

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second issue of the ASSTA Newsletter for 2008, a special issue giving you an update on ***Interspeech 2008 incorporating SST 2008***, to be held in Brisbane from 22nd to 26th September 2008. Read in the President's report of this issue for more details on this, an event of great interest to speech and language researchers. Don't forget the early bird specials available to registrations received before 14th July 2008.

Also, you will find information about upcoming conferences, and a list of recent job opportunities in speech and language technology. Thanks to those members who have sent me the submissions for this issue. If you have received an ASSTA travel award, please be sure to send along your conference report. Remember, this newsletter is a forum for you to share information about your travels, research and labs. We look forward to your contributions in the next issue.

Dr. Girija Chetty

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ASSTA Corporate Members

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Interspeech 2008 incorporating SST 2008 is upon us! From 22-26 September 2008 top Australasian and international researchers with expertise in the engineering, behavioural, and linguistic aspects of speech science and technology will converge on sunny Brisbane to give and receive 775 oral papers and posters, attend 8 tutorials and 9 special sessions, to mingle socially and scholastically, and maintain existing collaborations or set up new ones – either planned or serendipitously.

This is the ideal opportunity for Australasians from industry, health and related areas, and academia to

attend the two premier speech science and technology conferences in the world: Interspeech and our own Australasian SST rolled into one.

Both Interspeech and the SST have a relatively long heritage. Interspeech events began in the year 2000 when two conference series (Eurospeech, which began in 1989 in Paris) and ICSLP (International Conference on Spoken Language Processing, which began in 1990 in Kobe) united. SST conferences, hosted by ASSTA, began in 1986 in Canberra. The only other time these two conferences overlapped was in 1998 when the highly successful ICSLP incorporating SST was held in Sydney. (See <http://www.isca-speech.org/conferences.html> and http://www.assta.org/sst/history/ASSTA_and_SST_History_080402.pdf for more details of the background of these conferences.)

Interspeech 2008 incorporating SST 2008 has an impressive array of events. There will be:

- **Keynote** addresses by Professor Fujisaki on models in speech communication research, Professor Alwan on



automatic speech recognition, Professor Gonzalez-Rodriguez on forensic automatic speaker recognition, and Professor Cassell on embodied conversational agents;

- **Special Sessions** throughout the conference with two particularly Australasian-flavoured sessions, the Phonetics and Phonology of (i) Australian Aboriginal languages (OzPhon08) and (ii) Australian and New Zealand English (PANZE 2008) on the first full conference day (Tuesday Sept. 23) and another 7 throughout the conference, from ‘Talking Heads and Pronunciation Training’ through to ‘Forensic Speaker Recognition’, and a ‘Visual Speech Synthesis Challenge’;
- A full day of **Tutorials** on the pre-conference tutorial day, Monday Sept 22, with offerings from ‘Phonetics of Australian indigenous languages’ and ‘Signed Languages’ through to ‘Speech Recognition by Mind and Machine’, ‘History, Hardware and Sound Processing for the Bionic Ear’

and ‘Forensic Speaker Comparison’;

- A range of **social events** including welcome reception and conference dinner; and
- Special **student-centred events**: a student reception on the evening of Monday Sept 22, and two roundtable lunches (Tuesday, Sept 23, and Thursday, Sept 25) at which students can interact with senior academics and industry members over lunch to discuss speech science, jobs, and much more.

I encourage all ASSTA members to be there, and especially students, even if you are not presenting a paper – this is an opportunity for you to attend an international speech science and technology conference on a domestic airfare. Do so before the Early Bird registration date (July 14) and it is even cheaper. For more details and to register, please go to <http://www.interspeech2008.org> and for more science go to Brissy on September 22. See you there!

Denis Burnham

CONFERENCE LOG

21 - 25 July 2008, Mashantucket, CT, USA. 9th International Congress on Noise as a Public Health Problem.

<http://www.icben.org>

25 - 28 August 2008, Lyngby, Denmark. 1st International Conference on Waterside Security.

<http://www.wss2008.org>

25 - 29 August 2008, Sapporo, Japan. 10th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition.

<http://icmpc10.typepad.jp>

08 - 12 September 2008, Lerici, Italy. International Symposium on Underwater Reverberation and Clutter. <http://isurc2008.org>

10 - 12 September 2008, Fukuoka, Japan. Autumn Meeting of the Acoustical Society of Japan. <http://www.asj.gr.jp/indexen.html>

15 - 17 September 2008, Leuven, Belgium. International Conference on Noise and Vibration Engineering (ISMA2008).

<http://www.isma-isaac.be>

23 - 25 September 2008,

Southampton, U.K. Underwater Noise Measurement. <http://www.ioa.org.uk/viewupcoming.asp>

22 - 26 September 2008, Brisbane, Australia. INTERSPEECH 2008 incorporating SST 2008 - <http://www.interspeech2008.org>

21 - 23 October 2008, Tokyo, Japan. 13th Conference on Low Frequency Noise and Vibration.

<http://www.lowfrequency2008.org>

24 - 26 November 2008, Geelong, Victoria, Australia. Australian Acoustical Society National Conference.

<http://www.acoustics.asn.au>

24th Oct 2008, AFFINE – Affective Interaction in Natural Environments: Real-time affect analysis & interpretation for virtual agents and robots,

www.dcs.qmul.ac.uk/research/vision/AFFINE/AFFINE.html

20 - 27th Sept. 2008, Bertinoro International Summer School of Natural Computation, BNC 2008 Bertinoro, Italy, <http://www.dmi.unict.it/~bnc/>



CONFERENCE LOG

30th Oct. 2008, Search in Social Media, SSM 2008, , California, United States, <http://ir.mathcs.emory.edu/SSM2008/>

27 Feb. – 1 March 2009, Bi-directional Perspectives in the Cognitive Sciences, Marburg, Germany, <http://www.staff.uni-marburg.de/~callies/BPCS/BPCSindex.html>

19 - 24 April 2009, IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing, Taipei, Taiwan, <http://www.icassp09.org/>

15 - 18 December 2008, Second IEEE Spoken Language Technology, <http://www.slt2008.org>

17 - 18 December 2008, 8th Conference On Language Engineering, CLE2008, Cairo, Egypt, <http://www.esole.org>

3 – 6 March 2009, Production-Comprehension Asymmetries in Child Language, Osnabrueck, Germany, http://www.unifrankfurt.de/fb/fb10/inst_i/DG/

16 December 2008, The Second International Workshop on Evaluating Information Access, EVIA 2008 Tokyo, Japan, <http://ntcir.nii.ac.jp/index.php/EVIA-2008/>

4 March 2009, Insertions and Deletions in Speech, Wednesday, Osnabrueck, Germany <http://linguistlist.org/issues/19/19-2014.html>

25 – 27 February 2009, The 8th International Gesture Workshop, GW 2009, Bielefeld, Germany, www.GW2009.de

23 – 24 January 2009, The Seventh International Workshop on Treebanks And Linguistic Theories, Groningen, Netherlands <http://www.let.rug.nl/tlt>

12 –14 March 2009, 1st International Conference on Language Documentation and Conservation: Supporting Small Languages Together, Hawai'i, United States, <http://nflrc.hawaii.edu/ICLDC09>

17 – 18 November 2008, Text Analysis Conference, Maryland, USA, <http://nist.gov/tac/>

CONFERENCE LOG

24 – 25 January 2009, Relating Asymmetries between Speech & Comprehension in the Acquisition of Language, RASCAL, Groningen, Netherlands, <http://www.rug.nl/let/RASCAL2009>

16 – 19 December 2008, The 7th NTCIR Workshop, Tokyo, Japan <http://ntcir.nii.ac.jp/>

30 – 2 May 2009, Linguistic Interfaces & Language Acquisition Workshop, The Mind-Context Divide Iowa, United States, <http://www.uiowa.edu/interfaceworkshop>

13 – 15 March 2009, Generative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition, GASLA-10, Urbana, IL, United States, <http://netfiles.uiuc.edu/atrembla/gasla10>

6 – 9 April 2009, 31st European Conference on Information Retrieval, ECIR 2009, Toulouse, France, <http://ecir09.irit.fr>

30 – 3 April 2009, 12th Meeting of the European Chapter of the ACL, EACL 2009, Athens, Greece, <http://www.eacl2009.gr>

12 – 17 July 2009, 11th International Pragmatics Conference, Melbourne, Australia, <http://ipra.ua.ac.be>

14 – 15 May 2009, Philosophy of Language and Linguistics, PhiLang 2009, Lodz, Poland, <http://www.kognitywistyka.net/forum/viewtopic.php?p=3436>

24 – 26 September 2009, Gesture and Speech in Interaction, GESPIN 2009, Poznan, Poland, <http://www.ifa.amu.edu.pl/~gespin>



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Speech Research Engineer. VOCALIZE, Speech and Language Technology Solutions based in Campinas, SP, Brazil are looking for a Speech Research Engineer. http://www.isca-speech.org/jobs/isca_speech_research_engineer.htm

Computational Linguistics Researcher. VOCALIZE, Speech and Language Technology Solutions based in Campinas, SP, Brazil are looking for a Computational Linguistics Researcher. http://www.isca-speech.org/jobs/isca_computational_linguist.htm

Head of NLP, VoxID. VoxID are now looking for a very experienced Computational Linguist to lead their efforts in the natural language processing area. <http://www.techid.co.uk/vacancies.php>

Speech Recognition Engineers. VoxID is recruiting Speech Recognition Engineers, <http://www.techid.co.uk/vacancies.php>

Computational Linguist. VoxID is recruiting for a Computational Linguist for various UK locations -Research & Development Engineer Senior / Junior, VoxID. A member of a team of research and development engineers working both independently and in teams developing algorithms and models for large vocabulary speech recognition. <http://www.techid.co.uk/vacancies.php>

Senior/Principal Research Engineer, Auraya Company, <http://www.isca-speech.org/jobs/ResearchEngineer2.htm>

Thinking Head Project, Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (3 Year Fixed Term), Level: Academic Level A, Step 6-8 Remuneration

Package: \$75,869 to \$81,219 p.a., Reference: 80173 Closing Date: 01 Aug 2008. Department/School: MARCS Auditory Laboratories, UWS, Sydney.

Position Summary:

Remuneration Package: Academic Level A, Step 6 to 8, \$75,869 to \$81,219 p.a. (comprising Salary, 17% Superannuation, and Leave Loading)

MARCS Auditory Laboratories, University of Western Sydney has been awarded a prestigious \$3.4M ARC/NHMRC “Thinking Systems” grant to develop a 'thinking head' – a breakthrough system that can learn from and interact with humans.

The University of Western Sydney invites applications for a postdoctoral fellowship to work with the Thinking Head Evaluation Team on this exciting project at MARCS Auditory Laboratories (commencing: January 2009 - negotiable). The Postdoctoral Fellow will conduct high-level research and development activities in areas related to systematic evaluation of an Embodied Conversational Agent (ECA) and ECA-user interaction. Rigorous evaluation is critical to informing design and refinement of ECA capabilities, usability, intelligibility and naturalness, especially in areas of speech recognition/synthesis, non-verbal communication, turn-taking and emotion. The Fellow will have a PhD in experimental psychology, cognitive science, computer science or speech science and an interest in new technologies including ECAs. The successful applicant will report to Associate Professor Kate Stevens, and work closely with the Evaluation Team at the University of Western Sydney, and collaborate with Thinking Head researchers at University of Canberra, Macquarie and Flinders Universities. Enquiries: Assoc. Prof. Kate Stevens, email: kj.stevens@uws.edu.au