

PREFACE

This book is based on contributions to the Seventh European Summer School on Language and Speech Communication that was held at KTH in Stockholm, Sweden, in July of 1999 under the auspices of the European Language and Speech Network (ELSNET). The topic of the summer school was “Multimodality in Language and Speech Systems” (MiLaSS).

The issue of multimodality in interpersonal, face-to-face communication has been an important research topic for a number of years. With the increasing sophistication of computer-based interactive systems using language and speech, the topic of multimodal interaction has received renewed interest both in terms of human-human interaction and human-machine interaction. Nine lecturers contributed to the summer school with courses on specialized topics ranging from the technology and science of creating talking faces to human-human communication, which is mediated by computer for the handicapped. Eight of the nine lecturers are represented in this book. The summer school attracted more than 60 participants from Europe, Asia and North America representing not only graduate students but also senior researchers from both academia and industry.

A substantial number of people were involved in the preparation of this book and in the summer school on which it is based. In chronological order we would like to thank Steven Krauwer and Mariken Broekhoven at the ELSNET bureau; the Programme Committee of the school: Niels Ole Bernsen, Gerrit Bloothooft, Paul Mc Kevitt, Koenraad de Smedt, Wolfgang Wahlster and Alex Waibel; and the KTH graduate students: Jonas Beskow, Olov Engwall, Joakim Gustafson, Magnus Lundeborg, Tobias Öhman, Anna Sandell and Kåre Sjölander for all their time and effort spent in planning and realizing the summer school. We would also like to thank all the teachers and the students at the summer school for their interest and enthusiasm, which created such a productive environment. We gratefully acknowledge the financial support from our sponsors, ELSNET, TMR and KTH, and from our supporting organisations, ESCA (now ISCA) and EACL.

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