C-STAR II Plans Next-Generation Multi-Lingual Translating Telecommunications

Press Release, April 10, 1995

The International Consortium for Speech Translation Advanced Research (C-STAR II), held a meeting from April 3 to 5 at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA, to discuss ways to jointly establish fundamental technologies for spontaneous speech translation, as a step towards cross-language global communications.

Representatives from ATR (Japan), CMU (USA), ETRI (Korea), Karlsruhe University (Germany), and Siemens (Germany) participated in this meeting. The target of their common research activities is to process spontaneous speech in Japanese, English, German, and Korean, and to translate between these languages using speech recognition and synthesis. The C-STAR II Consortium is working towards component technologies by 1996, and full systems by 1999 integrating their technologies for multi-lingual speech-to-speech translation in illustrative applications such as travel planning and scheduling.

The former consortium (C-STAR) successfully demonstrated international automatic interpreting telephony in a series of bilingual experiments in January 1993 using Japanese, English, and German.

These tests were successful, but required a limited way of speaking, (e.g., grammatically correct sentences and clear speaking style, etc.) The C-STAR II research aims to reduce such limitations as much as possible, i.e., C-STAR II is aiming at more robust speech interpreting systems which can recognize ordinary spontaneous speech, translate it into other languages and generate synthesized speech. Moreover, C-STAR II focuses on multi-lingual translation in larger-scale tasks.

Hereafter C-STAR II will hold meetings once or twice per year towards such milestones as the 1996 intermediate evaluation of component technologies for speech recognition, language translation, and speech synthesis and the 1999 showpiece demonstrations. We envision, for example, portable interpreting telecommunication systems using personal hand-held phones, multi-language interpreted teleconferencing, and multi-media speech interpreting systems in teleconferencing.

The C-STAR II Consortium consists of the partners listed above who commit to build a full end-to-end system by 1999 and the affiliates who participate in workshops and may build component technologies. The second group includes DFKI (Germany), IRST (Italy), ITT (India), LIMSI (France), Lincoln Laboratory (USA), MIT (USA), SRI-International (USA/UK), and other organizations.

We envision, for example, multi-lingual interpreted teleconferencing and other applications such as personal hand-held phone and multi-media communication involving speech translation.

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