



IRB Number: 23183
IRB Approval Date: 12/18/2023
IRB Expiration Date: 03/02/2028

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Online Consent Form

Speech Accessibility Project: Individuals with disabilities helping researchers to improve technology

You are being asked to join a voluntary research study called the “Speech Accessibility Project.” This study will help computers learn to understand people with different types of speech. A computer learns to understand speech in almost the same way humans learn. It listens to speech, guesses what it says, and then guesses again whenever it makes a mistake. If the computer tries many times, then after a while it learns to guess correctly. By giving computers some examples of different speech, we can help them to better understand speech differences in the future.

Participating in this study is all online. You will record your speech online. We ask you to provide up to 600 speech samples. It should take you about 5 hours. You don't have to do it all at once. You can stop and start at any time, at your own pace and whenever you want. Risks associated with this study are no more than those in everyday life. You will not get any personal benefit from this research. Society may benefit, because computers might learn how to better understand speech differences.

Project Name: The Speech Accessibility Project, which has the website:

<https://speechaccessibilityproject.beckman.illinois.edu/>

Principal Investigator Name and Title: Professor Mark Hasegawa-Johnson, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (“UIUC”), Beckman Institute and Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Contact Information: speechaccessibility@beckman.illinois.edu is the team email address.

Organizations that will perform this study: University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) is the lead organization that will perform this study.

Sponsor: The Speech Accessibility Project is funded by a consortium that currently includes five companies: Amazon, Apple, Google, Microsoft, and Meta (parent company of Facebook). In the future, other companies, universities, and organizations may join this consortium as well.

Why am I being asked?

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are an adult, and because we think that computers should learn to understand speech like yours.

We plan to recruit more than 1,000 people to be in this study. Because the purpose of this study is to help computers learn to understand lots of different types of speech, we need to gather many different speech recordings from many types of people.

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the University of Illinois, its partners, or its sponsors of this project. Even if you decide to participate, you can choose to stop at any time without affecting that relationship.

What will you do for this research?

We will give you access to a website where you can record up to 600 speech recordings. For each recording, you will either read a sentence, or repeat a sentence that you hear somebody else saying, or answer a question out loud. You can do these recordings any time, whenever you want. We encourage you to record at different



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times of day so that we can learn how your speech might change throughout the day. And don't worry about giving us "bad" samples – all data are really helpful.

We will also give you access to a mentor. Your mentor will help you do your recordings, give you advice about your microphone settings, and give you tips for when and where to do your recordings.

You may take up to three months to finish your recordings. If you will need more than three months, please tell us so by e-mail at speechaccessibility@beckman.illinois.edu.

We will ask you whether you consider U.S. English to be your first language. People who speak English as a second language are sometimes better recognized by computers that also know different languages. If you provide this information, it will be shared with researchers using the data.

We will also ask you to provide optional data about yourself, such as your age, race and ethnicity. We will also ask questions about how your speech ability affects your everyday life. You are not required to answer any of these questions. If you tell us these things, it will help us to know when we have collected enough different types of speech. Other people who use your speech samples will not know your answers to these questions.

We will listen to all of your speech. If you say your own name or the names of anybody close to you, we will cut those sections out of your speech recording to protect your privacy. We will also write a short list of things we think a computer should know about your speech. We will not attach your name or email address to these samples. Instead, we will assign an ID code to you, and we will label your samples with that code. Only the UIUC research team will know the "identity key" that relates your email address to your ID code.

We will store your speech in a special secure computer system at UIUC. We will store your ID on a different computer, also secure. When we give your speech to other people, we will require them to know the password before they can listen to it. They will only have access to your speech samples and they will not know your ID or anything else about you.

Right now, the people who will get copies of your speech are the five company sponsors of this project: Amazon, Apple, Google, Meta, and Microsoft. Those five companies signed a contract with the University saying that they will only use your recordings to help computers better understand speech. Some of the terms of the contract include:

- Your recordings will be kept forever, so that computers in the future can also learn to understand speech like yours.
- Your recordings are not identified with your name or email address, but only with an ID code. Only UIUC will know your name or your email address.
- UIUC will listen to your recordings before we give them to anybody else.
- Scientists might study your speech, and write papers about it, but they will not publish your speech or your identity.
- Your speech might be used to develop new computer programs, including both free programs and non-free programs that help computers to understand people with speech like yours.

In the future we might let other people use your recordings. We will not ask for your permission every



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time we give the speech to somebody new, as long as they agree to all of the things listed above. In other words, you agree that other people can use your speech as long as they agree to the things listed above.

In summary, your speech samples will help researchers at UIUC and other places to make computers that can understand speech like yours.

What are the potential risks and discomforts?

The risks are no more than what happens in everyday life. We can think of two things that you might not like about this study, so here is how we will try to avoid these risks:

First, you may get tired. To help, we will let you record your speech samples over multiple sessions. You can log in at any time, from anywhere, and record at your own pace. You can also log out at any time, then log in again later. We hope that this will help you to avoid getting tired.

Second, even though we are working hard to keep your data safe, there is a risk that somebody might steal your data from us. Here is what we have done to keep that from happening:

- Your name and e-mail are not stored with your speech. Instead, your speech is labeled using an ID number.
- Before anybody from outside UIUC can use your speech, they need to sign a contract. In the contract, they promise to store your speech securely. They agree that only approved people can use your speech. They agree that they won't try to find out who you are. They also agree that, if we tell them to destroy all of your speech recordings, they will.
- Nobody from outside UIUC will know your name, your e-mail address, or what state you live in. That information will only be stored at UIUC, on a computer that only UIUC team members can use.
- Before your speech is given to anybody else, we will listen to your speech. If you say your name or the name of anybody you know, we will cut out those parts.
- You can change your mind at any time. If you change your mind, and ask us to destroy your speech recordings, we will.

Are there benefits to participating in the research?

There is no benefit to you personally.

Your recordings might help companies to make computer software that they can sell. You will not receive any extra payment if that happens.

The whole world may benefit if computers learn how to better understand people with speech like yours.

What other options are there?

You have the option to not participate in this study. This study is voluntary.

Will my study-related information be kept confidential?

Only people from UIUC will know your e-mail address or your name. We only need to know those things so that we can pay you for your participation in this project.

The UIUC team will also listen to all of your speech samples and edit out any personal names.



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Faculty, staff, students, and other people from UIUC will follow the law and UIUC policies in order to protect your confidentiality.

Speech recordings will be given only to people who have signed a contract, as described above.

Because this is a research project, we plan to publish research papers about this study. Research papers will never give your name or identity. If you wish, you may choose to allow the university to share anonymous samples of your voice in research presentations, but you don't need to.

Will I be reimbursed for any expenses or paid for my participation in this research?

You will be paid up to \$180. You will be paid \$60 after recording your 200th speech sample. You will be paid another \$60 after recording your 400th sample. You will get a final \$60 after recording your 600th sample.

In addition to your own payment, if somebody helps you to use your web browser for this project, they can be paid up to \$90. They will be paid \$30 after you record your 200th sample, an additional \$30 after you record your 400th sample, and a final \$30 after you record your 600th sample.

Payments will be made through email using Amazon ecodes.

Can I withdraw or be removed from the study?

Yes. You can stop participating at any time, and you can tell us to delete your recordings. We also have the right to stop your participation if we think it is in your best interests. If you want us to delete your recordings, you only need to tell us that you want them deleted. If you tell us to delete your recordings, we will delete them. We will also tell your participant ID number to anybody else who has a copy of your recordings, and say that they need to delete your recordings. Nobody will ever use your recordings after that for any future research. If some computers have already learned from your recordings, it may not be possible to force the computer to unlearn what it has learned.

Will data collected from me be used for any other research?

UIUC, Amazon, Apple, Google, Meta and Microsoft will use your speech recordings to make computers that better understand speech like yours.

In the future, we may let other people use your recordings, if they are willing to sign a contract. The contract will promise to use your speech only to help make better computers. The contract will also promise to protect your data. The contract will also promise that they will delete your recordings if we say that your recordings should be deleted. We will not ask you for your permission again. As long as new users of the data agree to the same terms, we will assume that you have already given permission.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

Contact the UIUC research team leader, Professor Mark Hasegawa-Johnson (jhasegaw@illinois.edu), if you have any questions about this study or your part in it. You can also contact him if you have any worries or complaints about the research.

What are my rights as a research subject?



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If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, including worries, complaints, or ideas, you may call the UIUC Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at 217-333-2670 or e-mail OPRS at irb@illinois.edu.

If you would like to complete a brief survey to provide OPRS feedback about your experiences as a research participant, please follow the link [here](https://oprs.research.illinois.edu/) or through a link on the OPRS website: <https://oprs.research.illinois.edu/>. You will be able to provide feedback or concerns without giving your name, or you can give us your name and contact information.

Please print this consent form if you would like a copy for your records.

Please read each item carefully and check each box to indicate your agreement.

- ☐ I understand this consent form.
- ☐ I understand that my speech samples will be used to help computers better understand speech like mine. I understand that my speech samples are protected by a contract between UIUC and the current members of the Speech Accessibility Project. I understand that future users of the data will have to sign a similar contract before they can use the data.
- ☐ I am 18 years old or older.
- ☐ I have a valid email address that can use to send me my payments.
- ☐ I won't let other people record their speech in place of me.
- ☐ The only payment I will get is the payment for contributing speech samples, which will be \$60 for every batch of 200 samples I provide.
- ☐ My goal is to provide 600 samples total. My maximum payment will be \$180.
- ☐ If I need a caregiver to help me make recordings, I will tell UIUC, so that my caregiver can also get paid for participating.
- ☐ I can stop participating at any time. Any time I want to, I can tell UIUC to delete all of my recordings. If I tell UIUC to delete my recordings, they will delete them. They will also tell anybody else who has copies to delete them.

Optional: If you want to let us play your speech as part of a presentation or an online demo of the Speech Accessibility Project, you can check this box. This is not required.



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☐ *I agree to let my speech be played during public presentations about the Speech Accessibility Project or as part of an online demo of the project.*

Optional: *If you wish, we can give your name and your e-mail address or phone number to people who are planning other research studies, so you can be a participant in their studies too. This is not required.*

☐ *I agree to that my email address and phone number can be shared with other research teams, who may contact me to participate in their studies.*

By clicking the "I CONSENT" button below, I indicate my willingness to voluntarily take part in this study.

I CONSENT