New add-on voice: SPO vox

My first speech synth that got me hooked about them: the SPO256-AL2!

Back in the day, in the mid-’80s there was only one place to get electronics components: the Tandy Radio Shack store.



They would sell chips in individual packages accompanied by a printed datasheet (I still have mine).



They were selling the SPO256 Narrator which became quite popular and was used in many commercial speech synthesizers that were interfaced with microcomputers.

Soon I found a schematic to build a talking printer! It was entertaining to hear it speak for the first time!



Today I decided to create a new add-on board for Emy.

The chip has a great potential for making sounds: it sounds metallic, it can hold a phoneme until the next one and the pitch can be driven by an external oscillator.

(in fact, the most difficult part is finding these chips!)



After a few iterations on the breadboard and ad few revisions of the board itself, I came up with a design that add **2 new functions** to the chip:

- pitch control via the external oscillator

- volume control via a digital potentiometer driving an OP amplifier



