

A CAPT tool for training and research on lexical stress errors in German

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Overview

This poster presents the prototype Computer-Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) tool **de-stress**: the German (**de**) System for **T**raining and **R**esearch on **E**rrors in **S**econd-language **S**tress [1].

de-stress targets lexical stress errors by non-native (L2) German speakers with French as their native language (L1). Its modular design incorporates various methods for diagnosing and presenting feedback on these errors. Both instructional and research applications have motivated its development:

- Learners can interact with the system independently (i.e. without assistance from human instructor)
- Teachers can create bespoke exercises for students
- Researchers can study effects of various diagnosis/feedback types
- Tool could become useful component of intelligent CAPT system (see fig. 1)

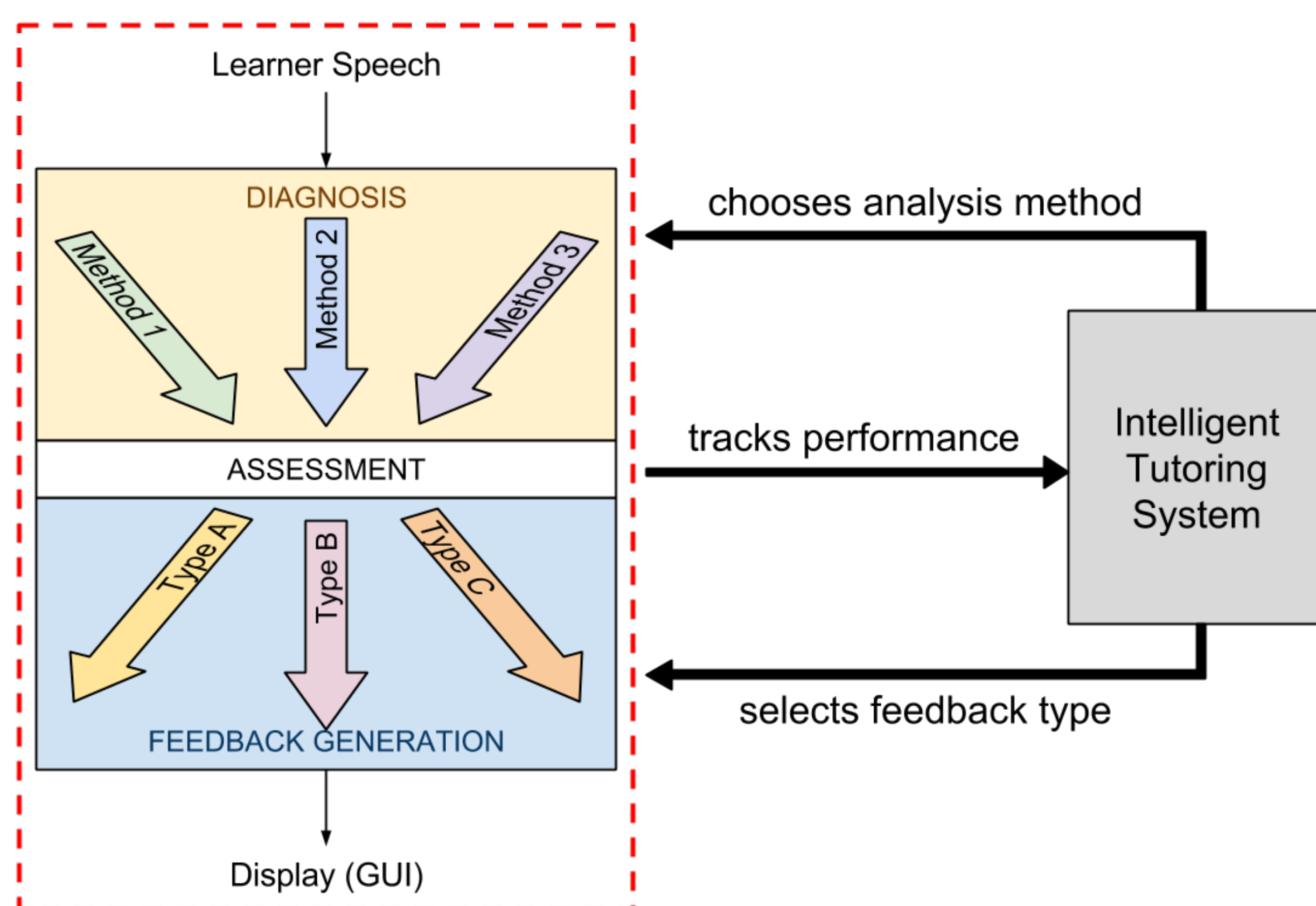


Figure 1: Conceptual diagram of **de-stress** (demarcated by dashed line) and its possible function in the context of an Intelligent Tutoring System (ITS).

A training tool for German learners

A simple web interface presents a learner with a German sentence to read aloud, with one word highlighted as the target for that exercise. The learner submits an utterance of the sentence for assessment and feedback on their realization of the lexical stress pattern of the target word.

Diagnosis options:

- Classification-based [3]

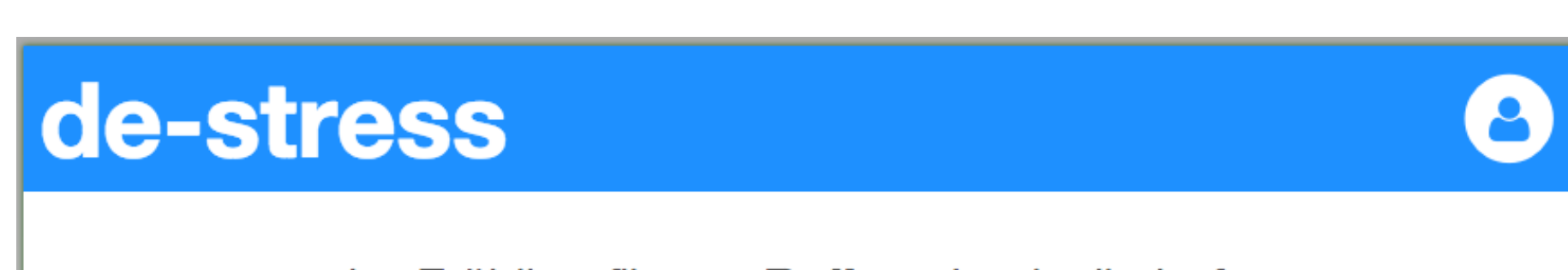
Possible feature sets:

- Duration (relative, w.r.t. syllables/vowels)
- Fundamental frequency (F0) (")
- Intensity (")
- Word uttered
- Speaker age/gender/proficiency

- Comparison-based

- One or multiple native reference utterances
- Manual or automatic (F0-based) reference selection

Feedback options:



A tool for teachers and researchers

An administrative interface allows a language teacher or CAPT researcher to create new exercises for students to complete, where each exercise features a specific combination of the various diagnostic methods and feedback types available in the system.

By allowing straightforward (graphical) yet fine-grained control over these features, **de-stress**:

- enables researchers to create different CAPT exercises for comparative in vivo studies
- allows teachers to create exercises matching the individual needs of their students (e.g. proficiency, learning style)

The screenshot shows the 'Create FeedbackMethod' form. It includes fields for 'Name' (set to 'VisualFB'), 'Description' (set to 'Visual feedback only'), and 'Requires Scorer Type' (a dropdown menu). Below these are several checkboxes: 'Show Skill Bars' (unchecked), 'Play Feedback Signal' (unchecked), 'Display Shapes' (checked), 'Style Text' (checked), 'Display Messages' (unchecked), and 'Self Assessment' (unchecked). A 'Create' button is at the bottom.

Figure 3: [TODO caption]

Conclusion and future directions

References

- [1] A. S. Vakil, "de-stress," <http://github.com/vakila/de-stress>.
- [2] LORIA Speech Team, "JSnoori," <http://jsnoori.loria.fr>.
- [3] A. S. Vakil and J. Trouvain, "Automatic classification of lexical stress errors for German CAPT," in *SLaTE*, 2015.