



AI SPEAKS – HILI BANJO

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

Hili Banjo: I'm Hili Banjo, and I'm from Austin, Texas.

Have you ever lost your voice, and you're faking it, and you're kind of whispering at the top of your lungs? Because it's hard when you have something to say, and you just can't express yourself, or nobody understands you when you do.

Imagine if that was your life, without a voice. You're constantly trying to get things out, and people just aren't hearing you. That's what life is like for my sister, Leigh. She's severely autistic and nonverbal, which means she is not able to express with words what you and I can, her thoughts and desires.

The magic of today's post-digital world is that that doesn't have to happen, and it doesn't have to happen for people like her with autism, but it also doesn't have to happen for people with Alzheimer's who can't communicate, or Parkinson's, or other traumatic brain injuries that make it difficult to express what they're trying to say. And the things that have made that possible are our ability to capture massive amounts of data, and synthesize it, and feed it into systems that are dynamically self-evolving throughout the day, and then connecting that to the devices in our cars, in our homes, in our everyday lives.

This could happen today. At UNC, they're using AI to detect autism in children that are six months old. That's a year and a half before autism is typically diagnosed, which gives you an extra year and a half for interventions that will help those children lead more meaningful lives, which is awesome. But it's also awesome because now we can understand the faces of autistic children, and the expressions, and the behaviors, and compare those neurotypical people, and have a better understanding of how those are different.

And commercially, companies like Facebook, and Apple, and Google are investing in this as well. Let's use our voices to help Laura understand why her father, who has dementia, is agitated. Let's use them to help people with Parkinson's express themselves, and let's use them to help Leigh feel understood for the first time in her life.

Thank you.