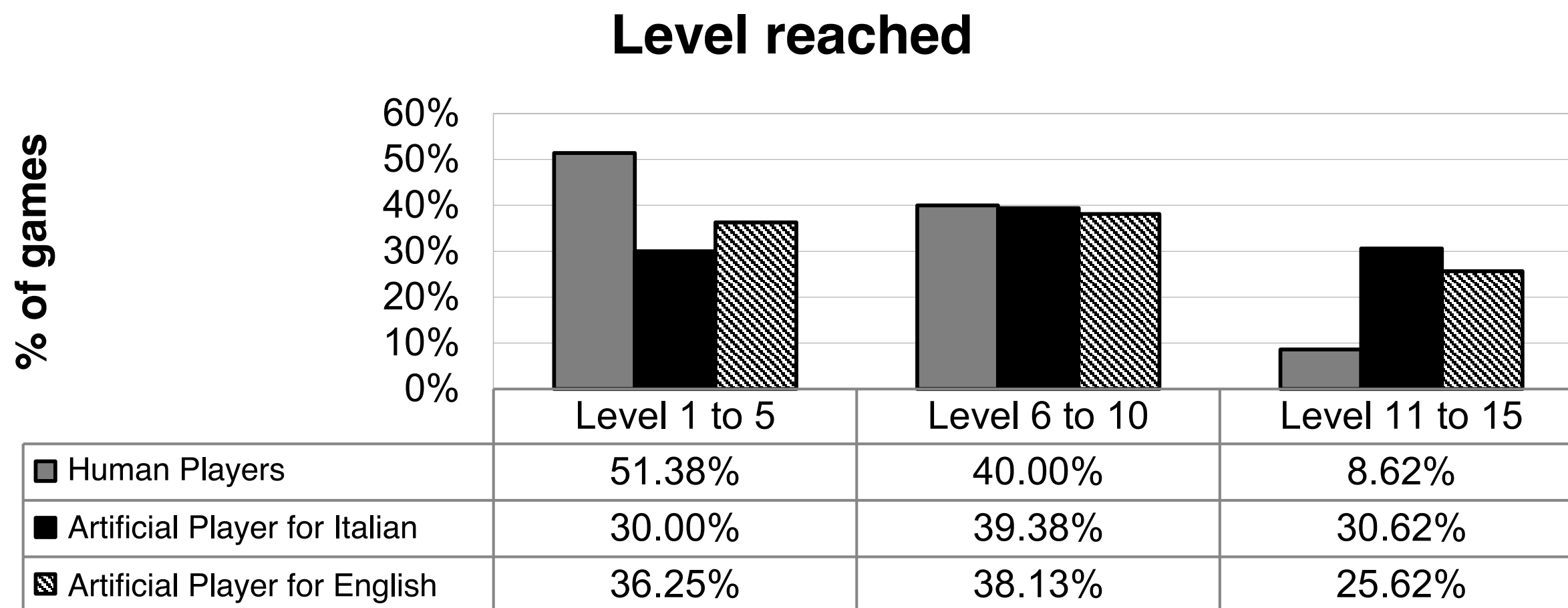
Test the ability of the **Artificial Player** (including **Decision Making**) in playing the game following its rules

Evaluated in terms of money earned and reached level

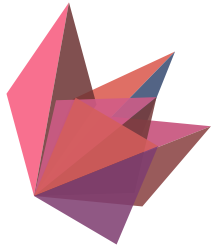




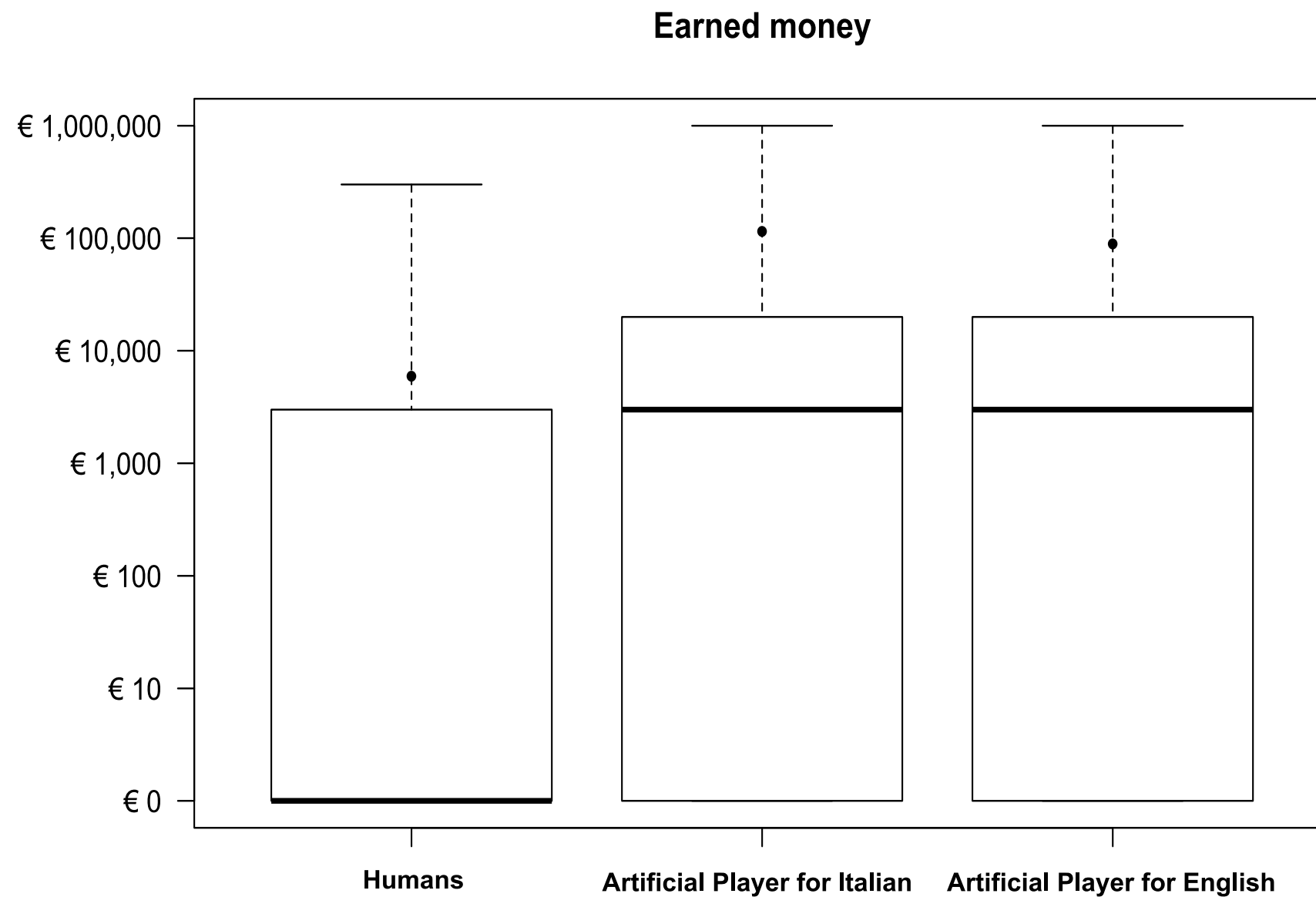
# Reached level



The **Artificial Player** wins the game **17 times** for Italian and **12 times** for English, while **human players never win**



# Earned Money



The **Artificial Player** earns on average **€114,531** for Italian and **€88,878** for English, while **human players** earn **€5,926**



# Conclusions

**RQ1** The new distributional semantics based features proposed achieve **surprisingly good results** considering their small number

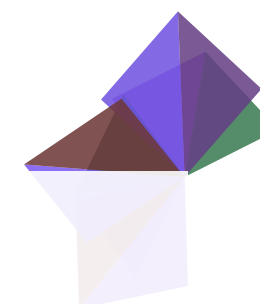
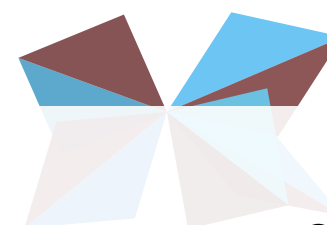
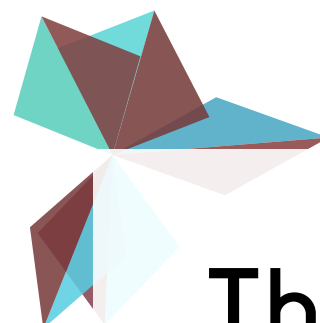
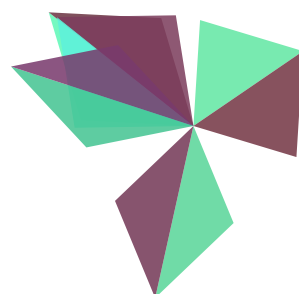
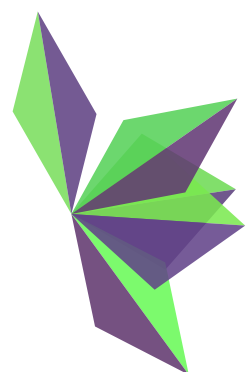
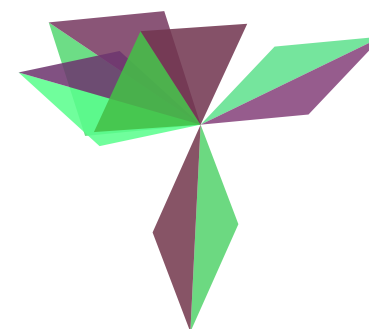
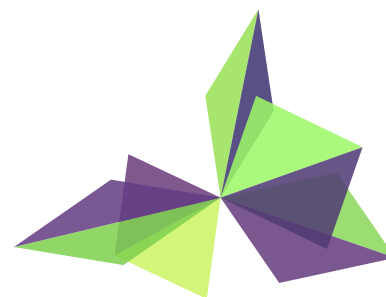
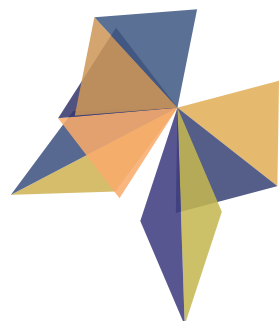
**RQ2** Distributional semantics based features **help achieving better ranking**. They are to be preferred to linguistic similarity ones as their contribution **overlaps** and they are **less computationally expensive**



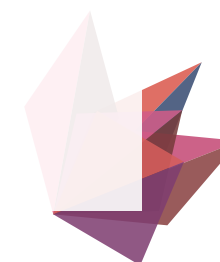
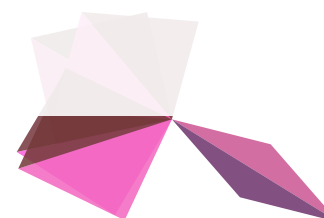
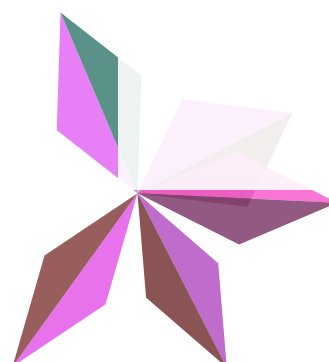
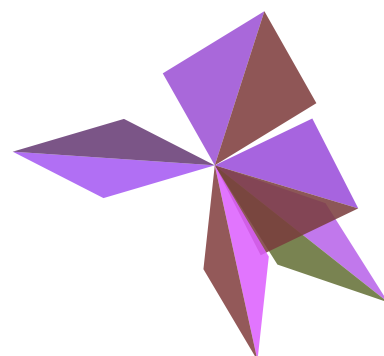
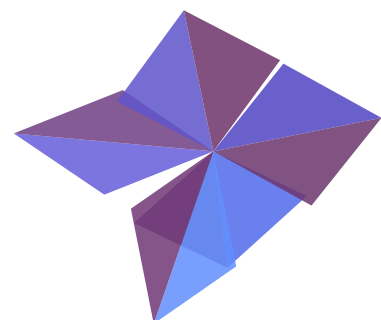
# Conclusions

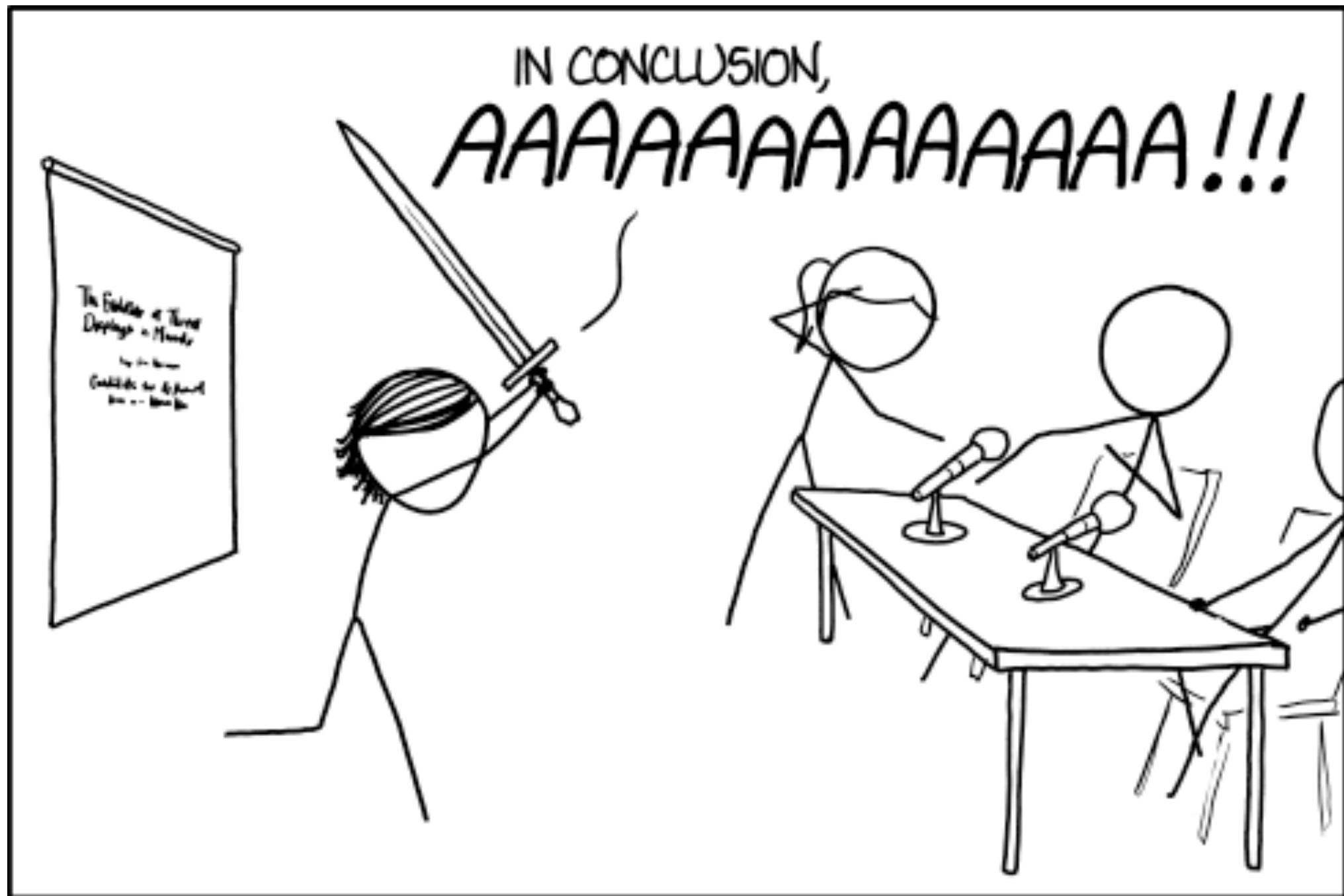
**RQ3** Definition of an **effective language-independent framework** for **QA** and **answer validation** leveraging open knowledge sources

**RQ4** Built an **Artificial Player** which **outperforms human players** in terms of **average accuracy** and **money earned** playing WWBM



Thank you for  
your attention





THE BEST THESIS DEFENSE IS A GOOD THESIS OFFENSE.



# Published papers

Piero Molino, Pasquale Lops, Giovanni Semeraro, Marco de Gemmis, Pierpaolo Basile. Playing with knowledge: A virtual player for "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" that leverages question answering techniques. Artificial Intelligence 222: 157-181 (2015)

Piero Molino, Luca Maria Aiello. Distributed Representations for Semantic Matching in non-factoid Question Answering. SMIR@SIGIR 2014: 38-45

Piero Molino, Gianvito Pio, Corrado Mencar. Fast Fuzzy Inference in Octave. Int. J. Computational Intelligence Systems 6(2): 307-317 (2013)

Piero Molino, Pierpaolo Basile, Ciro Santoro, Pasquale Lops, Marco de Gemmis, Giovanni Semeraro. A Virtual Player for "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" based on Question Answering. AI\*IA 2013: 205-216

Piero Molino, Pierpaolo Basile, Annalina Caputo, Pasquale Lops, Giovanni Semeraro. Distributional Semantics for Answer Re-ranking in Question Answering. IIR 2013: 100-103

Piero Molino. Semantic models for answer re-ranking in question answering. SIGIR 2013: 1146-1147

Piero Molino, Pierpaolo Basile. QuestionCube: a Framework for Question Answering. IIR 2012: 167-178

Piero Molino, Pierpaolo Basile, Annalina Caputo, Pasquale Lops, Giovanni Semeraro. Exploiting Distributional Semantic Models in Question Answering. ICSC 2012: 146-153



# Lifelines

## **50:50**

Remove 2 wrong answers randomly

## **Poll the Audience**

[50%,80%] correct *1<sup>st</sup> level*

[20%,35%] correct *15<sup>th</sup> level*

## **Phone a Friend**

[1, 5] always correct

[6, 10] randomly correct or no answer

[11, 15] randomly correct, no answer or wrong answer





# Decision Making Algorithm

---

**Algorithm 2** Decision making algorithm

---

```
1: procedure DECISION MAKING( $\langle q, (c_A, c_B, c_C, c_D) \rangle$ , lifelines)  $\triangleright$   
   Decision strategy based on the scores of the four candidate answers for question q, and  
   the available lifelines  
2:   BestAnswer  $\leftarrow$  BEST( $\langle q, (c_A, c_B, c_C, c_D) \rangle$ )  
3:   SecondBestAnswer  $\leftarrow$  SECONDBEST( $\langle q, (c_A, c_B, c_C, c_D) \rangle$ )  
4:   if BestAnswer.score  $<$  threshold1  
   or (BestAnswer.score - SecondBestAnswer.score)  
    $<$  (BestAnswer.score * threshold2) then  
5:     if CANUSE(Poll the Audience) then  
6:       audienceAnswers  $\leftarrow$  USE(Poll the Audience)  
7:       lifelines  $\leftarrow$  lifelines - {Poll the Audience}  
8:       if audienceAnswers.score  $>$  threshold1 then  
9:         RETURN BEST(audienceAnswers)  
10:      end if  
11:    end if  
12:    if CANUSE(Phone a Friend) then  
13:      friendAnswer  $\leftarrow$  USE(Phone a Friend)  
14:      lifelines  $\leftarrow$  lifelines - {Phone a Friend}  
15:      if friendAnswer  $\neq$  null then  
16:        RETURN friendAnswer  
17:      end if  
18:    end if  
19:    if (CANUSE(50:50) and CANRISK()) then  
20:      50 : 50answers  $\leftarrow$  USE(50:50)  
21:      lifelines  $\leftarrow$  lifelines - {50:50}  
22:      if 50 : 50answers.score  $>$  threshold1 then  
23:        RETURN BEST(50:50answers)  
24:      else  
25:        RETURN RANDOM(50:50answers)  
26:      end if  
27:    end if  
28:    if CANRISK() then  
29:      RETURN RANDOM(answers)  $\triangleright$  No more lifelines but the player can risk  
30:    end if  
31:    RETIRE()  
32:  else  
33:    RETURN BestAnswer  
34:  end if  
35: end procedure
```

---

the difference between the maximum confidence and the second best confidence is not large enough

the maximum confidence for the four answers is low

there is no confidence at all in the answers

1. Poll the Audience

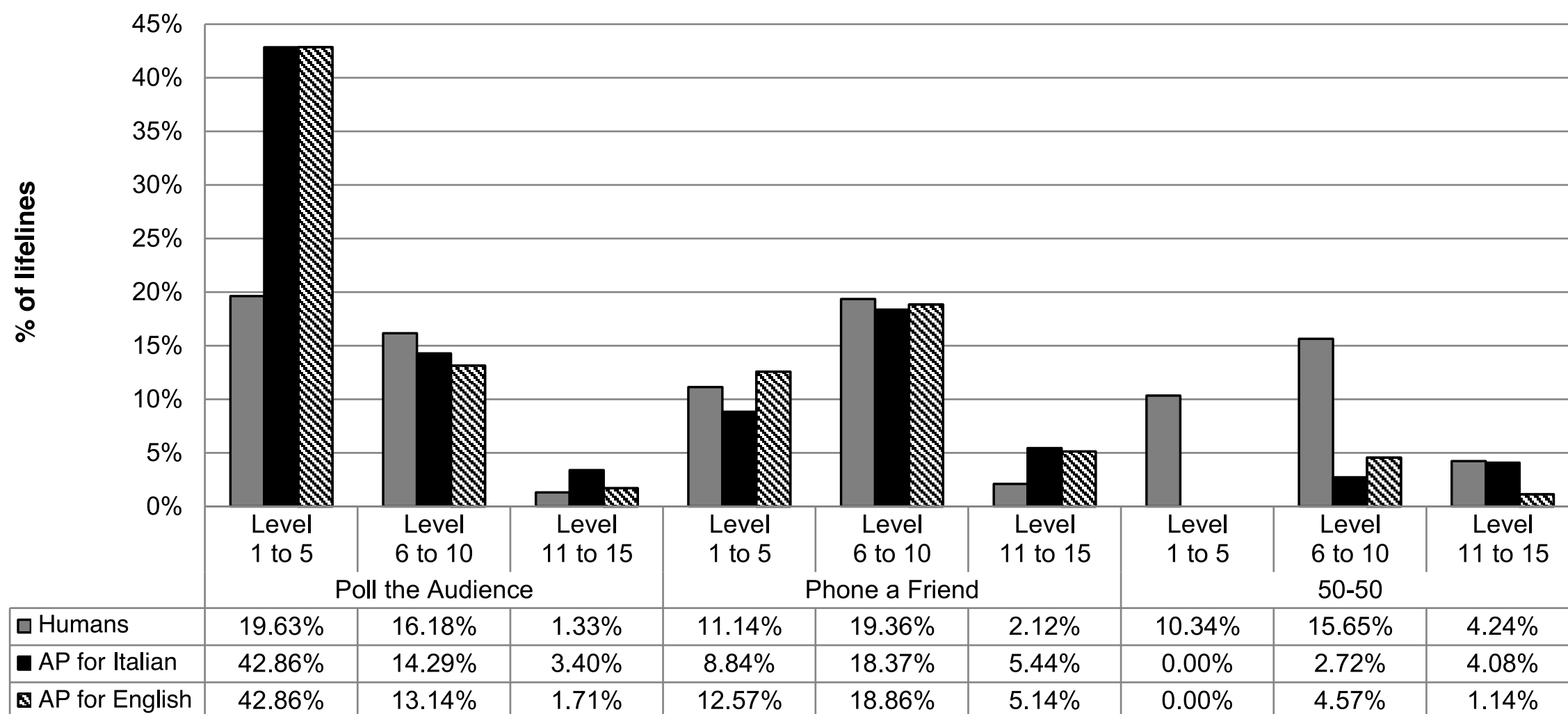
2. Phone a Friend

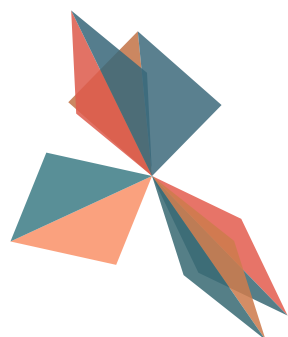
3. 50:50



# Use of lifelines

Use of lifelines





# DBpedia

## Indexing

Manually created ~**350** questions  
tagged with **DBpedia properties** (top  
50) to train a **centroid classifier**

Create documents with the  
lexicalization of **RDF triples** with the  
same subject

Ex. <Leonardo da Vinci, date of birth,  
1452-04-15>

Leonardo da Vinci



Portrait of Leonardo by Melzi

<b>Born</b>	Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci April 15, 1452 Vinci, Republic of Florence (present-day Italy)
<b>Died</b>	May 2, 1519 (aged 67) Amboise, Kingdom of France
<b>Known for</b>	Diverse fields of the arts and sciences
<b>Notable work(s)</b>	<i>Mona Lisa</i> <i>The Last Supper</i> <i>The Vitruvian Man</i> <i>Lady with an Ermine</i>
<b>Style</b>	High Renaissance
<b>Signature</b>	<i>Leonardo da Vinci</i>



# DBpedia

## Retrieval

Question tagged with **DBpedia property** by the classifier and **Named Entities**

Extract from documents the list of passages (**RDF triples**) with the corresponding **DBpedia property** and **Named Entities**

Leonardo da Vinci



Portrait of Leonardo by Melzi

<b>Born</b>	Leonardo di ser Piero da Vinci April 15, 1452 Vinci, Republic of Florence (present-day Italy)
<b>Died</b>	May 2, 1519 (aged 67) Amboise, Kingdom of France
<b>Known for</b>	Diverse fields of the arts and sciences
<b>Notable work(s)</b>	<i>Mona Lisa</i> <i>The Last Supper</i> <i>The Vitruvian Man</i> <i>Lady with an Ermine</i>
<b>Style</b>	High Renaissance
<b>Signature</b>	



# Preliminary Experiment

**Dataset** 2010 CLEF QA Competition

10.700 documents from European Union legislation and European Parliament transcriptions

200 questions in English and Italian

**Metrics**  $a@n$  (success@n) and MRR



# Preliminary Experiment

## Alone

**Only** the Distributional scorer is adopted, no other scorers in the pipeline

Term Overlap
Lemma+POS Overlap
Lemma+POS Density
Exact Term Sequence
Distributional Scorer

## Combined

Distributional scorer **and** others with **CombSum**

Baseline: distributional filter is **removed**

Term Overlap
Lemma+POS Overlap
Lemma+POS Density
Exact Term Sequence
Distributional Scorer



# Results for English

	Run	a@1	a@5	a@10	a@30	MRR
alone	TTM	0.060	0.145	0.215	0.345	0.107
	RI	0.180	0.370	0.425	0.535	0.267‡
	LSA	<b>0.205</b>	<b>0.415</b>	<b>0.490</b>	0.600	<b>0.300‡</b>
	LSARI	0.190	0.405	<b>0.490</b>	<b>0.620</b>	0.295‡
combined	baseline	0.445	0.635	0.690	0.780	0.549
	TTM	0.535	0.715	0.775	0.810	0.6141
	RI	0.550	<b>0.730</b>	0.785	<b>0.870</b>	<b>0.637†‡</b>
	LSA	<b>0.560</b>	0.725	<b>0.790</b>	0.855	<b>0.6371†</b>
	LSARI	0.555	<b>0.730</b>	<b>0.790</b>	<b>0.870</b>	0.6341†

Significance wrt.  
the baseline (†)

Significance wrt.  
the TTM (‡)



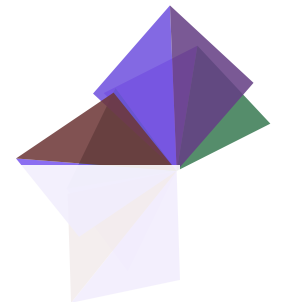
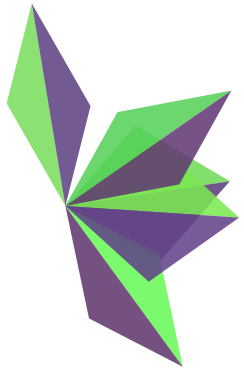
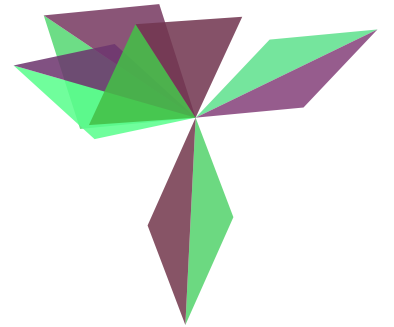
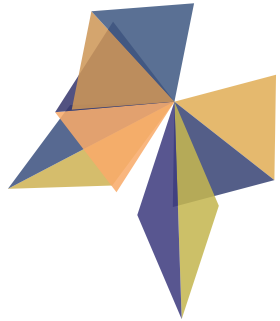
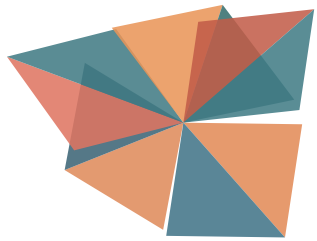
# Results for Italian

	Run	a@1	a@5	a@10	a@30	MRR
alone	TTM	0.060	0.140	0.175	0.280	0.097
	RI	0.175	0.305	0.385	0.465	0.241 <sup>‡</sup>
	LSA	0.155	0.315	0.390	0.480	0.229 <sup>‡</sup>
	LSARI	<b>0.180</b>	<b>0.335</b>	<b>0.400</b>	<b>0.500</b>	<b>0.254<sup>‡</sup></b>
combined	baseline	0.365	0.530	0.630	0.715	0.441
	TTM	0.405	0.565	0.645	0.740	0.5391 <sup>†</sup>
	RI	0.465	<b>0.645</b>	<b>0.720</b>	<b>0.785</b>	0.5551 <sup>†</sup>
	LSA	0.470	<b>0.645</b>	0.690	<b>0.785</b>	0.5511 <sup>†</sup>
	LSARI	<b>0.480</b>	0.635	0.690	<b>0.785</b>	<b>0.557<sup>†‡</sup></b>

Significance wrt.  
the baseline (†)

Significance wrt.  
the TTM (‡)





Thank you for your  
attention

