

16.MURI: Synthetic Telepathy

Multidisciplinary University research initiative program 48 RESEARCH We are conducting basic neuroscientific and signal-processing research on imagined speech production and on intended direction. When thinking to oneself silently, one can often hear imagined words in one's head. We use non-invasive brain-imaging techniques like EEG, MEG and fMRI to learn more about how the brain produces imagined speech when one thinks. We aim to process EEG and MEG signals to determine what words a person is thinking and to whom or what location the message should be sent. The research is conducted by teams at the University of California, Irvine, at Carnegie Mellon University, and at the New York University. The work of seven investigators and their students is supported directly by this project. This work is supported by one of 34 awards made in 2008 by the Department of Defense (DoD) to academic institutions to perform multi-disciplinary basic research. Awards are made by one of three DoD research offices: the Army Research Office (ARO) Office of Naval Research (ONR), and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR). The award is part of the the DoD Multi-disciplinary University Research Initiative (MURI) program. The MURI program supports multi-disciplinary basic research in areas of DoD interest that include more than one traditional science and engineering discipline. For such a multidisciplinary research area, bringing together scientists and engineers with different areas of expertise can accelerate basic research progress and the transitioning of research results to application. The MURI program complements other DoD research programs, which support standard single-investigator research at academic institutions, through awards to multi-disciplinary teams that are both larger and longer in duration. The 2008 awards are for a three-year base period with a two-year option which depends upon the availability of appropriations and satisfactory research progress. MURI awards can provide greater sustained support than single- investigator awards for the graduate training of students pursuing advanced work in science and engineering, as well as for associated infrastructure like research equipment. MURI program is highly competitive. ARO, ONR, and AFOSR solicited proposals in 18 topics important to DoD and received a total of 104 proposals for 2008 funding. The 34 proposals selected underwent merit review by panels of experts in the pertinent science and engineering fields. This MURI award is being supervised by ARO, which is part of the Army Research Laboratory. The ARO's mission is to (1) serve as the Army's premier extramural basic research agency in engineering, physical, information and life sciences, and (2) develop and exploit innovative advances to insure the Nation's technological superiority. Basic research proposals from educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and private industry are competitively selected and funded.

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