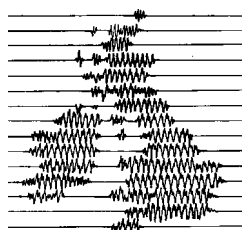


ABI



Accents of the British Isles

Do you have a local accent? If so you could earn £10 just by letting us record your voice

We have all seen science fiction films or television programmes where people speak to their computers or other machines. This fiction is now turning into reality: today we can buy 'speech recognition' software for our computer in high-street stores, and speech recognition is used more and more in everyday applications such as mobile phones and cars.

Speech recognition normally works best for people with 'standard southern British' accents. However, we all know that the way in which English is spoken varies enormously between different parts of the British Isles.

To measure the effects of these accents on the performance of speech recognition systems, and to improve the performance of these systems for different accents, 20/20 Speech Limited[†] and the University of Birmingham are collecting recordings of speech from fifteen different locations in the British Isles. These locations range from the north of Scotland, through Northern Ireland, Eire and Wales, to the south of England.

One of the locations which we have chosen is Birmingham. We need to record speech from 10 men and 10 women who have lived in Birmingham for all of their lives, and, if possible, whose parents also come from Birmingham. Each person will read a set of words, sentences and paragraphs. A session will last for about 30 minutes and we will pay the subject £10.

If you are willing to participate in these recordings please contact us by phone on extension 42826, by email at darcy@eee-fs7.bham.ac.uk or leave your name and address on the form at the Reception in the Electronic, Electrical and Computer Engineering building. Please give your name and a contact phone number or email address.

[†] 20/20 Speech Ltd. is a UK company based in Malvern, Worcestershire, which develops and supplies world class speech recognition and text-to-speech synthesis products.