Are Familiar Voices More Believable?

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The widespread availability of deepfake technologies presents unprecedented challenges in addressing the spread of misinformation. With the emergence of Large Language Models (LLMs) capable of generating realistic and convincing deepfakes, the possibility of generating audio and video content that can be used to subtly manipulate people into believing and spreading misinformation is now a realistic threat. Our work aims to study the subtle manipulation of people using familiar voices in deepfake based misinformation. In particular, we intend to find the effects of familiarity in the believability of information. The primary focus for this work is on the believability of misinformation conveyed by synthetic voices that contain voice characteristics of popular celebrities whose voices are found to be familiar to young adults belonging to Generation Z (aged between 18 to 26). A primary quantitative study has been conducted within the United States (N = 110) to identify celebrity voices familiar to the Generation Z population. With the top 6 celebrities identified, another quantitative experiment was conducted (N = 102) to identify deepfake voice clones of the selected celebrities that retain a varying degree of familiarity present in the original voice. This is a work in progress, and we aim to study the susceptibility of the general population, children, and older adults to such familiar deepfakes.