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First Australian Conference on
SPEECH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Canberra, November 1986

FOREWORD

A research community involved in the study of speech from many different disciplinary perspectives has been developing in Australia over the past decade. This community has been held together loosely by the publication of an occasional newsletter and directory of personnel and research interests, plus several meetings attached to conferences with related interests such as Linguistics and Computing. Whilst all these have been very useful informal associations, the current upsurge of interest in Speech Science and Technology on a world wide scale has made this an appropriate time to convene our first national conference.

SST-86 is the first national conference of the speech community in Australia, but there have been two pre-cursors of significance. In 1978 a two-day "Speech Research Workshop" was incorporated into the structure of the Australian Computer Society conference. At this workshop the Australian Speech Research Association (ASRA) was constituted as an informal association of researchers from many disciplines bound by a common interest in the phenomenon of speech.

The aims adopted for the ASRA were:

- 1) To facilitate professional interaction between persons in and around Australia who are engaged in research towards a better understanding of the phenomenon of human speech.
- 2) To produce a regular newsletter of relevant developments in the area together with current interests, aspirations and contact information of all personnel involved.
- 3) To affiliate with groups and societies of related interests and to arrange joint meetings on a rotating basis.
- 4) To facilitate the sharing of information and research facilities.
- 5) To make known the opportunities in Australia for research in speech and promote interest in the study of speech.
- 6) To sponsor visits to Australia by speech researchers from overseas.

In 1984 a further workshop on the topic of "Speech Normalisation" was held at the Australian National University under the auspices of the ASRA.

The present conference has arisen out of these historical roots, and, while greatly extending the scope of earlier endeavours, has been designed to perpetuate the broad multidisciplinary base of the local speech community.

Around the two-day conference are two satellite meetings, one on current issues for the benefit of the research community in the form of a workshop of round-table discussions, and the other an introduction to Speech Science and Technology for the wider interested community in government and industry by means of an intensive one day tutorial programme.

We expect SST-86 to be the first in a line of conferences which will focus the national effort in Speech Science and Technology and provide a forum in Australia for the exchange of international expertise.

John Clark	(Macquarie University)
Bruce Millar	(Australian National University)
Mary O'Kane	(Canberra College of Advanced Education)
Michael Wagner	(University of New South Wales / ADFA)

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