

CS 414 – Multimedia Systems Design  
Lecture 33 –  
Synchronization (Part 1)

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# Administrative

- MP3 is ongoing
- 'mi-clicker' experiment is ongoing



# Outline

- Synchronization Concept
- Synchronization Classification
- Logical Data Units
- Live vs Synthetic Synchronization
- Synchronization Requirements

# Notion of Synchronization

- Sync in correspondence to
  - Content relation
  - Spatial relation
  - Temporal relation
- **Content Relation**
  - Define dependency of media objects for some data
  - Example: dependency between spreadsheet and graphics that represent data listed in spreadsheet

# Spatial Relation

## ■ Layout relation

- Defines space used for presentation of media object on output device at certain point of multimedia presentation
- Example: desktop publishing

## ■ Layout frames

- Placed on output device and content assigned to frame
- Positioning of layout frames:
  - Fixed to position of document
  - Fixed to position on page
  - Relative to position of other frame
- Example: in window-based system, layout frames correspond to windows and video can be positioned in window

# Temporal Relation (Our focus!!!)

- Defines **temporal dependencies** between media objects
- Example: lip synchronization
- **Time-dependent object**
  - Media stream since there exist temporal relations between consecutive units of the stream
- **Time-independent object**
  - Traditional medium such as text or images
- **Temporal synchronization**
  - Relation between time-dependent and time-independent objects
  - Example: audio/video sync with slide show

# Temporal Relations

- Synchronization considered at several levels of Multimedia Systems

- **Level 1: OS and lower level communication layers**

- CPU scheduling, semaphores during IPC, traffic shaping network scheduling
- Objective: avoid jitter at presentation time of one stream

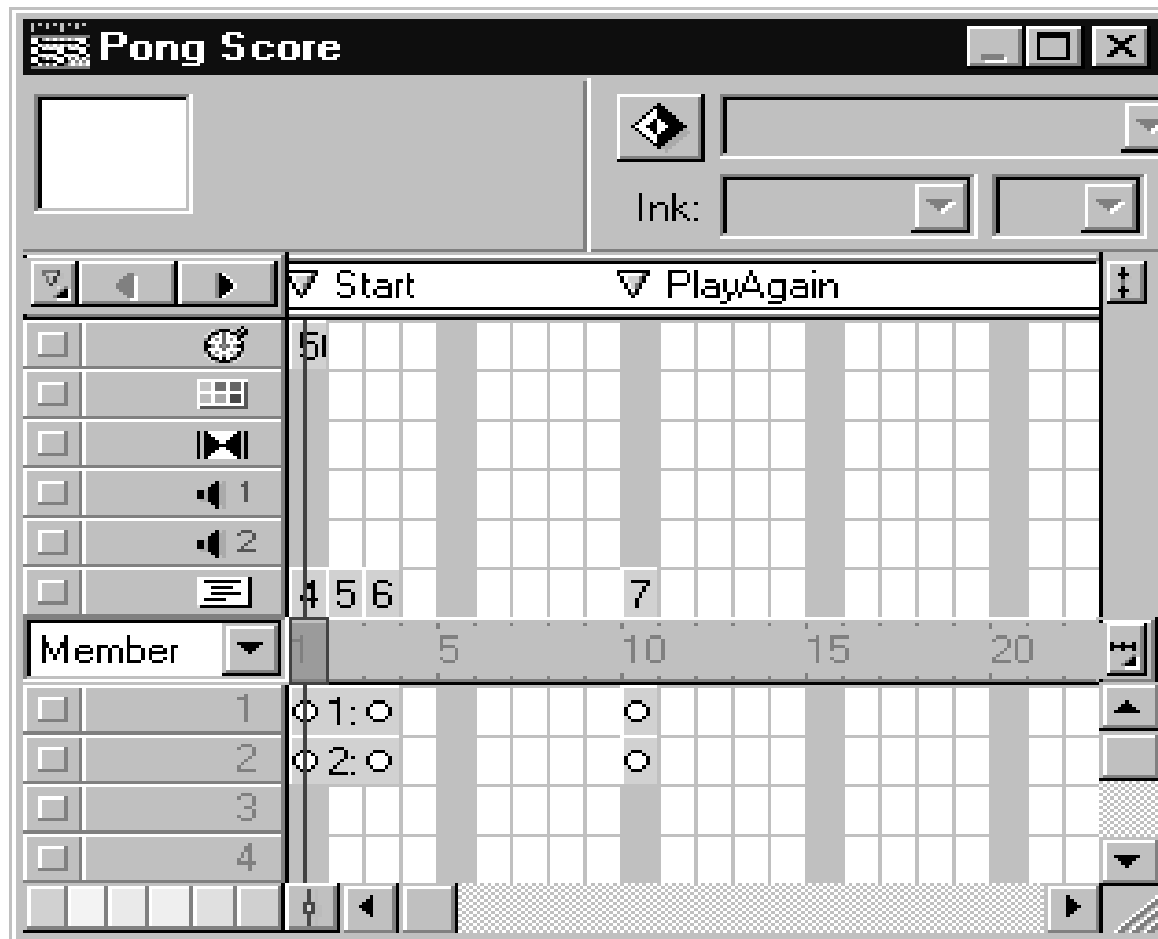
- **Level 2: Middleware/Session layer (Run-time)**

- Synchronization of multimedia streams (schedulers)
- Objective: bounded skews between various streams

- **Level 3: Application layer (Run-time)**

- Support for synchronization between time-dependent and time-independent media together with handling of user interaction
- Objective: bounded skews between time-dependent and time-independent media

# Synchronization Tools



# Synchronization Specification

## ■ Implicit

- Temporal relation specified implicitly during capturing of media objects
- Goal: use this temporal relation to present media in the same way as they were originally captured
- Example: Audio and Video recording and playback

## ■ Explicit

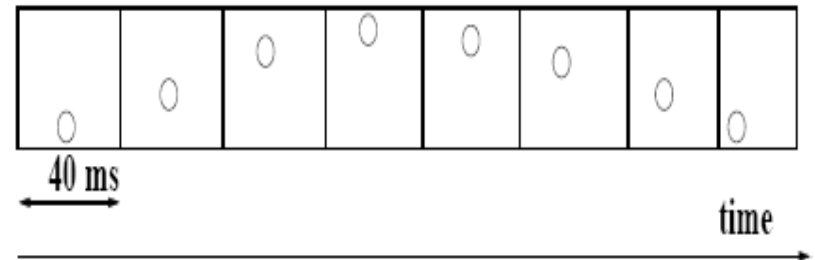
- Temporal relation specified explicitly to define dependency in case media objects were created independently
- Example: creation of slide show
  - Presentation designer
    - selects slides,
    - creates audio objects,
    - defines units of audio presentation stream,
    - defines units of audio presentation stream where slides have to be presented



# Synchronization Classification

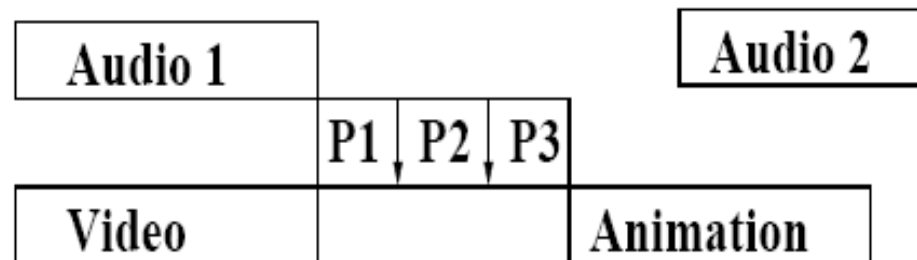
## Intra-object Synchronization

- Time relation between various presentation units of one time-dependent media stream



## Inter-object Synchronization

- Time relation between media objects belonging to two time-dependent media streams



# Synchronization Classification

## ■ Live Synchronization

- Goal: exactly reproduce at presentation temporal relations as they existed during capturing process
- Requirement: must capture temporal relation information during media capturing
- Example: video conference, phone service
- Example: recording and retrieval services – presentations with delay

# Synchronization Classification

## ■ Synthetic Synchronization

- Goal: arrange stored data objects to provide new combined multimedia objects via artificial temporal relations
- Requirements: support flexible synchronization relations between media
- Example: authoring, tutoring systems

## ■ Two phases:

- **Specification phase** – define temporal relations
- **Presentation phase** – present data in sync mode

## ■ Example:

- 4 audio messages recorded related to parts of engine in animation. Animation sequence shows a slow 360 degree rotation of engine

# Synchronization Requirements during media presentations

- For **intra-object synchronization**
  - Need accuracy concerning jitter and EED delays in presentation of LDUs
- For **inter-object synchronization**
  - Need accuracy in parallel presentation of media objects
- Implication of **blocking**:
  - O.K. for time-independent media
  - Problem for time-dependent media – **gap problem**

# Gap Problem in Synchronization

- What does blocking of stream mean for output device?
  - Should we repeat previous music, speech, picture?
  - How long should such gap exist?
- **Solution 1: restricted blocking method**
  - Switch output device to last picture as still picture
  - Switch output device to alternative presentation if gap between late video and audio exceeds predefined threshold
- **Solution 2: resample stream**
  - Speed up or slow down streams
  - **Off-line re-sampling** – used after capturing of media streams with independent streams
    - Example: concert which is captured with two independent audio/video devices
  - **Online re-sampling** – used during presentation in case gap between media streams occurs

# Lip Synchronization



- Temporal relation between audio and video

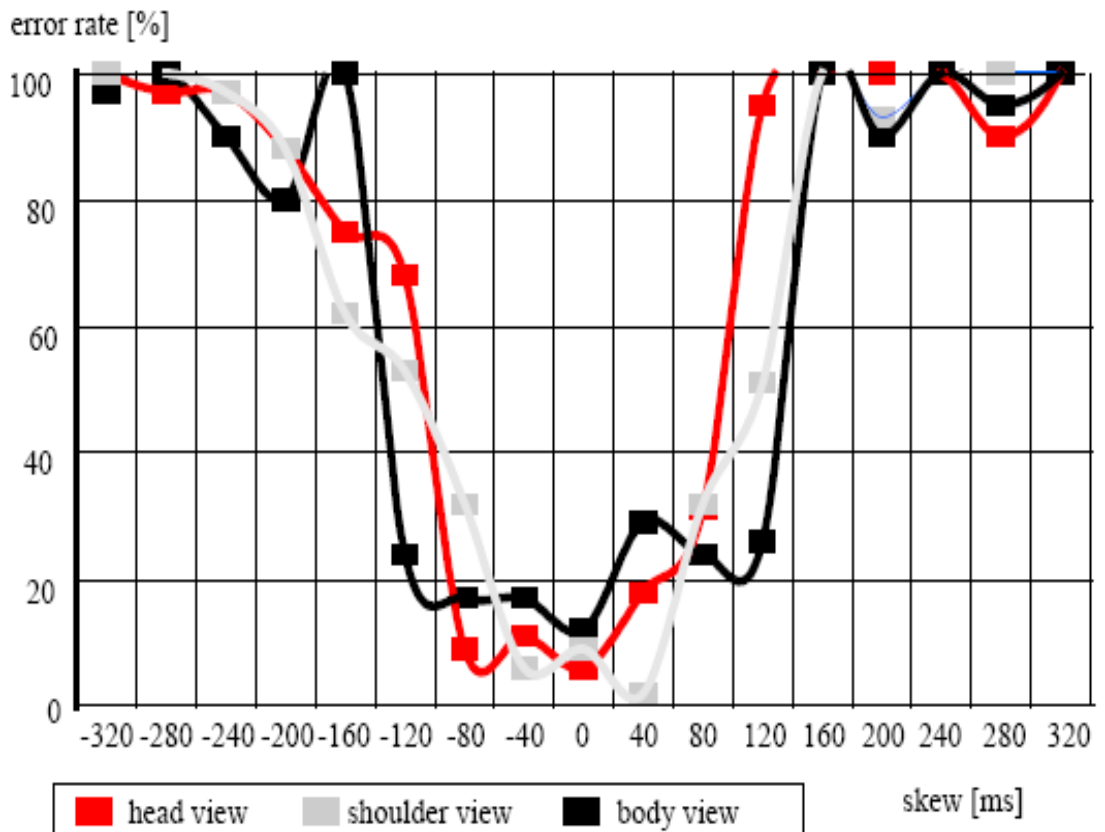
- **Synchronization skew**

- Time difference between related audio and video LDUs

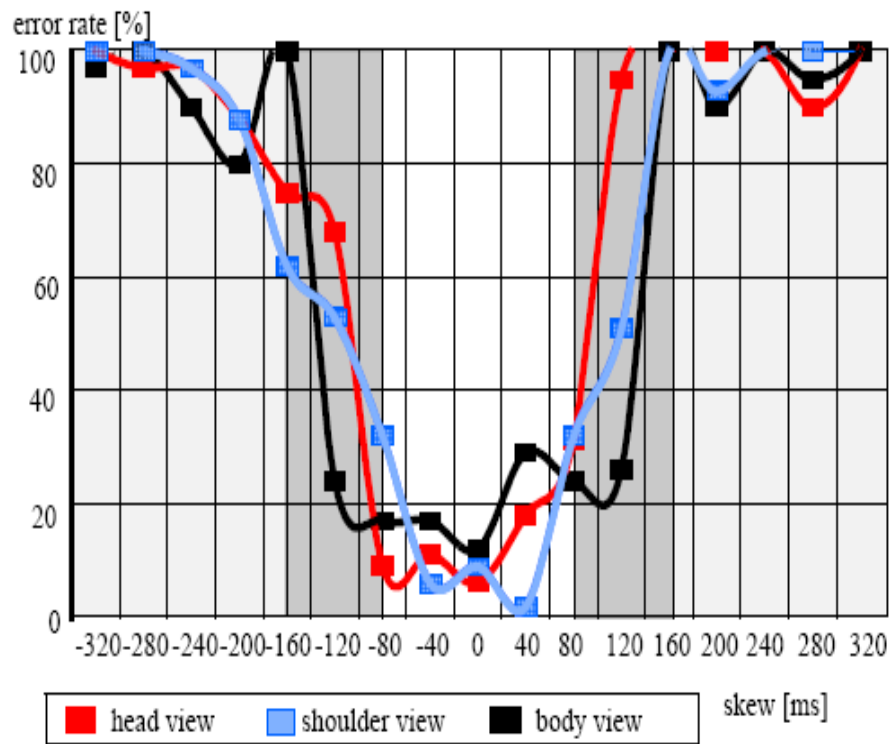
- **Streams in sync** iff skew = 0 or skew  $\leq$  bound

- **Negative skew**: video before audio

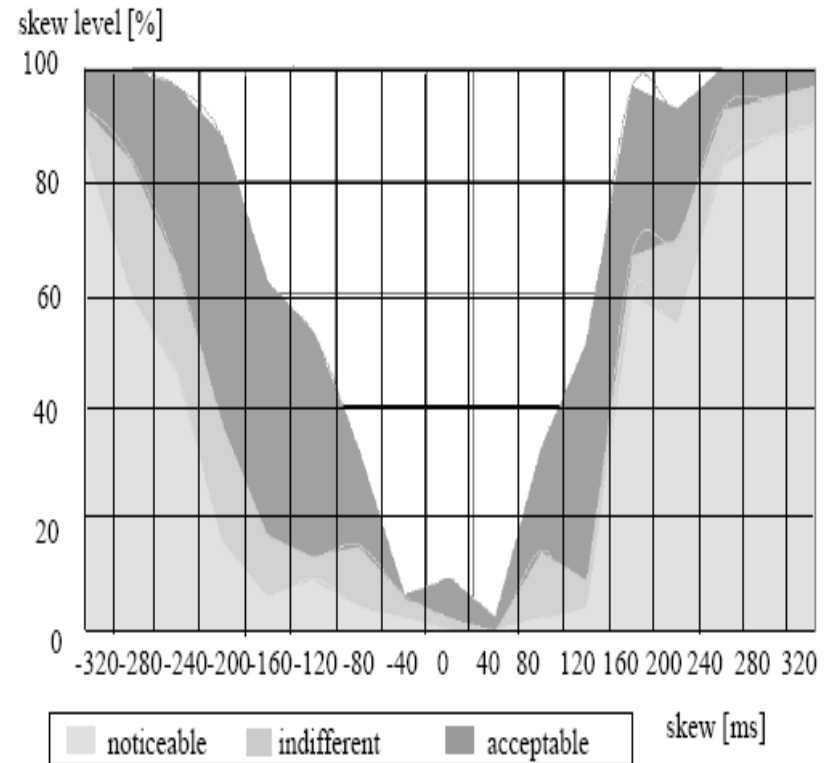
- **Positive skew**: Audio before video



# Lip Synchronization



Perception of Synchronization Errors

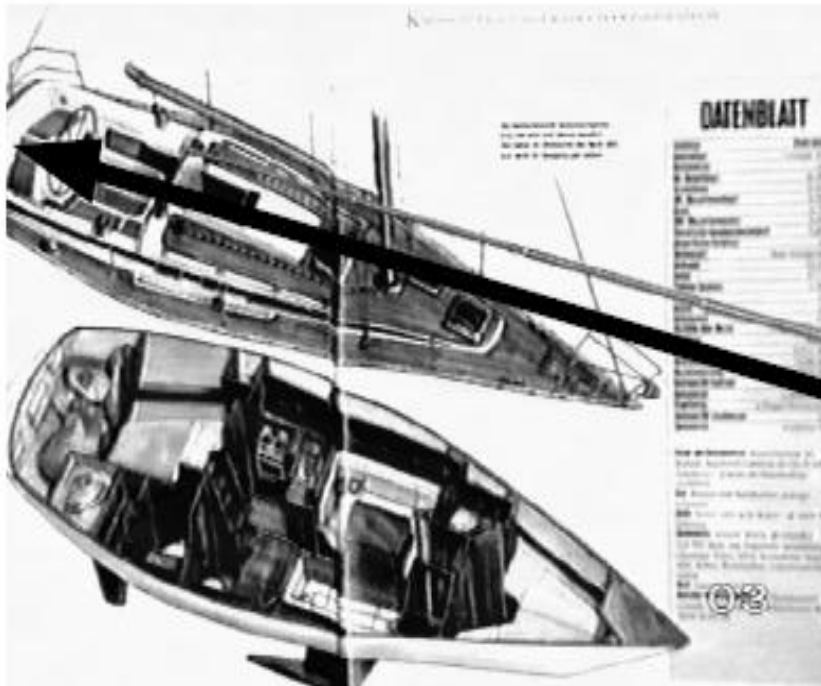


Skew Level found to be annoying

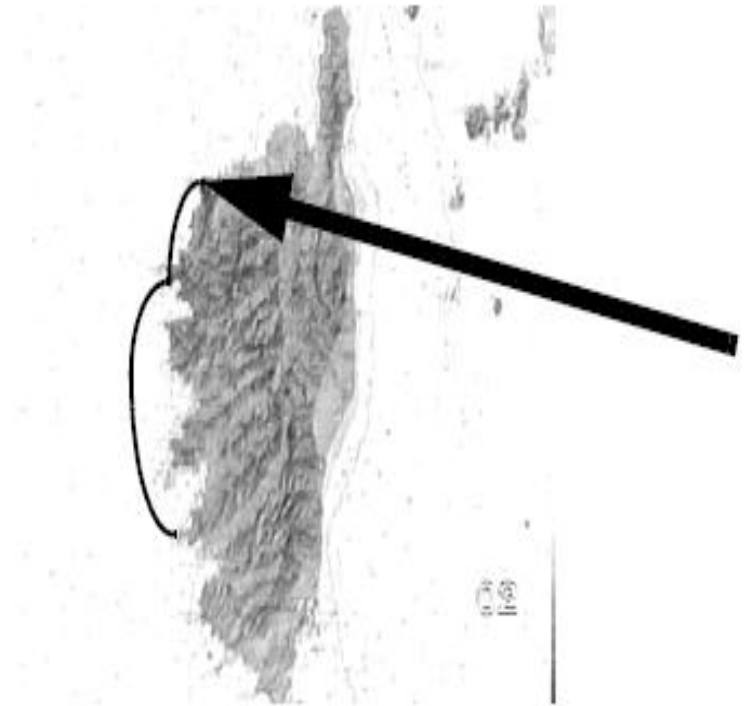
# Lip Synchronization Requirements

- In sync:
  - $-80\text{ms} \leq \text{skew} \leq 80\text{ms}$
- Out of sync:
  - Skew  $< -160\text{ms}$
  - Skew  $> 160\text{ms}$
- Transient:
  - $-160\text{ms} \leq \text{skew} < -80\text{ms}$
  - $80\text{ms} < \text{skew} \leq 160\text{ms}$

# Pointer Synchronization

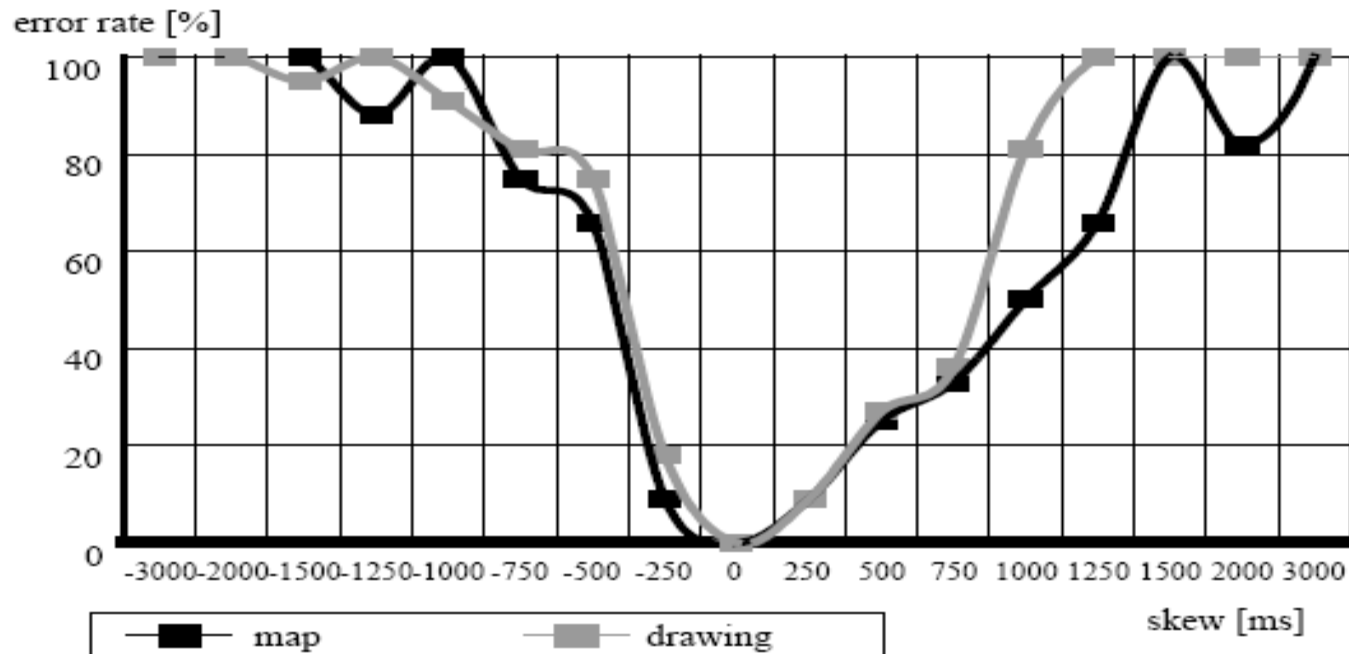


Pointer Sync based on technical drawing



Pointer Sync based on map

# Pointer Synchronization



Negative skew: pointer before audio

Positive skew: pointer after audio

# Pointer Synchronization Requirements

- In sync:
  - $-500\text{ms} \leq \text{skew} \leq 750\text{ms}$
- Out of sync:
  - $\text{Skew} < -1000\text{ms}$
  - $\text{Skew} > 1250\text{ms}$
- Transient sync situation:
  - $-1000\text{ms} \leq \text{skew} < -500\text{ms}$
  - $750\text{ms} < \text{skew} \leq 1250\text{ms}$

# Other Sync Requirements

## Jitter delay of digital audio

- Max. allowable jitter:
  - 5-10 ns (perception experiments)
  - 2 ms (other experiments)

## Combination of audio and animation

- Not stringent as lip sync
- Max allowable skew: +/- 80ms

## Stereo audio

- Tightly coupled
- Max allowable skew: 20 ms
- Due to listening errors, suggestion even +/- 11ms

## Loosely coupled audio channels (speaker and background music)

- Max allowable skew: 500ms

# Conclusion

- Carefully **analyze** what kind of **synchronization** is needed in your multimedia system and application
- Determine **at which level you need** synchronization
- Determine **what the synchronization requirements** should be based on prior experiments