

Miss Georgiana-Elena Sfeclis
PhD Researcher

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Subjective Listening Tests for Quality Evaluation

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to participate in a research study evaluating the effectiveness of speech enhancement algorithms. In this experiment, you will listen to several audio samples and evaluate them based on three scales: speech quality, background intrusiveness, and overall quality. You have been invited to participate in this study because we need to verify how subjective speech evaluations compare to objective metrics for predicting speech quality. This Participant Information Sheet tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the study. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. By giving consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.
- ✓ You have received a copy of this Participant Information Sheet to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researcher(s): Miss Georgiana-Elena Sfeclis (g.sfeclis@uea.ac.uk).

This will take place under the supervision of Dr Ben Milner (b.milner@uea.ac.uk).

(3) What will the study involve for me?

Participants will take part in an audio listening task at a time and location of their choice, as long as it is in a quiet environment with little to no distractions. The use of headphones/earphones is recommended, and the test lasts around 20 minutes (or it may last longer if they decide to take breaks).

In a single session, you will need to evaluate an audio sample containing speech on three scales: signal quality (SIG), background intrusiveness (BAK), and overall quality (OVRL). There will be eight practice sessions and twenty-four actual test sessions. For each scale, you must listen to the audio again. After every two sessions, you will be asked if you are still focusing on the task, and if not, you may take a break until you feel ready to continue.

The only information retained in this study is your evaluations of speech and the time taken to complete the survey tasks.

You will not have the opportunity to review information generated about you prior to publication.

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(4) How much of my time will the study take?

20 minutes.

(5) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I have started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part.

Your decision to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of East Anglia now or in the future.

If you decide to take part in the study, you can withdraw your consent at any point. You can do this by stopping the survey at any point. Since all entries are anonymous, the research team will not be able to identify which response is yours after you have submitted the study.

(6) What are the consequences if I withdraw from the study?

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind, you are free to withdraw at any time before you have submitted the questionnaire. Once you have submitted it, your responses cannot be withdrawn because they are anonymous and therefore we will not be able to tell which one is yours.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

There will be financial reimbursement (£3 per survey), which will be transferred via Prolific.

The study may help develop speech enhancement algorithms, which could be used for improving hearing aids and telecommunication systems.

(9) What will happen to information provided by me and data collected during the study?

No personal data will be collected. The study will only track clicks, duration, and speech ratings provided by the participant.

Your personal data and information will only be used as outlined in this Participant Information Sheet, unless you consent otherwise. Data management will follow the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the University of East Anglia's [Research Data Management Policy](#).

The information you provide will be stored securely and your identity will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published and may also be used for other scholarly and educational purposes such as in teaching, but you will not be identified if you decide to participate in this study. The data will be kept for at least 10 years beyond the last date the data were used. The study findings may be deposited in a repository to allow it to facilitate its reuse. The deposited data will not include your name or any identifiable information about you.

No personal information about the participants is retained.

(10) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Miss Georgiana-Elena Sfeclis (g.sfeclis@uea.ac.uk) will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have.

(11) Will I be told the results of the study?

You are not able to receive feedback about the overall results.

(12) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

If there is a problem please let me know. You can contact me via the University of East Anglia at the following address:

Miss Georgiana-Elena Sfeclis
School of Computing Sciences
University of East Anglia
NORWICH NR4 7TJ
g.sfeclis@uea.ac.uk

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the Head of School of Computing Sciences: Beatriz de la Iglesia (B.Iglesia@uea.ac.uk).

(13) How do I know that this study has been approved to take place?

To protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity, all research in the University of East Anglia is reviewed by a Research Ethics Body. This research was approved by the SCI S-REC (Faculty of Science Research Ethics Subcommittee).

(14) What is the general data protection information I need to be informed about?

According to data protection legislation, we are required to inform you that the legal basis for processing your data as listed in Article 6(1) of the UK GDPR is because this allows us to process personal data when it is necessary to perform our public tasks as a University.

In addition to the specific information provided above about why your personal data is required and how it will be used, there is also some general information which needs to be provided for you:

- The data controller is the University of East Anglia.
- For further information, you can contact the University's Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@uea.ac.uk
- You can also find out more about your data protection rights at the [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#).
- If you are unhappy with how your personal data has been used, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@uea.ac.uk in the first instance.

(15) OK, I want to take part – what do I do next?

To take part, simply follow the instructions provided in the study interface. Make sure you are in a quiet environment, adjust your volume to a comfortable level, and begin listening to the audio samples when you're ready.

(16) Further information

This information was last updated on 06 February 2025.

If there are changes to the information provided, you will be notified by If there are changes to the information provided, you will be notified by an updated message displayed within the survey interface.

This information sheet is for you to keep