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Participant Information Sheet

[to appear on a Google Form at the beginning of the test]

You are being invited to participate in a research study titled “Subjective Evaluation of Synthetic Speech”. This study is being done by Minghui Zhao from the School of Computer Science at the University of Sheffield.

Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything you don't understand or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you want to take part.

1. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the quality of synthetic speech generated by advanced text-to-speech systems. We aim to gather ratings from participants through a listening test, in which you will assess various speech samples based on naturalness. The results of this study will help improve the development of more natural-sounding synthetic speech systems.

2. Why have I been chosen to take part?

We would like to invite you, as a native speaker of English who will not be biased by language proficiency, to assess the quality of speech samples. Your feedback is valuable for assessing whether our approach leads to improved speech quality.

3. Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary and will not create a legally binding agreement or any form of employment with the University of Sheffield. You may choose to withdraw at any point during the task, without providing any explanation or facing any consequences.

4. What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to complete a listening test. In this test, you will listen to one audio clip at a time and rate it on a scale from 1 to 5 based on how natural the speech sounds to you. To ensure the best audio quality for evaluation, we recommend **using headphones** while completing the test on a computer. The test will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. You will be compensated **\$2.80 USD** for your participation.

Participation is entirely voluntary, and you can stop at any time before submitting your responses by exiting the test page. Once your responses are submitted, they will be anonymised and cannot be withdrawn.

In order to receive compensation, you must (1) provide informed consent by completing the Google Form, and (2) enter your Amazon Mechanical Turk (AMT) Worker ID. This Worker ID will be used *only* to confirm your participation and issue payment. It will not be stored with your responses or used for any other purpose. Participants who do not provide full consent or fail to submit their AMT Worker ID in the Google Form will not be eligible for payment.

Please note that the Google Form will not collect your email address, IP address, or any other personally identifying information.

5. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?



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Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantage or discomfort. No potential physical or psychological harm or distress is expected.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Participants will be compensated for their time and effort in completing the listening test. Additionally, your participation will contribute to improving speech synthesis models, which could have practical applications in fields such as voice assistants, accessibility tools, and language technology.

7. Will my participation be kept confidential?

Yes, your participation will be kept confidential. The responses you provide will remain anonymous, and no personally identifiable information will be collected during the study. While your Amazon Mechanical Turk worker ID may be visible to the researcher for administrative purposes, such as ensuring payment, it will not be linked to your responses in the analysis or reporting of the results.

8. Data protection

No personal information, including IP addresses, will be collected as part of this study. All responses collected will be anonymised and used solely for the purpose of the research.

This research is carried out in the public interest in accordance with data protection legislation. Further information can be found in the [University's Privacy Notice](#).

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study, ensuring that all research activities comply with relevant regulations and ethical guidelines.

9. What happens to the results of the research?

The results of this research will be used for academic purposes and may be published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at conferences. Participants will not be identified in any report or publication.

Due to the nature of this research, the collected opinion scores may be useful for future comparisons of synthetic speech quality. Before submitting the test, you will be asked for your explicit consent to share your data.

10. Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This project has been ethically approved by the School of Computer Science at the University of Sheffield.

11. What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research or report a concern or incident?

If you would like to raise a complaint about any aspect of the research or if you feel that you have been exploited, abused or harmed as a result of taking part in the research, please contact Dr. Anton Ragni at a.ragni@sheffield.ac.uk.

If you are not satisfied with the response, or believe your complaint has not been addressed appropriately, you may contact the University's Research Ethics & Integrity Manager:

Lindsay Unwin

Email: l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk

Telephone: 0114 222 1443



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If you have any concerns about how your data has been handled, you can find information about how to raise a complaint in the University's Privacy Notice.

12. Contact for further information

The contact information of all individuals who have access to the responses collected in this study is provided below. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Minghui Zhao - PhD student

Email: mzhao39@sheffield.ac.uk

Dr. Anton Ragni - Supervisor

Email: a.ragni@sheffield.ac.uk

You can download the full information sheet via the provided link. Please note that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any point during the task without any consequences or need for explanation.

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