

Information Sheet

Title: Emotional Response Language Education E-learning Platform

Topic: Second Language Acquisition, Computational Linguistics, Multimodal Communication

Institution: UCD Computer Science

Researcher: John Sloan

What is this research about?

ERLE is a language learning website which uses the emotions of an avatar to give feedback. I am interested in how users interact with the website and the avatar.

Why are you doing this research?

I believe facial expressions are a very important means of non-verbal communication. I want to understand how language learners feel about interacting with an avatar who displays different emotions when they make correct and incorrect sentences.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are an intermediate English language learner who is over 18. Your teacher/professor has indicated that your English level is suitable for this project.

What will happen if I decide to take part in this research study?

If you decide to participate, you will be able to practice your English with the avatar for 30 minutes in each class. You will be able to join classes for 12 weeks. You may choose to type or speak to input sentences. You will receive feedback from a native English speaker. This feedback will be shown in the facial expressions of the avatar. If you make mistakes, you will be able to see where the errors are and what the correction is.

How will the data be used?

The sentences you type and speak will be used to understand how you change your language pronunciation and production after receiving feedback. The recordings from the sentences you speak will be saved and used to train a pronunciation model.

How will you protect my privacy?

You will choose a username which has no connection to your real name. In the study you will be referred to only by the basic demographic information you provide: age, sex and nationality.

How is this research funded?

This project is funded by UCD Computer Science.

What are the benefits of taking part in this research study?

You will be able to practice your English. You may find it enjoyable to interact with an avatar who responds to your sentences.

What are the risks of taking part in this research study?

If you see negative expressions from the avatar you may feel bad. When using the speech recognition, it may be frustrating to see a different result from what you expect. The sentences you input by speech or text may be identifiable.

Can I change my mind at any stage and withdraw from the study?

Yes. You can change your mind anytime and withdraw with no disadvantage. If you wish to withdraw, you can send an email to john.sloan.1@ucdconnect.ie with the subject “withdraw from ERLE - <username>”. If you want a copy of your data, or wish your data to be deleted, you can state that in the email and we will follow your request.

Has this research project received ethical approval?

Yes.

How will I find out what happens with this project?

You can email - john.sloan.1@ucdconnect.ie.