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# Motion-Sound Mapping through Interaction

An Approach to User-Centered Design of Auditory Feedback using Machine Learning

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Technologies for sensing movement are expanding towards everyday use in virtual reality, gaming, and artistic practices. In this context, there is a need for methodologies to help designers and users create meaningful movement experiences. This paper discusses a user-centered approach for the design of interactive auditory feedback using interactive machine learning. We discuss Mapping through Interaction, a method for crafting sonic interactions from corporeal demonstrations of embodied associations between motion and sound. It uses an interactive machine learning approach to build the mapping from user demonstrations, emphasizing an iterative design process that integrates acted and interactive experiences of the relationships between movement and sound. We examine Gaussian Mixture Regression and Hidden Markov Regression for continuous movement recognition and real-time sound parameter generation. We illustrate and evaluate this approach through an application in which novice users can create interactive sound feedback based on coproduced gestures and vocalizations. Results indicate that Gaussian Mixture Regression and Hidden Markov Regression can efficiently learn complex motion-sound mappings from few examples.

CCS Concepts: • **Human-centered computing** → **Auditory feedback**; *Interaction design theory, concepts and paradigms*; • **Computing methodologies** → **Learning from demonstrations**;

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Interactive Machine Learning, Programming-by-Demonstration, User-Centered Design, Sound and Music Computing, Sonification, Movement.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Movement interaction is emerging at the forefront of Multimedia and Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) research. Technologies and contexts of use for motion sensing are constantly expanding, reaching out beyond academic circles towards a general audience. Beyond task-oriented gestural interaction, movement can support human expression and learning in multimedia applications such as virtual reality, serious games, or creative applications in dance and music. Such applications necessitate the development of specific methodologies and frameworks to help designers and users create meaningful movement experiences.

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53 In this paper, we focus on designing the interaction between movement and sound, motivated by a large range of  
54 applications ranging from performing arts [28] to movement learning or rehabilitation guided by auditory feedback [7].  
55 In these contexts, it is often essential for users to personalize the movement-sound relationship to their context of use  
56 and individual needs. In music and performing arts, developing custom gestural languages for interacting with sound  
57 and music is necessary to support the artistic discourse. A musician willing to map particular movements to audio  
58 processing might design gestures according to the metaphor and poetics of the performance. In movement learning  
59 contexts such as rehabilitation, adapting to individuals is critical to fit different abilities and motor skills. As a result,  
60 whether sound control is an explicit goal (as in the case of music performance), or sound feedback intrinsically supports  
61 the movement execution itself (e.g. for rehabilitation), there is a critical need for users to personalize gesture-sound  
62 relationships.  
63

64  
65 Our general goal is to develop a user-centered framework for designing interactive systems with auditory feedback.  
66 In particular, it aims to enable users to design continuous feedback that can be controlled in real-time by their own  
67 gesture vocabularies. Users should be able to personalize the mapping between motion and sound by demonstrating a set  
68 of examples of associated sounds and gestures.  
69

70 Our approach relies on Interactive Machine learning as a tool for rapid prototyping of the movement-sound  
71 relationships. Users can therefore craft interactive systems by iteratively specifying their gestures and their associated  
72 sounds, training the system, and directly interacting with the learned mapping, as described by Fiebrink et al. [28].  
73 We emphasize the creation of demonstrations of continuous gestures performed while listening to the corresponding  
74 sounds. These multimodal recordings are used to train a probabilistic model of the mapping that can be used for  
75 real-time control of sound synthesis based on new movements. In this paper, we propose to use generative models for  
76 the real-time generation of sound parameters associated to a movement.  
77

78 From a conceptual point of view, as we propose a design process based on a short cycle of recording and performing  
79 gestures with sound feedback that facilitates the integration of the action-perception loop. This approach therefore  
80 supports a shift from designing “for” user experience to designing “through” user experience. We argue that the iterative  
81 nature of the design process is essential. Users progressively learn to create effective demonstrations and to execute  
82 gestures accurately. As a result, we refer to our approach as “mapping through Interaction”, to emphasize not only the  
83 role of embodied demonstrations for crafting movement control strategies, but the importance of rapid testing through  
84 direct interaction with the trained mapping.  
85

86 Specifically, we describe in this paper the following contributions  
87

- 88 • We propose the use of two probabilistic regression models for multimodal motion-sound sequence mapping,  
89 respectively based on Gaussian Mixture Models and Hidden Markov Models. We describe an implementation  
90 that allows the user to specify parameters governing the model’s complexity and generalization, which can be  
91 adjusted to target specific interaction design contexts. Our implementation allows for real-time generation of the  
92 sound parameters.  
93
- 94 • We describe an application that uses co-produced gestures and vocalizations for the design of auditory feedback.  
95 We report the results of a study that compares the performance of the proposed methods of Hidden Markov  
96 Regression and Gaussian Mixture Regression with other regression techniques on a dataset of of gestures  
97 associated with vocalizations. The study also highlights the learning process of the participants, who iteratively  
98 improve the quality of their demonstrations, and the consistency of their movements.  
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105 The paper is organized as follows. We review related approaches using interactive machine learning for mapping  
106 movement to sound in Section 2. We provide a conceptual motivation of our approach in Section 3, and give a detailed  
107 description of the design process of Mapping through interaction in Section 4. Section 5 describes two models for  
108 modeling motion and sound relationships: Gaussian Mixture Regression and Hidden Markov Regression. Sections 6  
109 and 7 respectively describe and evaluate a specific application of the approach that uses user-defined gestures and  
110 vocalization to create interactive sound feedback. Finally, Section 8 provides a general discussion of the proposed  
111 approach.  
112  
113

## 114 2 RELATED WORK 115

116 In this section, we review related works on interactive machine learning that reconsiders the role of the user in machine  
117 learning systems. We detail how interactive machine learning can support the design of movement interaction, in  
118 particular regarding motion-sound mapping design within the New Interfaces for Musical Expression community.  
119  
120

### 121 2.1 Interactive Machine Learning

122 Machine learning’s ability to learn representations from real-world data represents one of the most promising approaches  
123 for designing movement interaction. In classical machine learning workflows, however, user engagement is limited.  
124 The training data is fixed and users’ only opportunity for intervention is to evaluate the results of the training, or the  
125 classification of new input. Yet, using machine learning for interaction design requires more expressive frameworks  
126 that provide a deeper involvement of users in the design and evaluation process.  
127  
128

129 The framework of Interactive Machine Learning (IML), proposed by Fails and Olsen [24], introduced a fluid interaction  
130 workflow that integrates users at all steps of the process, from providing training data to training and evaluating  
131 machine learning models. Since then, several lines of research have focused on improving user interaction with machine  
132 learning systems, using for example user feedback on target concepts in recommender systems [29], better programming  
133 environments [28, 69], visualization [1, 80], or pedagogical approaches that explain the system’s decisions to users [58].  
134

135 Such user-centered approaches to machine learning emphasize a fluid workflow that can allow novice users to  
136 design efficient classifiers or regression models for interaction based on movement and gestures [91]. For example,  
137 the Wekinator [28] encourages iterative design and multiple alternatives through an interaction loop articulating  
138 configuration of the learning problem (selection of features and algorithm), creation/editing of the training examples,  
139 training, and evaluation. Through several studies, Fiebrink et al. showed that users consistently iterate over designs,  
140 analyzing errors and refining the training data and algorithms at each step [28]. Similarly, IML can facilitate the  
141 integration of user-defined gestures for communication with virtual characters [42], or to reinforce bodily interaction  
142 in gaming [56].  
143  
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145

### 146 2.2 Interactive Machine Learning for Motion-Sound Mapping

147 Designing the relationship between movement and sound has been central to research and practice of interactive audio  
148 and music applications, in the fields of New Interfaces for Musical Expression (NIME), Digital Musical Instrument (DMI)  
149 design [63], Sonic Interaction Design (SID) [37], and sonification [47]. The design of the *mapping* [74] between motion  
150 and sound highly determine the interaction possibilities, for example in terms of ease-of-use, expressivity, controllability,  
151 or metaphorical qualities. Mapping in the NIME community has evolved from *explicit* wiring of parameters toward  
152 *implicit* mapping strategies that use an intermediate interaction model [50]. Such models can take a variety of forms, such  
153 as interpolation maps [46, 87, 88] or dynamical systems [45, 52, 65]. Interactive Machine learning (IML) is particularly  
154  
155  
156

157 relevant to implicit mapping design in that it allows instrument designers and performers to express personal and  
158 individualized movements. Its application to motion-sound mapping design has focused on two major approaches,  
159 respectively based on gesture recognition and regression [19].  
160

161 With gesture recognition, one can link the identification of particular gestures, which might carry a semantic meaning,  
162 to the control of audio processing. Many machine learning algorithms have been applied to real-time gesture recognition,  
163 for example Hidden Markov Models (HMMs) [6, 57], Dynamic Time Warping (DTW) [6], and Artificial Neural Networks  
164 (ANNs) [12]. While many methods for real-time gesture recognition have been proposed and distributed in the NIME  
165 community [40], most uses of gesture recognition are confined to discrete interaction paradigms such as triggering a  
166 musical event when a particular gesture is recognized [41].  
167

168 In sound and music computing, complex mappings involving many-to-many associations are often preferred to  
169 simple triggering paradigms. To address the need for continuous interaction in music performance, gesture recognition  
170 has been extended to characterize gestures as continuous processes varying in timing and dynamics. *Gesture Follower* [9]  
171 is built upon a template-based implementation of HMMs to perform a real-time alignment of a live gesture over a  
172 reference recording. The temporal mapping paradigm introduced by Bevilacqua et al. exploits this real-time alignment  
173 to synchronize the resynthesis of an audio recording to the execution of a gesture [8]. *Gesture Variation Follower*  
174 (GVF) [17] extends this approach to the tracking of several features of the movement in real-time: its time progression  
175 but also a set of *variations*, for example the offset position, size, and orientation of two-dimensional gestures. Caramiaux  
176 et al. showed that the model consistently tracks such gesture variations, which allows users to control continuous  
177 actions. However, both approaches are confined to single-example learning, which limits the possibility of capturing  
178 the expressive variations that intrinsically occur between several performances of the same gesture.  
179  
180

181 Alternatively to gesture recognition, supervised learning can be used to directly learn the mapping between motion  
182 and sound parameters through regression. Many approaches rely on neural networks, that have a long history in  
183 machine learning for their ability to learn the characteristics of non-linear systems [25, 26, 59, 64]. While neural  
184 networks are a powerful tool for non-linear mapping design, training such models can be tedious, notably because of  
185 the lack of transparency of the training process. Moreover, most implementations for interaction are lacking an explicit  
186 temporal model that takes into account the evolution of movement features over time.  
187  
188

189 In this paper, we extend and generalize an approach to regression based on probabilistic sequence models [34]. We  
190 formalize a general framework for cross-modal sequence mapping with Gaussian models, and we propose two models  
191 for regression that rely on joint probabilistic representations of movement and sound. The first model is based on  
192 Gaussian mixtures and can be seen as a static regression. The second integrates a multilevel sequence model derived  
193 from Hidden Markov Models that help creating continuous, time-evolving, relationships between movement and sound  
194 parameter sequences.  
195  
196

## 197 2.3 Probabilistic Models: from Recognition to Synthesis

198 In this section, we make a detour through speech processing, animation and robotics. We briefly review approaches to  
199 cross-modal mapping that rely on generative sequence models.  
200  
201

202  
203 2.3.1 *Statistical Parametric Speech Synthesis.* The rapid development of statistical speech synthesis has been sup-  
204 ported by well-established machine learning method from speech recognition. As a matter of fact, Hidden Markov  
205 Models (HMMs) provide a unified modeling framework for speech analysis and synthesis, allowing to transfer methods  
206 — such as speaker adaptation, — from recognition to generation. Statistical parametric speech synthesis provides a  
207

flexible framework for expressive synthesis, that can integrate prosodic, articulatory or affective features [85]. While several methods have been proposed for efficient and robust parameter generation with HMMs [86, 93], most of them are oriented towards offline generation.

Novel applications such as speaker conversion or automated translation are encouraging a shift from pure synthesis towards the issue of sequence mapping. *Acoustic-articulatory mapping* – also known as *speech inversion* – aims at recovering from acoustic speech signals the articulation movements related to vocal production. Toda et al. proposed to use the Gaussian Mixture Models (GMMs) for regression [83], following the theoretical work of Ghahramani and Jordan [39]. The method consists in learning a joint multimodal model from observation vectors built as the concatenation of the input and output feature vectors. For regression, each Gaussian distribution is expressed as a conditional distribution over the input features. Subsequent work applied HMMs to the problem of feature mapping, extending the trajectory HMM to learn a joint model of acoustic and articulatory features [49, 92, 94].

**2.3.2 Movement Generation and Robotics.** As for speech synthesis, statistical Gaussian models have proved efficient for encoding the dynamics of human motion. Their flexibility allows for generating movement according to external variables such as style. Brand and Hertzmann’s ‘style machines’ extract style parameters implicitly at training, which can then be used during generation for interpolating between styles [11]. Drawing upon speaker adaptation methods in speech processing, Tilmanne et al. proposed a method for style adaptation and interpolation in walking motion synthesis [81, 82].

In robotics, several methods for motor learning by demonstration draw upon probabilistic models for motor task modeling, reproduction and generalization. Calinon et al. proposed to learn a joint time/motion GMM trained from multiple demonstrations of a motor behavior [15]. They further extended the method by combining HMMs with GMM regression (or Gaussian Mixture Regression, GMR) where the weight of each Gaussian are estimated by a forward algorithm [14]. The method was shown to outperform the time-based GMR, and gives similar results as Dynamic Movement primitives [51], but can more easily learn from several demonstrations with variations.

We propose a similar framework for user-centered design of motion sound mapping. Our method draws upon the use of Gaussian models for sequence-to-sequence mapping. Importantly, the context of interaction design required to adapt the model for training on few examples and real-time generation.

### 3 CONCEPTUAL MOTIVATION

Several threads of research in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) have addressed movement interaction through different lenses, ranging from task-driven accounts of gestural interaction to experiential approaches relying on somatic practices and expert knowledge. In this section, we motivate the Mapping through Interaction framework by considering the importance of the action perception loop, in particular with regards to recent results in embodied music cognition.

#### 3.1 Movement Design and Embodied Cognition

Embodied cognition theories emphasize the essential role of the body in cognitive phenomena. Embodied cognition supports that knowledge, reasoning and behaviors emerge from dynamic interactions within the environment [2]. The theory of embodied cognition has a significant impact on current trends in HCI research [54] and interaction design [23], by reassessing the role of the body in computer-mediated interaction.

Yet, gesture design remains a challenging task. Participatory design is now a standard approach for gesture creation through elicitation studies with novice users [20, 90]. While such approaches to gestural interaction design are leading

261 the way to end-user adaptation and customization, they can be limited by several factors. User elicitation of gesture  
262 sets often suffers from a “legacy bias” that conditions users in creating gestures that mimic their previous experience  
263 with technology [90]. Misconceptions about sensing technologies or recognizers’ abilities are often limiting, and can  
264 be critical for end user gesture customization [67]. Moreover, the limitation to discrete interaction paradigms often  
265 overlooks the nuance and expressiveness of movement. Alternative methodologies reconsider how we can design  
266 movement interaction through somatic practices [48, 62, 77]. By adopting a more holistic and situated approach to  
267 movement design, these techniques can limit the legacy bias and result in more engaging interactions. Such experiential  
268 approaches promote the value of designing for and through movement.  
269

271 Most approaches, however, do not heavily rely on a given feedback loop during the design process. Yet, the action-  
272 perception loop is necessary to appreciate the nuances of movement execution, which make it such an efficient and  
273 expressive modality in human interaction and communication. Pointing devices such as the mouse are extremely  
274 efficient because they rely on quantitative models of movement execution in a restricted design space. Their success is  
275 due to a large body of work on the implementation of a tight visuo-motor loop. The action-perception loop enables  
276 learning and skill acquisition, and it is therefore essential to consider in movement interaction.  
277

278 We focus on the design of movement interaction with auditory feedback. In music, Leman suggest that listeners  
279 engage with listening through motor simulation, putting bodily experience as a primary vector of musical expression  
280 [60]. Experiments investigating spontaneous motors responses to sound stimuli show that people present a wide range  
281 of strategies for associating gestures to sounds, such as mimicking the sound-producing actions [16, 44], or tracing  
282 the perceived properties of the sound [43]. All studies underline that associations between movement and sound are  
283 highly idiosyncratic, in light of the large diversity of gestures generated in response to sound. This suggests that sound  
284 feedback could support the creation of gestures, but also that the design tools need to adapt to the variability induced  
285 by contextual, cultural, and personal factors.  
286  
287  
288

### 290 3.2 Conceptual Approach

291 Approaches to motion-sound mapping design have evolved from analytical views of the mapping between motion and  
292 sound parameters towards approaches based on the action-perception loop at a higher level. At the same time, the  
293 recent developments of interactive machine learning support data-driven design approaches that allow users to design  
294 interactions by example. A particularly interesting methodology is *play-along* mapping [27], which relies on a *score* of  
295 sound presets to guide to the definition of the training examples. The approach, however, might require to define the  
296 score manually, and does not explicitly considers listening and perception as a starting point.  
297  
298

299 Our approach for designing sonic interactions draws upon the general principle of *mapping through listening* [18],  
300 that builds upon related work on listening modes and gestural sound descriptions to formalize three categories of  
301 mapping strategies: *instantaneous*, *temporal*, and *metaphoric*. *Instantaneous* mapping strategies refer to the translation  
302 of magnitudes between instantaneous gesture and sound features or parameters. *Temporal* mapping strategies refer  
303 to the translation and adaptation of temporal morphologies (i.e. profiles, timing, and event sequences) between the  
304 gesture and sound data streams. *Metaphorical* mapping strategies refer to relationships determined by metaphors or  
305 semantic aspects, that do not necessarily rely on morphological congruences between gesture and sound.  
306  
307

308 Mapping through listening is not a technical approach but a design principle that considers embodied associations  
309 between gestures and sounds as the essential component of mapping design. We propose to explicitly consider corporeal  
310 demonstrations of such embodied associations as a basis for learning the mapping between motion and sound. We  
311

combine the design principle of mapping through listening with interactive machine learning in a framework we call *Mapping through Interaction*.

## 4 MAPPING THROUGH INTERACTION

We define Mapping through Interaction as a method for crafting sonic interactions from corporeal demonstrations of embodied associations between motion and sound. It uses an interactive machine learning approach to build the mapping from user demonstrations, emphasizing an iterative design process that integrates *acted* and *interactive* experiences of the relationships between movement and sound.

The term Mapping through Interaction evolved from our initial definition of *Mapping-by-Demonstration* [30] that referred to the field of Programming-by-Demonstration in robotics [3].<sup>1</sup> Robot programming-by-demonstration focuses on reproducing and generalizing behaviors from a set of demonstrations from a human teacher. Hence, it emphasizes the role of the human in the demonstration and specification of desirable behaviors. Our goal is to emphasize not only the role of embodied demonstrations for crafting movement control strategies, but the importance of rapid testing through direct interaction with the trained mapping.

### 4.1 Overview

We now give an overview of the workflow of the Mapping through Interaction framework from a user's perspective, as illustrated in Figure 1. The framework implements an interaction loop iterating over two phases of *Demonstration* and *Performance*.

The demonstration phase starts with a listening phase in order to generate movement. The user imagines a movement that can be associated to a particular sound (**listening**). Then, this embodied association between motion and sound needs to be acted. The user provides the system with an example of the mapping, by performing a movement along the sound (**acting**). We record the motion and sound parameter streams to form a synchronous multimodal sequence, which constitutes a demonstration of the movement-sound mapping. The aggregation of one or several of these multimodal demonstrations constitutes a training set, which is used to train a machine learning model encoding the mapping between motion and sound. Once trained, this mapping model can be used in the *Performance* phase. The user can then reproduce and explore the created mapping through movement (**performance**). Movement parameters are then continuously streamed to the mapping layer that drives the sound synthesis, giving a direct feedback to the user (**listening**). This feedback serves as material to reflect on the design. It allows users to compare the interactive relationship, as learned by the system, with the initial embodied association that was acted in the demonstration. Thus, this framework allows users to quickly iterate through a design process driven by the interaction within a feedback loop.

### 4.2 Design Process from the User's Perspective

The design process can be broken down to a sequence of actions available to the user: (1) create a set of sounds, (2) record demonstrations of gestures synchronized with sounds, (3) edit and annotate the resulting training data, (4) configure and train the machine learning model, (5) evaluate the learned mapping through direct interaction:

---

<sup>1</sup>Note that *imitation* learning is also widely used in robot motor learning [75, 76]. Although the term is particularly relevant in humanoid robotics, its application to the problem of motion-sound mapping reduces the scope to having a computer imitating a human, which is not the purpose of the proposed framework.



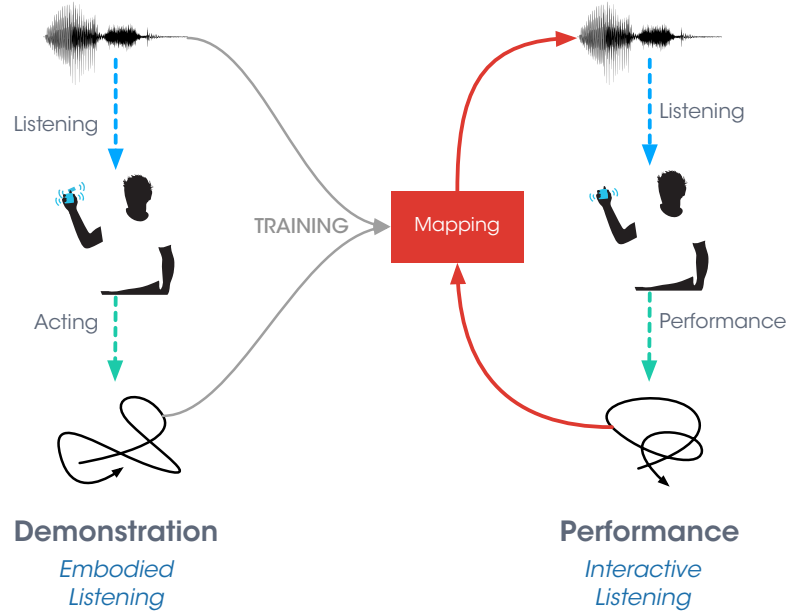


Fig. 1. Overview of the workflow of Mapping through Interaction. Blue and green dashed arrows respectively represent listening and moving. In *Demonstration*, the user’s movement performed while listening is used to learn an interaction model. In *performance*, the user’s movements continuously control the sound synthesis with the learned mapping.

*Sound Design.* Users first need to create a set of sounds to be used as demonstrations. These sounds can either be synthesized, or selected from a corpus of recorded sounds. In the case of parametric synthesis, users create sounds by editing trajectories of sound control parameters, as we previously proposed with physical modeling sound synthesis [34]. In this paper, we focus on sampled-based sound synthesis (as detailed in the section). In this case, users can create a selection of recorded sounds from an existing corpus.

*Data Creation by Demonstration.* All examples used to train the machine learning model are provided by the user, who can record gestures synchronized with sounds. Gestures are captured using motion sensors such as inertial sensors. The choice of appropriate sensors and movement features depends on the application, as discussed in the next section. Our methodology derives from the Mapping through listening approach that considers modes of listening as the starting point for interaction design. Recording a gesture while listening to the associated sound gives users the opportunity to enact the motion-sound relationship, and adjust their gesture if necessary. Moreover, this ensures the correct synchronization of both modalities.

*Data Editing and Annotation.* Machine learning from few examples is challenging and requires high quality demonstrations. Since the demonstrations are not always perfectly executed, it is useful for to give users the possibility to select or improve the segmentation of some of the recorded demonstrations. In addition, demonstrations can be annotated with a set of labels representing various *classes*. Classes are ensembles of gestures used for joint recognition and regression. For example, one could record several variations or a circular gesture associated to recordings of water sounds, and several variations of a square gesture associated with industrial sounds. In performance, we can use the

417 trained machine learning model to jointly recognize the class (circle or square), and generate the associated sound  
418 parameters by regression.  
419

420 *Machine Learning Configuration and Training.* Users can interactively train the machine learning on their set of  
421 demonstrations. We let users directly manipulate some of the parameters of the machine learning models that deal with  
422 regularization or model complexity. These particular parameters are described and discussed in detail for the proposed  
423 probabilistic models in Section 5.3.  
424

425 *Evaluation by direct interaction.* Finally, users can directly interact with the learned mapping in the *Performance* phase.  
426 Movements performed at the input of the system are recognized and mapped in real-time to the auditory feedback.  
427 This allows users to evaluate the quality of their design: they can reproduce their demonstration gestures to assess the  
428 consistency of the feedback or the reliability of the gesture recognition, or they can perform new variations of their  
429 gestures to evaluate the generalization of the mapping. Such direct interaction is essential to reflect on the mapping  
430 and modify any of the previous actions.  
431  
432  
433

434 Note that this workflow can be adjusted to the target users. We have applied this approach both in public installations  
435 involving novice users, as further described in the use-case of Section 6, and in collaboration with expert composers [4].  
436 When presenting systems as interactive installations, sound design, annotation and machine learning configuration  
437 was hidden from end users for simplicity. We further discuss the importance of expertise in Section 8.2.  
438  
439

### 440 4.3 Technical Overview

441 In this section, we detail the main technical building blocks necessary to implement a Mapping through Interaction  
442 system: movement capture and analysis, sound analysis and synthesis, and machine learning.  
443  
444

445 *Motion Capture and Analysis.* Capturing and analyzing users' movements is essential in the implementation of  
446 a mapping through interaction system. The choice of sensors and the feature extraction method should be chosen  
447 according to the type of gestures that are meant to be captured. In our work, we mostly focus on wearable sensors such  
448 as inertial sensors (accelerometers, gyroscopes) that can be handheld or body-worn. We experimented with different  
449 features according to the scenario of use, from smoothed acceleration signals to higher-level features. In this paper, we  
450 represent the movement with frames of low-level features from accelerometers sampled at 100 Hz.  
451  
452

453 *Sound Analysis and Synthesis.* We use supervised learning to model the mapping between motion features and sound  
454 parameters – the control parameters of a given synthesizer. Because demonstrations are composed of sequences of sound  
455 parameters (not the audio itself), the choice of the sound synthesis technique is essential. We previously proposed to use  
456 a graphical editors for specifying the sound parameter trajectories of the demonstration sounds, using physical modeling  
457 sound synthesis [34]. In this work, we focus on descriptor-driven concatenative sound synthesis techniques [78]. This  
458 particular case of sample-based sound synthesis allows to synthesize sounds from a set of audio descriptors that can be  
459 automatically extracted from audio recordings. Instead of designing sounds individually, which can be time-consuming,  
460 users can therefore create the demonstration sounds from existing collections of audio recordings. In this article, we  
461 also consider a case where users directly produce the demonstration sounds by vocalization.  
462  
463  
464

465 *Machine Learning Modeling of the Mapping.* We use supervised learning techniques to estimate the mapping from a  
466 small set of multimodal demonstrations. This requires the use of methods that can efficiently learn from few examples.  
467  
468

Moreover, the training should be fast to allow users to rapidly iterate between demonstration and direct evaluation. The next section detail two probabilistic models of motion-sound relationships that can be used for jointly recognizing gestures and generating sequences of associated sound parameters in real-time.

## 5 PROBABILISTIC MODELING OF MOTION-SOUND RELATIONSHIPS

In this section, we detail two probabilistic models for real-time movement control of sound synthesis. Our approach to probabilistic mapping of movement and sound relies on the conversion between models with joint multimodal distribution to models with cross-modal conditional distributions. We detail detail regression methods that rely respectively on Gaussian Mixture Models and Hidden Markov Models.<sup>2</sup>

### 5.1 Gaussian Mixture Regression

Gaussian Mixture Regression (GMR) takes advantages of Gaussian Mixture Models (GMMs) for regression. The method was initially proposed by Ghahramani and Jordan for missing data estimation [39]. It has been applied to statistical speech synthesis [83, 84] as well as robot movement generation [13]. In this section, we briefly summarize the representation, learning and regression. A complete mathematical description of GMR can be found in [39, 79].

For training, we use multimodal feature vectors built by concatenating motion and sound feature vectors. We train a GMM on these features using the standard Expectation-Maximisation algorithm. For prediction, the weight of each gaussian component is estimated from the movement features only, and the associated sounds features are predicted by regression over each component.

*5.1.1 Representation and Learning.* Each demonstration is represented as a sequence of synchronized frames of motion features  $\mathbf{x}^m$  and frames of sound parameters  $\mathbf{x}^s$ . For training, we consider the multimodal observation vectors built by concatenating motion and sound features  $\mathbf{x} = [\mathbf{x}^m; \mathbf{x}^s]$ . We estimate a GMM of parameters  $\theta$  with  $K$  components, using the joint probability density function [66]:

$$p(\mathbf{x} | \theta) = \sum_{k=1}^K w_k \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x} | \mu_k, \Sigma_k) \quad (1)$$

where  $w_k$  is the weight of the  $k$ th component.  $\mathcal{N}$  is a multivariate normal distribution, which mean  $\mu_k$  and covariance  $\Sigma_k$  can be expressed as a combination of the parameters for each modality ( $m$  for movement and  $s$  for sound). The mean of each Gaussian distribution is a concatenation of the mean for each modality, and the covariance matrix combines four submatrices representing uni-modal and cross-modal dependencies:

$$\mu_k = [\mu_k^m; \mu_k^s] \quad \text{and} \quad \Sigma_k = \begin{bmatrix} \Sigma_k^{mm} & \Sigma_k^{ms} \\ \Sigma_k^{sm} & \Sigma_k^{ss} \end{bmatrix} \quad (2)$$

For training, we use the Expectation-Maximization (EM) algorithm to estimate the mean, covariance, and weight of each component of the mixture. Algorithmic details on the EM algorithm can be found in [10, 66].

<sup>2</sup>In this section, we follow the mathematical conventions used in [66], and we refer the reader to chapters 11 and 17 for details on the standard algorithms for GMMs and HMMs.

521 *5.1.2 Regression.* For regression, our goal is to estimate the sound parameters  $\mathbf{x}^s$  from input motion features  $\mathbf{x}^m$ . For  
 522 this purpose, the joint density distribution must be converted to a conditional distribution that expresses the dependency  
 523 of the sound modality over the input space of motion parameters. Following [39], the conditional distribution for a  
 524 GMM can be expressed as:

$$525 \quad p(\mathbf{x}^s | \mathbf{x}^m, \theta) = \sum_{k=1}^K \beta_k \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}^s | \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}_k^s, \hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}_k^{ss}) \quad (3)$$

528 where

$$529 \quad \begin{cases} \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}^s = \boldsymbol{\mu}^s + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{sm} (\boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{mm})^{-1} (\mathbf{x}^m - \boldsymbol{\mu}^m) \\ \hat{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}}^{ss} = \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{ss} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{sm} (\boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{mm})^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{ms} \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

532 and where the responsibility  $\beta_k$  of component  $k$  over the space of motion features is defined by

$$533 \quad \beta_k = \frac{w_k p(\mathbf{x}^m | \boldsymbol{\theta}_k)}{\sum_{k'} w_{k'} p(\mathbf{x}^m | \boldsymbol{\theta}_{k'})} \quad \text{with} \quad p(\mathbf{x}^m | \boldsymbol{\theta}_k) = \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}^m | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k^m, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k^{mm}) \quad (5)$$

536 We use the Least Square Estimate (LSE) to generate the vector of sound parameters from an input vector of motion  
 537 features. The estimate can be computed as the conditional expectation of  $\mathbf{x}^s$  given  $\mathbf{x}^m$ :

$$538 \quad \hat{\mathbf{x}}^s = E[\mathbf{x}^s | \mathbf{x}^m, \theta] = \sum_{k=1}^K \beta_k \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}_k^s \quad (6)$$

## 543 5.2 Hidden Markov Regression

544 We now consider an alternative to GMR that integrates a model of the gestures' time structure. Our method uses  
 545 Hidden Markov Models for regression, which we denote Hidden Markov Regression (HMR). We start by learning a  
 546 HMM on synchronous recordings of motion and sound parameters. Then, we convert the joint model to a conditional  
 547 model: for each state, we express the distribution over sound parameters conditionally to the motion parameters. In  
 548 performance, we use the input motion features both to generate the associated sound parameters from the conditional  
 549 distribution. We propose an online estimation algorithm for HMR based on the Least Squares Estimate of the output  
 550 sound parameters that allows for real-time parameter generation.

551 *5.2.1 Representation and Learning.* For training, we use a standard HMM representation with multimodal features.  
 552 A HMM consists of a discrete-time, discrete-state Markov chain, with hidden states  $z_t \in \{1 \dots N\}$ , plus an observation  
 553 model  $p(\mathbf{x}_t | z_t)$  [66] where  $\mathbf{x}_t$  and  $z_t$  are the feature vector and hidden state at time  $t$ , respectively. The joint distribution  
 554 of a HMM for the sequence of  $T$  feature vectors  $\mathbf{x}_{1:T}$  and the state sequence  $z_{1:T}$  can be written as:

$$555 \quad p(\mathbf{x}_{1:T}, z_{1:T}) = p(z_{1:T}) p(\mathbf{x}_{1:T} | z_{1:T}) = \underbrace{\left[ p(z_1) \prod_{t=2}^T p(z_t | z_{t-1}) \right]}_{\text{(a) Markov process}} \underbrace{\left[ \prod_{t=1}^T p(\mathbf{x}_t | z_t) \right]}_{\text{(b) observation model}} \quad (7)$$

556 where the Markov process is represented by the prior  $\Pi = [\pi_i]_{i=1 \dots K}$  and the transition matrix  $A = [a_{ij}]_{i,j=1 \dots K}$  so  
 557 that  $p(z_1 = i) = \pi_i$  and  $p(z_t = j | z_{t-1} = i) = a_{ij}$ . For continuous observations such as motion and sound features, we  
 558 use a Gaussian observation model:<sup>3</sup>

$$559 \quad p(\mathbf{x}_t | z_t = k, \theta) = \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_t | \boldsymbol{\mu}_k, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_k) \quad (8)$$

570 <sup>3</sup>For simplicity, we considered a single Gaussian per observation distribution, however our implementation allows to define an observation model as a  
 571 Gaussian mixture.

where the mean  $\mu_k$  and covariance  $\Sigma_k$  can be expressed with Equation 2. We use HMMs for modeling gestures composed of time series of motion and sounds features. A particular gesture is therefore modeled using a fixed number of hidden states that encode the temporal evolution of the features. To guarantee the consistency of the temporal process, we use a left-right topology for the transition matrix, which only allows transitions forward in time (See [71] for details). We train the HMM using the Baum-Welch algorithm [71] on a set of demonstrations (times series of joint motion and sound features), in order to estimate the transition probabilities and the mean and variance of each Gaussian observation model.

**5.2.2 Regression.** Several techniques for sequence mapping with Hidden Markov Models have been proposed for speech synthesis [21, 22, 38, 86]. However, most approaches in speech synthesis focus on the offline estimation of the output sequence. Our goal is to control the sound synthesis continuously and in real-time, which requires the generation of sound parameters as soon as a new frame of motion parameters is available. Our method is identical to that of Calinon et al. [14] for movement generation in robotics.

We aim to estimate  $p(\mathbf{x}_t^s | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta)$ , the distribution over the sound parameters at time  $t$  conditioned on the history of motion features up to time  $t$ :

$$\begin{aligned} p(\mathbf{x}_t^s | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta) &= \sum_{i=1}^N p(\mathbf{x}_t^s, z_t = i | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^N p(\mathbf{x}_t^s | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, z_t = i, \theta) p(z_t = i | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta) \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

Given that the observation model is Gaussian (see Equation 8), we can express the conditional observation model as:

$$p(\mathbf{x}_t^s | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, z_t = i, \theta) = \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_t^s | \hat{\mu}_i^s, \hat{\Sigma}_i^{ss}) \quad (10)$$

where  $\hat{\mu}_i^s$  and  $\hat{\Sigma}_i^{ss}$  can be expressed from  $\mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m$ ,  $\mu_i$  and  $\Sigma_i$  using Equation 4. The filtered estimate of state probabilities  $p(z_t = i | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta)$  can be computed in real-time using the forward algorithm [71]. The forward algorithm estimates the posterior likelihood of state  $z_t$  given the observation sequence  $\mathbf{x}_{1:t}$  for a HMM with parameters  $\theta$  recursively:

$$\alpha_t^m(j) \triangleq p(z_t = j | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta) = \frac{\hat{\alpha}_t^m(j)}{\sum_{j'=1}^N \hat{\alpha}_t^m(j')} \quad (11)$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{\alpha}_t^m(j) &= \left[ \sum_{i=1}^N \alpha_{t-1}^m(i) a_{ij} \right] p(\mathbf{x}_t^m | z_t = j, \theta) \\ &= \left[ \sum_{i=1}^N \alpha_{t-1}^m(i) a_{ij} \right] \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_t^m | \mu_j^m, \Sigma_j^{mm}) \end{aligned} \quad (12)$$

The algorithm is initialized as follows:

$$\alpha_0(i) = \frac{\pi_i \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_0^m | \mu_i^m, \Sigma_i^{mm})}{\sum_{j=1}^N \pi_j \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_0^m | \mu_j^m, \Sigma_j^{mm})} \quad (13)$$

625 Similarly to GMR, we use the Least Square Estimate (LSE) for generating the sound parameters associated to an  
 626 input frame of motion features. Formally, the sound parameter vector can therefore be expressed as:  
 627

$$628 \hat{\mathbf{x}}_t^s = E [\mathbf{x}_t^s | \mathbf{x}_{1:t}^m, \theta] = \sum_{i=1}^N \alpha_t^m(i) \hat{\boldsymbol{\mu}}_i^s \quad (14)$$

### 631 5.3 Implementation for User-centered Design

632 Making machine learning usable for users and interaction designers requires models that can be trained from few  
 633 examples. Setting the model parameters to appropriate values is therefore essential. Many model selection methods  
 634 have been proposed in the machine learning literature for automatically selecting optimal parameters. However, as  
 635 shown by Fiebrink et al. for the case of musical instrument design [28], users often prefer to evaluate models by direct  
 636 interaction rather than through metrics such as the classification accuracy. Fiebrink reported that in some cases, the  
 637 classification boundary is more relevant to users because it informs them on the amount of variations of the gestures  
 638 that are meant to be recognized. We consider that two parameters of the proposed probabilistic models are essential for  
 639 interaction design: complexity of the model and its regularization. This section aims to give practical insights supporting  
 640 the choice of particular models, and the adjustment of their parameters.  
 641  
 642  
 643  
 644

645 *5.3.1 Choice of GMR vs HMR.* GMR and HMR have different properties for modeling the mapping between motion  
 646 and sound. The main difference is that HMR has an explicit model of the temporal evolution of the features, while GMR  
 647 does not take time into account. The choice of a model should be determined according to the use-case, by analyzing  
 648 the type of gestures and of relationships between motion and sound.  
 649

650 GMR is particularly appropriate to design continuous mappings between motion and sound that have a one-to-one  
 651 relationship between particular values of motion and sound parameters. In some cases, however, there can be ambiguities  
 652 in the feature spaces that result in one-to-many associations between values of motion and sound parameters. In this  
 653 case, the temporal model of HMR can help resolving the ambiguities because it intrinsically takes into account the  
 654 history of the movement features. Such ambiguities can also arise from a choice of sensors: acceleration signals can  
 655 present specific temporal patterns that make difficult to associate particular acceleration values to sound parameters  
 656 with a one-to-one mapping. However, the constraints imposed by the temporal structure of HMR can also limit the  
 657 possibility for extrapolation.  
 658  
 659

660 *5.3.2 User Control of the Model Complexity.* Model complexity can be handled through the number of Gaussian  
 661 components in GMR, or the number of hidden states in HMR. The non-linearity of the mapping increases with the  
 662 number of state or components. Using a small number of hidden states implies that the information of the movement is  
 663 embedded in a lower dimensional space, reducing the accuracy of the temporal modeling of the gesture. Using few  
 664 states can help ensuring a good generalization of the model. The recognition will therefore be tolerant to variations  
 665 in the input, which might help when working with novice users, or when the end users do not design the gestures  
 666 themselves. Conversely, choosing a large number of states – relatively to the average duration of the training examples,  
 667 – increases the accuracy of the temporal structure. This can help ensure that the temporal structure of the synthesized  
 668 sound parameters is coherent with the demonstrations. It can also be useful for expert users, such as musicians, who  
 669 can repeat gestures with high consistency.  
 670  
 671  
 672

673 *5.3.3 Regularization.* Regularization is essential when training machine learning models from few examples. It  
 674 can prevent numerical errors during training by avoiding that variances tend towards zero. More importantly, it also  
 675

allows users to control the degree of generalization of the model when the training set is too small to ensure a robust estimation of the data covariance. For GMR and HMR, regularization artificially increases the variance and overlap of the Gaussian components, which impacts the smoothness of the generated sound trajectories.

We implemented regularization through a prior  $\sigma$  added to the covariance matrices of the Gaussian distributions at each re-estimation in the Expectation-Maximization algorithm. Our regularization method is a special case of the Bayesian regularization technique proposed by [68].  $\sigma$  combines an absolute prior and a relative prior:

- *Absolute Regularization*  $\sigma^{abs}$  represents the absolute minimal value to add to the diagonal of the covariance matrix.
- *Relative Regularization*  $\sigma^{rel}$  is proportional to the standard deviation of each feature on the entire training set.

At each iteration of the Expectation-Maximization (EM) algorithm, we estimate the regularized covariance matrix  $\bar{\Sigma}$  from the covariance matrix  $\Sigma$  estimated via EM as

$$\bar{\Sigma}_{ii} = \Sigma_{ii} + \max\left(\sigma^{rel} * \sigma_i, \sigma^{abs}\right) \quad \forall i \in [1; D] \quad (15)$$

where  $D$  is the total number of features,  $\Sigma_{ii}$  is the  $i$ th value of the diagonal of the covariance matrix  $\Sigma$  and  $\sigma_i$  represents the standard deviation of feature  $i$  on the entire training set.

**5.3.4 Joint Recognition and Mapping.** Our implementation gives users the possibility to define ‘classes’ of motion-sound mappings, by annotating demonstrations with discrete labels. This process allows for joint recognition and regression: in *performance*, we use the movement to jointly estimate the likelihood of each class and their associated sound parameters. In practice, we train one model (GMR or HMR) per class,<sup>4</sup> using all demonstrations with a given label. During performance, we evaluate the posterior likelihood of each class given the motion features. The likeliest class is then used to generate the sound parameters.<sup>5</sup>

**5.3.5 The XMM Library.** We released our implementation of GMR and HMR as an open-source library for continuous motion recognition and mapping. XMM<sup>6</sup> is a portable, cross-platform C++ library that implements Gaussian Mixture Models and Hidden Markov Models for recognition and regression. XMM has python and Node.js bindings for scripting and web integration. The models are also integrated with the *MuBu*<sup>7</sup> environment within *Cycling 74 Max*. It provides a consistent framework for motion/sound feature extraction and pre-processing; interactive recording, editing, and annotation of the training sets; and interactive sound synthesis. This set of tools reinforces the fluidity of the workflow for recording, training and evaluating of the models, and testing the mapping.

## 6 CASE STUDY: INTERACTIVE AUDIO FEEDBACK USING VOCALIZATIONS

We now detail the case study of a particular implementation of a mapping through interaction system. In this project, we considered voice and gestures as primary material for interaction design. Humans use vocalizations in conjunction with gestures in a number of situations, from everyday communication to expert movement performance. Vocalization is an efficient and expressive way to provide the system with sound examples that can be accurately performed in synchrony with movements. This project is motivated by the extensive use of (non-verbal) vocalization as a support to

<sup>4</sup>Note that our multiclass implementation of HMR allows the use of a hierarchical extension of Hidden Markov Models, that we previously used for real-time gesture recognition [32].

<sup>5</sup>Note that our implementation also allows to generate the sound parameters as a mixture of the prediction of each class, where the likelihoods are used as mixing weights.

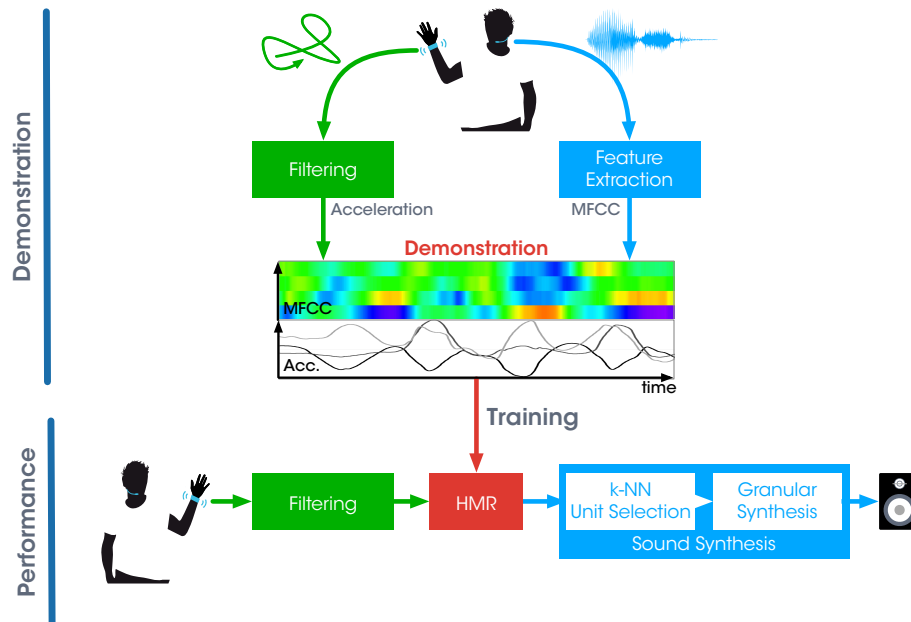
<sup>6</sup>The XMM open-source library: <https://github.com/Ircam-RnD/xmm>

<sup>7</sup>MuBu is freely available on Ircam’s *Forumnet*: <http://forumnet.ircam.fr/product/mubu/>

729 movement expression in dance practice and pedagogy [61] as well as in dance movement therapy [5]. Similarly, expert  
 730 choreographers integrate vocal sounds in rehearsal and practice to communicate choreographic ideas to performers [55]:  
 731 timing and rhythm, but also movement dynamics and ‘quality’, or even imagery [89]. We were interested in exploring  
 732 how novice participants would associate particular gesture with sounds produced vocally. Our system relies on jointly  
 733 performed gestures and vocalizations to train a joint multimodal model that encode the time-evolving dynamics  
 734 of movement and sound. It enables users to continuously control the synthesis of vocalizations from continuous  
 735 movements. It enables users to continuously control the synthesis of vocalizations from continuous  
 736 movements.  
 737

## 738 6.1 System Description

739 The architecture of the application is outlined in Figure 2.<sup>8</sup> Users build the demonstrations by producing a vocalization  
 740 while performing a gesture. We capture the movements using body-worn inertial sensors. The system uses HMR to learn  
 741 the relationship between a sequence of motion parameters and a sequence of Mel-Frequency Cepstrum Coefficients  
 742 (MFCCs) representing the vocal sound. Once the model is learned, users can perform new movements to control the  
 743 sound synthesis. Motion parameters are streamed to the trained HMR that predicts MFCCs for each new input frame.  
 744 The MFCC are then used to synthesize sound based on the vocalization, using descriptor-driven granular synthesis.  
 745  
 746  
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 748



771 Fig. 2. Overview of the interactive vocalization system. The demonstrations are built by the player who co-produce a gesture and a  
 772 vocalization. The mapping is modeled by Hidden Markov Regression, and vocal sounds are resynthesized using descriptor-driven  
 773 granular synthesis.  
 774  
 775

776 *Motion Capture.* Users are equipped with an Inertial Measurement Unit (IMU) strapped on the right wrist. The IMU  
 777 includes a 3D accelerometer and a 3-axis gyroscope (as IMU we used the Modular Musical Object (MO) described  
 778

779 <sup>8</sup>A video demonstrating the system for gesture-based control of vocalizations can be found online: <http://vimeo.com/julesfrancoise/mad>



781 in [72]). Data frames are streamed to the computer running the software using the Zigbee protocol at a fixed sampling  
782 rate of 100 Hz.  
783

784 *Motion Representation.* The motion is represented using a set of low-level features from the inertial data. We use a  
785 concatenation of the acceleration data, the gyroscopic data, and the first derivative of the acceleration data, for a total  
786 of 9 dimensions. The data is smoothed using a moving-average filter with a window size of 6 frames. To ensure a good  
787 signal-to-noise ratio, the derivative is computed on a low-pass filtered version of the acceleration. These parameters  
788 were fine-tuned empirically along an iterative design process.  
789

790  
791 *Audio Analysis.* Vocalizations are recorded at 44.1 kHz using a microphone. We use the PiPo library to extract 12  
792 Mel-Frequency Cepstral Coefficients (MFCCs), with a window size of 46.4 ms and a hop size of 11.6 ms. MFCCs are  
793 then resampled at 100 Hz to match the sampling rate of the motion data, and smoothed using a moving-average filter  
794 with a window size of 6 frames.  
795

796  
797 *Mapping.* Motion parameters, audio, and MFCCs are synchronously recorded using MuBu. we use the MuBu  
798 implementation XMM library to train a HMR model for each vocalization. The HMM can be parametrized manually.  
799 Based on informal iterative testing, we consider that using 20 states per gesture and a relative regularization of 0.2  
800 provide high quality feedback and allow for rapid training. To generate the sound feedback, the motion parameters are  
801 streamed to the trained HMR that predicts, for each input frame, the associated MFCC parameters.  
802

803  
804 *Sound Synthesis.* Vocalizations are resynthesized in real-time using descriptor-driven granular synthesis. Our synthe-  
805 sis method is similar to concatenative sound synthesis [78], with shorter sound segments. From a frame of MFCCs, we  
806 estimate the position within the original vocalization of the nearest sound segment — .i.e with the smallest distance  
807 between MFCCs. The estimated temporal position is then used to drive a granular synthesis engine with a grain duration  
808 of 100 ms, 90% overlap, and a 3ms random variation of the temporal position.  
809

## 810 6.2 Presentation as a Public Installation: The ‘Imitation Game’

811  
812 We created an imitation game that engages two players in imitating each other’s gestures to reproduce vocal imitations  
813 (shown at For SIGGRAPH’14 Emerging Technologies [35, 36]). The setup of the game is illustrated in Figure 3. The  
814 game started with a participant recording a vocal imitation along with a particular gesture. Once recorded, the systems  
815 learned the mapping between the gesture and the vocalization, allowing users to synthesize the vocal sounds from new  
816 movements. The second player then had to mimic the first player’s gesture as accurately as possible to resynthesize the  
817 vocalization accurately and win the game.  
818

819  
820 To support the creation of gestures and vocalizations, we created a set of 16 *action cards* that gave a pictorial  
821 representation of an action with its associated sound as a phonetic indication (see Figure 4). To prepare the game, each  
822 player recorded several vocal and gestural imitations. During the playing phase, participants were shown sequences  
823 of the action cards. Participants had to reproduce the gestures, remaining as accurate as possible while the pace was  
824 accelerating, allocating less time to imitate each gesture. Along the game, participants won points according to a measure  
825 of how accurately they were able to reproduce the gestures’ dynamics. This measure was based on the likelihood  
826 computed by the models for particular gestures, and allowed us to analyze the performance of the participants over  
827 time. Statistical analysis showed that participants with higher expertise (i.e. the demonstrators) had significantly higher  
828 likelihoods in average, and that the likelihood for all participants decreased as the game accelerated. This acceleration  
829 was leading participants to reproduce the gestures faster and with more energy, which eventually lead to decreased  
830  
831  
832



Fig. 3. The *imitation game*: the players use interactive audio feedback to improve their imitations of each other's gestures. A set of action cards support the creation of particular metaphors.

likelihood with respect to the original demonstration. Nonetheless, the gamification of the system increased participants' engagement with the installation.

Qualitative observations support the idea that interactive sound feedback helps reproducing gestures characteristics that are not easily apprehended using the visual modality only. Often, participants managed to reproduce the dynamics of the demonstrator's gesture by iteratively exploring the movement and its relationship to the sound feedback. We hypothesize that combining the auditory feedback with verbal guidance allowed to quickly converge to the correct motion dynamics. In many cases, we observed a quick adaptation of the participants along the trials.

### 6.3 Applications in Music and Dance

Composer Greg Beller used both our systems based on Hidden Markov Regression and Gaussian Mixture Regression in his contemporary performance project "Synekine" during his musical research residency at Ircam. In the Synekine project, "the performers develop a fusal language involving voice, hand gestures and physical movement. This language is augmented by an interactive environment made of sensors and other Human-Computer Interfaces." [4].

We also applied the system to movement quality sonification for dance pedagogy. In Laban Movement Analysis, vocalization is used to support the performance of particular Efforts relating to movement qualities. We conducted a study on the sonification of Laban Effort factors using the vocalization system [33]. We trained a system using expert performances of vocalized movement qualities, that we used in an exploratory workshop to support the pedagogy of Laban Effort Factors with dancers. Finally, we used the system as a tool for sketching interaction in sonic interaction design, in the framework of the SkAT-VG European project [73].



Fig. 4. Selection of 10 of the action cards designed for the imitation game. Each card depicts a metaphor involving both a gesture and a vocalization (cards designed and drawn by R. Borghesi).

## 7 EVALUATION

We focus on machine learning as a tool for user-centered design. Mapping through Interaction lets users define their own gestures and sounds, and it is often the same person that defines the training data to later perform the interactive system. As a result, we focus on evaluating the different models on user-defined gestures, where models are trained and evaluated on gestures from the same user.

In order to evaluate the proposed method of Hidden Markov Regression, we conducted a study using the interactive vocalization system (section 6.1). We captured a dataset of gestures co-produced with vocalizations, in order to assess the quality of the synthesized sound parameters from an input gesture with various models: Hidden Markov Regression (HMR), Gaussian Mixture Regression (GMR), and a set of standard regression methods. We selected a set of models readily available within the scikit-learn machine learning toolbox [70]: Support Vector Regression (SVR), Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP) and Gaussian Process Regression (GPR). A full description of each of these models is beyond the scope of the current paper, details and references can be found in the scikit-learn documentation.

### 7.1 Protocol

We designed 10 gestures and their associated vocalizations, based on the set of action cards created for the ‘imitation game’ introduced in the previous section. Participants were asked to record a set of executions of each gesture, alternating between (1) co-producing a gesture and a vocalization, and (2) executing the gesture with the interactive audio feedback.

937 7.1.1 *Participants.* We recruited 10 participants (6 women, 4 men), aged from 24 to 42 (mean=32.4, SD=6.3). Parti-  
938 cipients did not have previous expertise with the proposed system. The experiment was exclusively performed with the  
939 right hand, and 1 participant was left-handed.  
940

941 7.1.2 *Apparatus.* Participants were sitting on a chair in front of the computer running the software. They were  
942 equipped with a motion sensor and their vocalizations were recorded using a microphone adjusted to their position.  
943 The software ran on an Apple MacBook Pro with a 2.9 GHz Intel core i5 processor and 8GB memory. The software  
944 and interface were implemented using *Cycling'74 Max* and the *MuBu for max* library<sup>9</sup> for motion analysis and sound  
945 synthesis. We used the system previously described, with an Audio Technica ATM31a microphone. For the parts with  
946 audio feedback, the HMR was parametrized with 20 states and a relative regularization of 0.2, based on the configuration  
947 used for the public installation.  
948

949 Participants were presented with an interface composed of two panels. The top panel presented to the participant  
950 both the 'action card' — with a schematic description of the gesture and a text description of the vocalization, — and  
951 a video of one of the experimenters showing the gesture and vocalization to reproduce.<sup>10</sup> The bottom panel allowed  
952 participants to start and stop the recordings, and informed them whether to perform both the gesture and vocalization,  
953 or only the gesture with the interactive audio feedback.  
954  
955  
956

957 7.1.3 *Procedure.* Participants were asked to record a total of 15 executions of the 10 gestures, raising a total of 150  
958 recordings per participant. Gestures were designed from the action cards created for the imitation game, as depicted in  
959 Figure 4. Actions cards were presented sequentially, and their order was randomized for each participant, in order to  
960 avoid any order effect. The procedure for each gesture, depicted in Figure 5, was as follows:  
961

- 962 (1) Observe the action card and the associated video example. There was no limitation on the number of viewings,  
963 and participants were invited to imitate the gesture and vocalizations displayed in the video
- 964 (2) Perform 5 iterations of 3 recordings:  
965 **Demo** Record a gesture co-produced with a vocalization  
966 **Exec** Record two executions of the gesture only, with the interactive audio feedback trained on the previous  
967 gesture-voice recording.  
968  
969

970 Participants were instructed to remain as consistent as possible between recordings, and that the quality of the audio  
971 feedback depended on the consistency of their gesture execution with regards to the demonstration.  
972

973 7.1.4 *Data Collection.* The resulting dataset contains 500 demonstrations (coproduced gestures and vocalizations),  
974 and 1000 gestures performed with the interactive audio feedback, from a total of 10 participants. Each execution contains  
975 synchronized recordings of:  
976  
977

- 978 • The motion features and raw IMU data
- 979 • The audio, either from the microphone during vocalization, or from the sound synthesis during executions with  
980 feedback.
- 981 • The audio description as MFCCs, either computed from the microphone during vocalization, or predicted by the  
982 HMR model during executions with feedback
- 983 • A video of the participant from the laptop's built-in camera, for control.  
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986 <sup>9</sup> <http://forumnet.ircam.fr/product/mubu/>

987 <sup>10</sup>The example videos are available online as supplementary material: <https://www.julesfrancoise.com/tiis-supplementary/>

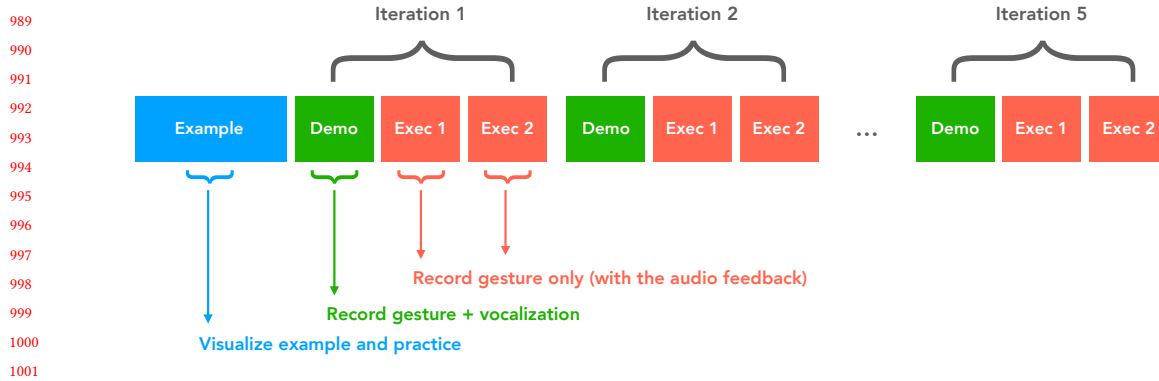


Fig. 5. Overview of the procedure for each gesture. Participants start by observing the action card and the example video recording. When ready, they proceed to 5 iterations of recordings, each composed of one demonstration (gesture and vocalization are co-produced) and two executions (only the gesture is performed) with the audio feedback.

## 7.2 Evaluation of the Regression Error

Mapping through Interaction aims to enable users to prototype through rapid iterations. It requires that regression models learn efficiently from few examples, and that the output parameters are generated in real-time. Our evaluation focuses on one-shot learning (from a single demonstration) of user-defined gestures and vocalizations. Training and prediction are therefore performed on data from the same participant. We evaluate the error between the sequence of MFCCs predicted causally by a model from a user’s gesture and the true vocalization of the user. We compare Hidden Markov Regression (HMR), Gaussian Mixture Regression (GMR), Support Vector Regression (SVR), Gaussian Process Regression (GPR) and the Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP). We used the XMM implementation of HMR and GMR, and the python Scikit-Learn<sup>11</sup> library for SVR, GPR and MLP.

We report the results of two evaluation of the regression error. The first evaluation focuses on pure regression where the same gesture is used for training and testing. The second evaluation considers a multi-class problem involving joint recognition and regression, where models are trained using 10 demonstrations associated with different action cards.

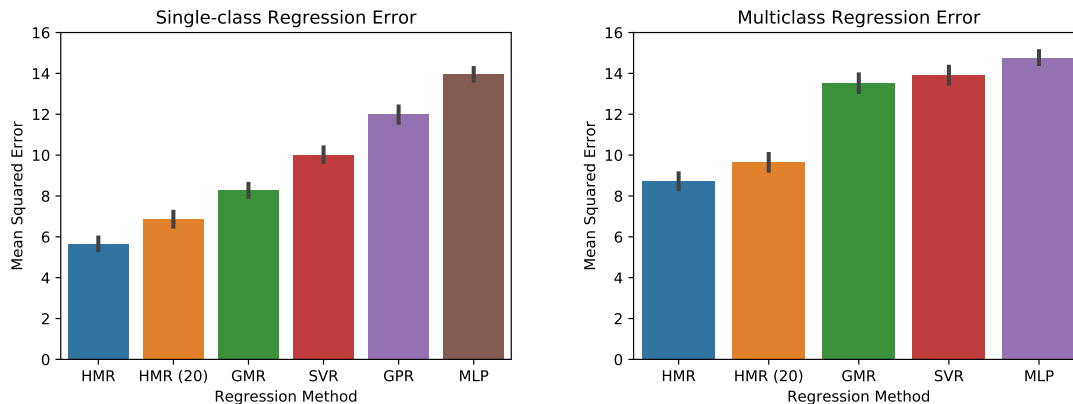
**7.2.1 Single-class Regression.** We measure the regression error of each model according to the following procedure. For each gesture, each participant, a model is trained on one demonstration. For all other demonstrations of the same gesture by the same participant, we use the trained model to predict the sequence of MFCC of the associated vocalization. The regression error is measured as the mean squared error between the predicted MFCC and the MFCC of the true vocalization.

We optimized the parameters of each model by grid search on a subset of the dataset composed of the gestures of 2 participants. HMR was configured with  $N = 50$  hidden states and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 2$ . GMR was configured with  $N = 20$  Gaussians components and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.2$ . SVR used a Radial Basis Function (RBF) kernel of coefficient  $\gamma = 1.0$ , with a penalty of the error term  $C = 1$ . GPR was optimized by stochastic gradient descent, used a Radial Basis Function (RBF) kernel, and a regularization  $\alpha = 1e^3$ . MLP was configured with a single layer of 1000 hidden units with logistic activation, regularization (L2-penalty)  $\alpha = 0.1$ . We additionally report the results of Hidden Markov Regression with  $N = 20$  hidden states and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.2$ , that was used

<sup>11</sup><http://scikit-learn.org/>

to provide feedback to the participants during the study. We used the demonstrations from the 8 remaining participants for testing.

Figure 6a reports the mean squared regression error for a single-class problem for all models. In order to test for statistical significance of the observed differences in mean, we computed an ANOVA with post-hoc Tukey paired tests, after checking for normality and homogeneity of variances. With one-way repeated-measures ANOVA, we found a significant effect of the model on the regression error ( $F(5, 9714) = 231, p < 0.001, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.12$ ). A Tukey’s pairwise comparison revealed the significant differences between all models ( $p < 0.01$ ). The results indicate that HMR performs significantly better than all other regression methods with parameters set to optimal values. The regression error for GMR is also significantly lower than for other methods, which shows that our implementation can efficiently learn from few examples on a dataset of user-defined gestures and vocalizations. While our parameter choice for the user study (20 states,  $\sigma = 0.2$ ) is not optimal, it still outperforms other models. It also reduces the training time, which is essential for rapid prototyping. The performance of the algorithm was consistent across the various action cards, which confirms the performance of the method for a number of different gestures.



(a) Mean squared regression error for a single-class setting (same action card used for training and testing) using various regression methods. Results present the mean and 95% confidence interval for each method. Models used the following configuration: ‘HMR’: Hidden Markov Regression ( $N = 50, \sigma^{rel} = 0.7$ ), ‘HMR (20)’: Hidden Markov Regression ( $N = 20, \sigma^{rel} = 0.2$ ), ‘GMR’: Gaussian Mixture Regression ( $N = 20, \sigma^{rel} = 0.05$ ), ‘SVR’: Support Vector Regression (RBF Kernel,  $C = 1, \alpha = 1$ ), ‘GPR’: Gaussian Process Regression (RBF Kernel,  $\alpha = 1e3$ ), ‘MLP’: Multi-Layer Perceptron (Logistic activation,  $N = 1000, \alpha = 0.1$ )

(b) Mean squared regression error for a multi-class setting (10 action cards used for training) using various regression methods. Results present the mean and 95% confidence interval for each method. Models used the following configuration: ‘HMR’: Hidden Markov Regression ( $N = 50, \sigma^{rel} = 0.7$ ), ‘HMR (20)’: Hidden Markov Regression ( $N = 20, \sigma^{rel} = 0.2$ ), ‘GMR’: Gaussian Mixture Regression ( $N = 20, \sigma^{rel} = 0.05$ ), ‘SVR’: Support Vector Regression (RBF Kernel,  $C=1, \alpha = 1$ ), ‘MLP’: Multi-Layer Perceptron (Logistic activation,  $N = 1000, \alpha = 0.1$ )

Fig. 6. Regression error in single-class and multi-class settings.

**7.2.2 Multi-class Joint Recognition and Regression.** We now consider a regression problem with multiple classes of gestures. Each class is represented by an action card. Our goal is to let users define continuous mappings for each action card, and to jointly perform the recognition of the card and the generation of sound parameters. For each gesture, each participant, a model is trained on one demonstration of each of the 10 action cards, annotated with its label. For all

1093 other demonstrations of the same gesture by the same participant, we use the trained model to predict the sequence of  
 1094 MFCC of the associated vocalization. The regression error is measured as the mean squared error between the predicted  
 1095 MFCC and the MFCC of the true vocalization.  
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1097 As before, we optimized the parameters of each model by grid search on a subset of the dataset composed of the  
 1098 demonstrations of 2 participants. For HMR and GMR, we trained 10 models for each of the labels. For prediction,  
 1099 we evaluate at each frame the likeliest model, which is used to predict the associated MFCCs. SVR and MLP do not  
 1100 intrinsically allow for the definition of classes and were trained on all frames of the 10 gestures without any label. HMR  
 1101 was configured with 50 hidden states and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.7$ . GMR was configured with 30 Gaussians  
 1102 components and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.05$ . SVR used a Radial Basis Function (RBF) kernel of coefficient  
 1103  $\gamma = 1.0$ , with a penalty of the error term  $C = 1$ . GPR was optimized by stochastic gradient descent, used a Radial Basis  
 1104 Function (RBF) kernel, and a regularization  $\alpha = 1e^3$ . MLP was configured with a single layer of 1000 hidden units with  
 1105 logistic activation, regularization (L2-penalty)  $\alpha = 0.1$ . We additionally report the results of Hidden Markov Regression  
 1106 with 20 hidden states and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.2$ , that was used to provide feedback to the participants  
 1107 during the study. We used the demonstrations from the 8 remaining participants for testing.  
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1110 Figure 6b reports the mean squared regression error for a multi-class joint regression problem for all models. With  
 1111 one-way repeated-measures ANOVA, we found a significant effect of the model on the regression error ( $F(5, 9714) = 231$ ,  
 1112  $p < 0.001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = 0.12$ ). A Tukey's pairwise comparison revealed the significant differences between all models  
 1113 ( $p < 0.01$ ). The results indicate a similar trend in the performance of the various models. It is interesting to notice  
 1114 that the performance gain of HMR compared to other methods is larger than in the case of single-class regression. In  
 1115 particular, HMR performed significantly better than GMR, which shows that the temporal model introduced by the  
 1116 Markov process is critical for real-time recognition and mapping on a large set of gestures. In future work, we will  
 1117 compare the proposed approach with recurrent neural networks, that can integrate temporal dependencies at various  
 1118 time scales. Since there exist many forms and possible implementations of recurrent neural networks, an exhaustive  
 1119 evaluation is beyond the scope of this paper, and we focused on models with standard implementations.  
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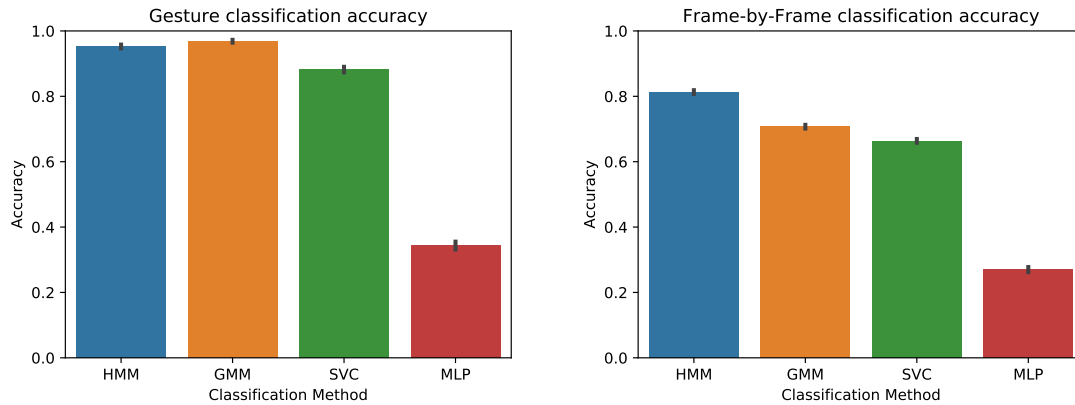
### 1123 7.3 Real-time Gesture Recognition

1124 We also evaluated the ability of each model to recognize in real-time the various gestures labeled by action card. We  
 1125 measure the classification accuracy of user-defined gestures for each model according to the following procedure.  
 1126 For each participant, a model is trained from a single demonstration of each of the gestures. We then use the trained  
 1127 model to recognize the label of the action card of all other gesture recordings. We report to measures of accuracy: the  
 1128 classification of the entire gesture (one label per gesture), and the frame-by-frame classification (accuracy averaged  
 1129 on all frames of a gesture). Our method focuses on continuous recognition, where the likelihood of various classes  
 1130 is re-estimated at each new frame. This process is appropriate for real-time control of audio processing recognition:  
 1131 it enables to avoid any segmentation before the classification process, which might lead to inconsistent results with  
 1132 errors in the segmentation. For this reason, we report the frame-by-frame recognition rate that accounts for the model's  
 1133 ability to recognize the gestures in a continuous stream of movement data.  
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1137 Analogously to the previous section, we compare the following models: Hidden Markov Models (HMM), Gaussian  
 1138 Mixture Models (GMM), Support Vector Machines Classification (SVC) and the Multi-Layer Perceptron (MLP). We  
 1139 optimized the parameters of each model by grid search on a subset of the dataset composed of the gestures of 2  
 1140 participants. HMMs were configured with  $N = 10$  hidden states per class and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.1$ .  
 1141 GMMs were configured with  $N = 10$  Gaussians components per class and a relative regularization  $\sigma^{rel} = 0.1$ . SVC used  
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a Radial Basis Function (RBF) kernel of coefficient  $\gamma = 1$ , with a penalty of the error term  $C = 1$ . MLP was configured with a single layer of  $N = 500$  hidden units with logistic activation, regularization (L2-penalty)  $\alpha = 0.1$ . We used the demonstrations from the 8 remaining participants for testing.

Figure 7a reports the accuracy of each model for the classification of entire gestures. With one-way repeated-measures ANOVA, we found a significant effect of the model on the classification accuracy ( $F(3, 22396) = 4913, p < 0.001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = 0.39$ ). A Tukey's pairwise comparison revealed the significant differences between all models ( $p < 0.01$ ), except between HMMs and GMMs which show the highest average accuracy of 0.95 and 0.96 respectively.



(a) Classification of complete gestures (one label per gesture) (b) Frame-by-frame classification accuracy (one label per frame)

Fig. 7. Classification accuracy for personal gestures for various classifiers. 'hmm': Hidden Markov Regression ( $N = 10, \sigma = 0.1$ ), 'gmm': Gaussian Mixture Regression ( $N = 10, \sigma = 0.1$ ), 'svc': Support Vector Classification (RBF Kernel,  $C = 1, \alpha = 1$ ), 'mlp': Multi-Layer Perceptron (Logistic activation,  $N = 500, \alpha = 0.1$ )

Figure 7b presents the accuracy of each model for frame-by-frame recognition. This corresponds to a desired use-case in music interaction, where the goal is to continuously recognize the likeliest class at each frame, to allow for low-latency sound control. For each gesture, we evaluate the accuracy as the average accuracy of the recognition at each frame. In other words, this measure represent the proportion of frames accurately classified over the entire gesture. With one-way repeated-measures ANOVA, we found a significant effect of the model on the classification accuracy ( $F(3, 22396) = 5072, p < 0.001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = 0.40$ ). A Tukey's pairwise comparison revealed significant differences between all models ( $p < 0.01$ ). HMMs have the highest accuracy, with an average of 80% of frames accurately recognized in each test gesture. Once again, the temporal model introduced by the Markov process is beneficial to the continuous recognition of user-defined gestures.

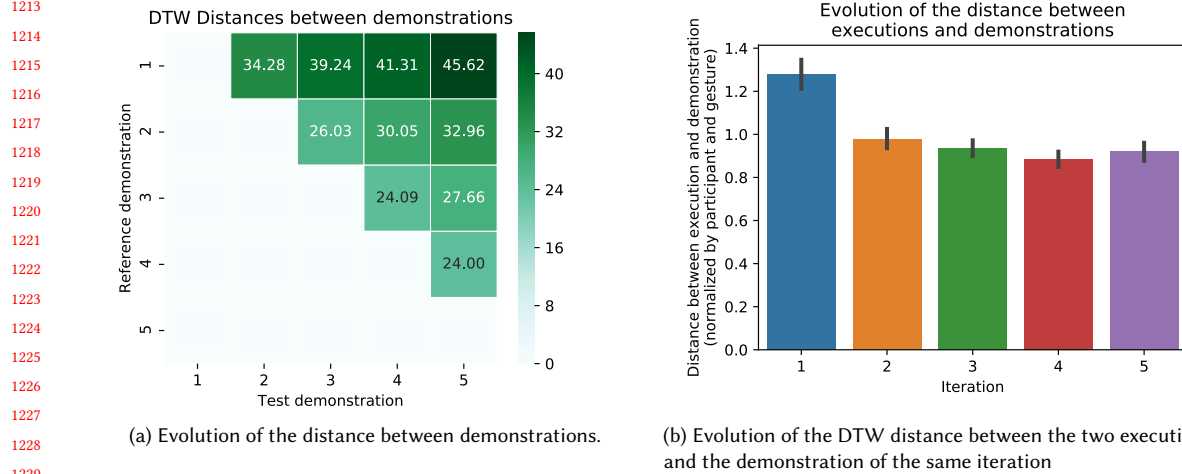
#### 7.4 Evolution of Gesture Execution over Time

We now investigate participants' execution of the demonstrations and the gestures performed with audio feedback. Our goal is to evaluate whether participant's iteratively refined their demonstrations over the 5 iterations of demonstration for each gesture. We also assess the evolution over time of the consistency in their execution of gestures, where consistency is measured in terms of distance between gestures. We computed distances between recordings to assess the similarity between two executions of the same gesture. We define the distance between executions as the Dynamic



1197 Time Warping (DTW) [53] distance between two sequences of motion features. DTW realigns the sequences and allows  
 1198 to alleviate the variations in timing for the different recordings. DTW is therefore advantageous to limit the influence of  
 1199 irrelevant errors introduced by the gesture segmentation — for instance, the duration between the start of the recording  
 1200 and the actual start of the participant’s gesture can vary across recordings). We consider that the DTW distance relates  
 1201 to the consistency of movement execution: two  
 1202  
 1203

1204 **7.4.1 Evolution of the Demonstrations across Iterations.** We computed the set of distances between the 5 demonstra-  
 1205 tions that users recorded for each action card. For each participant, each action card, we computed the DTW distance  
 1206 between the motion feature sequence of the demonstration of two iterations. Figure 8a reports the average distances  
 1207 between the first and last demonstration, and all other demonstrations. In the following, we denote the distance between  
 1208 demonstrations  $i$  and  $j$  as  $D_{ij}$ .  
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Fig. 8. Evolution of the distances between different recordings of the same gestures. Distances are computed as the DTW between two sequences of motion features from two executions of a gesture.

We observe that the distance to the first demonstration gradually increases at each iteration. With one-way repeated-measures ANOVA, we found a significant effect of the iteration on the distance to the first demonstration, although with a small effect size ( $F(3, 396) = 3.8, p < 0.05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = 0.03$ ). A Tukey’s pairwise comparison revealed a significant difference between D12 and D15 ( $p < 0.01$ ). This means that although participants were instructed to remain consistent across iteration, the variations in the gesture execution are not random but highlight an evolution of the gesture over time. Similarly, the distance to the 5th demonstration diminishes along iterations.

The most significant result relates to the comparison of the distances to the first and last demonstration:  $D_{1x}$  and  $D_{5x}$ . With a paired t-test, we found no significant difference between D12 and D52, meaning that the second demonstration is as similar to the first than the last demonstration. With paired t-tests, we found significant differences between D13 and D53, and between D14 and D54 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This means that participants’ gestures rapidly diverge from the first recording, and get increasingly stable over time.

1249       7.4.2 *Evolution of the Consistency between Demonstration and Executions across Iterations.* We now investigate  
1250 participants consistency over time, i.e. their ability to execute the gesture with the auditory feedback consistently with  
1251 their demonstration. For each of the 5 iterations, we computed the distances between the executions performed with  
1252 sound feedback, and the associated demonstration gesture. Because participants execute each gesture in a different way  
1253 and because their baseline consistency varies, we normalized the distances by dividing each distance by the average  
1254 distance for the same participant, same gesture.  
1255

1256       Figure 8b reports the evolution over time of the normalized distance between the executions performed with sound  
1257 feedback and their associated demonstration. A Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a significant effect of the iteration on the  
1258 distance ( $F(4) = 122.0, p < 0.001$ ). A post-hoc test using Mann-Whitney U tests with Bonferroni correction showed  
1259 the significant differences of consistency between Demonstrations 1 and all other Demonstrations ( $p < 0.001, r > 0.5$ )  
1260 and between Demonstration 2 and Demonstration 4 ( $p < 0.01, r = 0.2$ ). While participants show a large variability in  
1261 their execution on the first iteration of the process, results show that participants are rapidly improving the way they  
1262 execute the gesture. The consistency keeps improving after the second iteration, though to a smaller extent. Note that  
1263 the same distances have been computed on the MFCCs representing the vocalization, with analogous results.  
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## 1267 8 DISCUSSION

1268 Mapping through Interaction requires that all training examples are provided by the user, to allow for rapid person-  
1269 alization of the relationships between motion and sound. In this section, we discuss some of the critical aspects of  
1270 the method regarding the challenges of generalization from few examples, user expertise, and the importance of the  
1271 iterative design process.  
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### 1275 8.1 Generalizing from Few Examples

1276 Our study highlighted that the proposed methods of HMR and GMR outperform standard regression techniques  
1277 on a dataset of user-defined gestures and vocalizations. It is interesting to notice that the optimal parameters for  
1278 real-time joint recognition and generation involve large values of regularization. This shows that regularization is  
1279 essential for one-shot learning, because it allows to better take into account the variations in a new execution of the  
1280 gesture. Furthermore, we found that HMR outperformed all other techniques on this task and dataset, with an optimal  
1281 configuration involving 50 hidden states. Using such a large number of states can result in overfitting. However, for  
1282 user-specific gestures this large number of states increases the resolution of the time structure of the gesture, that helps  
1283 improving the quality of the synthesis of sound parameter trajectories.  
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1285 Our dataset was built to evaluate the prediction error for user-specific gesture control of sound feedback. Results  
1286 show that the proposed method enables to learn individual differences in the execution of gestures and vocalizations,  
1287 that greatly vary across action cards and participants. Further evaluating the extrapolation and interpolation between  
1288 gestures would require the creation of a dataset of gestures and sounds with well-defined variations.  
1289

1290 In our experience, HMR is advantageous for gestures that have a well-defined temporal evolution. In this case,  
1291 HMR can extrapolate from a set of demonstrations with variations of the motion-sound relationship, as long as these  
1292 variations follow a similar time structure. For continuous mappings that have a one-to-one correspondence between  
1293 the motion and sound parameter spaces, GMR can extrapolate more consistently than HMR, and can be advantageous  
1294 for multidimensional control of parametric synthesis.  
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## 8.2 Dealing with User Expertise

Users' ability to provide high quality demonstration is another essential condition for efficient learning from few example, and has been discussed in related areas such as robot programming-by-demonstration [3]. Through our user study, we found out that the regression error is significantly higher when the model is trained on the first demonstration rather than on a subsequent demonstration. Participants were able to rapidly adapt their gestures to make a more efficient demonstration, that would allow for more accurate resynthesis of the vocalization-based feedback. This observation highlights that human learning is necessary to efficient and expressive design with machine learning. Users can acquire expertise in the sensori-motor execution of particular gestures for a given task, but they can also learn at a longer time scale how to use machine learning as a tool for designing gestures.

Adjusting model parameters also requires expertise. When presenting systems as interactive installations, the training process was hidden from end users for simplicity. However, as designers, we carefully adjusted the parameters of the models so that the variability of novice demonstrators' gestures would not limit the quality of the sound feedback. For example, the vocalization system used HMR with 20 states and a relatively large regularization which, combined, ensure that the temporal structure of the sound will remain consistent even when the input is noisy. A large regularization means that the prediction will rely more heavily on the time structure and will tolerate larger variations of the input gesture. On the contrary, when designing for expert musical gestures, using lower variance and more states can allow for more fine-grained control. Understanding the role of the model parameters is essential to gain expertise in interaction design with machine learning. To support novice users in this process, we started investigating how visualizations can support the choice of parameters [31]. We proposed to dynamically visualize how changes of the training data and parameters affect the model itself. In future work, we will investigate if and how such visualizations can help designers build a better understanding of the model's underlying mechanisms.

## 8.3 Designing through User Experience: An Iterative Process

We presented an audio application that involves novice users in designing their own gestures for sound control. Our vocalization system was presented as a public installation, and tested by several hundred participants. Our observations of the participants' engagement underline a large diversity of personal strategies for creating gestures and the associated sound. By letting people design by demonstration, our approach allows for experience-driven design of movement interactions. Users can rely on their existing sensori-motor knowledge and past experiences to create personal metaphors of interaction.

As highlighted in the user study, this process is highly dynamic and iterative. Users gradually refine their demonstrations according to the feedback received with direct interaction. Our framework evolved from the initial notion of Mapping-by-Demonstration, that did not describe fully the processes at play when designing with motion-sound mapping with interactive machine learning. Indeed, a focus on demonstrations themselves assumes that the human operators is able to provide high-quality examples that represent a source of 'truth'. Designing efficient gesture sets is a difficult task that requires users to iterate in demonstrating examples and interacting with the trained mapping, thus our focus on the *interactive* experience as the central piece of the design process itself.

## 9 CONCLUSION

We described an approach to user-centered design of auditory feedback using machine learning. *Mapping through Interaction* relies on an iterative design process in which users can rapidly iterate over (1) recording demonstrations of their

1353 personal associations between gestures and sounds and (2) evaluating the mapping learned from these demonstration  
1354 by directly interacting with the trained system. Our approach relies on probabilistic models of the mapping between  
1355 sequences of motion and sound parameters, that can be learned from a small set of user-defined examples. We proposed  
1356 to use Gaussian Mixture Regression and Hidden Markov Regression for real-time joint recognition and mapping.  
1357

1358 We presented a concrete application of this approach where users can create personalized auditory feedback by co-  
1359 producing gestures and vocalizations. An evaluation of the system on a dataset of user-defined gestures and vocalizations  
1360 showed that Hidden Markov Regression outperforms Gaussian Mixture regression as well as standard implementations  
1361 of other regression methods. Moreover, our results show that participants rapidly adapt the way they execute the  
1362 gesture and become increasingly consistent over time. This supports the idea that human learning is essential when  
1363 using machine learning as a tool for user-centered design: users need to learn how to execute gestures in order to  
1364 provide high quality demonstrations  
1365  
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