Expressive Speech Synthesis

Emotions (anger, happiness, sadness, etc.) are inseparable components of the natural human speech. Because of that, the level of human speech can only be achieved with the ability to synthesize emotions. We follow data-driven methods to add emotions to the computer speech. Our approach is based on “emotional” data collected for each one of the targeted emotions (anger, sadness, happiness and frustration). Collected data is segmented into smaller speech units, which later are concatenated to produce the required emotional synthetic output. Adding emotions increases the naturalness and variability of synthetic speech and brings it closer to the level of natural speech. The wide range of applications based on human-machine interaction, the need for more listenable systems for disabled people and the resent developments in the movie industry employing virtual actors are some of motivational factors for the project.
**UNIQUE OR DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS RELATIVE TO STATE-OF-THE-ART**

- Data-driven approaches for synthesis of emotional speech.

**APPLICATIONS**

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<tr>
<td>“Virtual Teacher” - educational software</td>
<td><strong>RECENT HIGHLIGHTS, LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT, UPCOMING MILESTONES</strong></td>
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<td>Web page, e-mail, book, etc. reading programs</td>
<td>• Collection of large emotional inventory from both professional and amateur subjects.</td>
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<td>Systems for disabled people</td>
<td>• Synthesis of new emotions (surprise, boredom, disgust, various forms of anger, etc.).</td>
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<td>Human-machine based applications (ex. computer games, robots)</td>
<td>• Development of emotion conversion algorithms.</td>
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<td>Movie Industry (ex. Final Fantasy)</td>
<td>• Classification of emotions based on their acoustical characteristics.</td>
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**UNDERLYING TECHNOLOGIES**

- Text-To-Speech Synthesis
- Automatic Emotion Recognition
- Voice Transformation
- Speech and Language Processing

**REFERENCE URL**

- [http://sail.usc.edu](http://sail.usc.edu)

For additional information, please contact the Principal Investigator listed above via email, or contact

Isaac Maya, Ph.D., P.E.  
Director, Industry and Technology Transfer Programs  
213-740-2592  
imaya@imsc.usc.edu

Ann Spurgeon  
Associate Director of Industry Programs  
213-740-4877  
aspurgeo@imsc.usc.edu

Integrated Media Systems Center  
3740 McClintock Avenue, Suite 131  
Los Angeles, CA 90089-2561  
213-740-8931 (fax)

For additional information on the Integrated Media Systems Center (IMSC), please visit our Web site at [http://imsc.usc.edu](http://imsc.usc.edu)