

Voice Attractiveness: its Acoustic Correlates and Perceptual Characteristics

People are social human beings. They tend to engage in some kind of social interaction for various reasons. While perceiving other people, interactors make use of visual and auditory cues, both verbal and non-verbal. Human voice thus plays a very important role in social interaction. Undoubtedly, it represents a rich source of information for listeners. Voice quality of speakers may be the indicator of biological information such as sex and age, social status, state of health and emotional states.

In our research, we would like to investigate the voice quality and its effects on impressions of personality. Numerous studies have shown that more attractive people tend to make positive and more favourable impressions on interactors. Attractive people are thought to be self-confident, socially-skilled and intelligent. Taking into account the physical attractiveness stereotype, we would like to examine whether the attractiveness of a person's voice has similar effects.

Recordings of both male and female voices (both authentic and manipulated) will be evaluated by listeners (native Czech speakers) in order to rate perceived attractiveness, masculinity/femininity, pitch and loudness, voice quality (e.g. creaky voice), etc. The listeners will also be asked to assess speaker's personality in order to study potential voice perceptual characteristics correlating with more favourable and positive personality traits ratings.

Acoustic analysis will be conducted to investigate acoustic measures in relation to perceived voice attractiveness. Apart from the correlation research the aim of which is to study the relationship between subjective ratings of the speakers and the respective acoustic measures, our dissertation project includes experimental research to observe the effect of manipulated stimuli on the speaker's evaluation.

Although there exist quite a lot of studies about the human voice, investigation into the voice quality and its social role has not attracted much attention until recently. This question seems to be of great interest not only to the academic community, but also to a wide range of professionals and in the media. The author of the present dissertation proposal believes to bring new findings on this topic in the Czech context.

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