ABSTRACT

The Speech, Spatial, and Qualities of Hearing Scale (SSQ) was developed to assess listeners' subjective sense of hearing ability/disability in everyday listening situations. The SSQ is one of the few instruments designed to measure such quantities, and has been used extensively to assess functional hearing impairment and examine other aspects of hearing disability. Although a recent study examined the psychometric properties of the SSQ in a small sample of hearing-impaired listeners (Demeester et al. 2014), there has not been comparable work for young, normal hearing populations. The aim of this study is to provide improved normative data for the SSQ, using a larger sample of young, normal-hearing listeners. The present dataset has normative value. Together, these results suggest that the present dataset has normative value.

RESULTS

Methods

Two hundred thirty-nine subjects (70 Female, 169 Male) participated in the study. The subjects were generally young, and all had normal hearing. The distribution of subject ages is shown in Fig. 1. A significant portion of the sample was college-aged. The distribution of pure-tone air-conductive thresholds is shown in Fig. 2. Figures 3 and 4 display distributions of pure-tone averages (PTAs) for each ear. For each sub-scale, items are rank-ordered by the median response (blue line). White lines indicate the 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th percentiles. The ability to generalize these results to the population of normal hearing listeners may be limited. The goal of the study is to provide improved normative data for the SSQ, using a larger sample of young, normal-hearing listeners.

Item results for the three SSQ sub-scales are displayed in Fig. 6, along with mean results for each sub-scale. The mean results from the three SSQ subscales are displayed in Fig. 6, along with mean results for each sub-scale. The mean results from the three SSQ sub-scales are displayed in Fig. 6, along with mean results for each sub-scale. The mean results from the three SSQ sub-scales are displayed in Fig. 6, along with mean results for each sub-scale. The mean results from the three SSQ sub-scales are displayed in Fig. 6, along with mean results for each sub-scale. The mean results from the three SSQ sub-scales are displayed in Fig. 6, along with mean results for each sub-scale.

CONCLUSIONS

• Using the SSQ, many young, normal-hearing listeners do not rate their listening abilities at the top of the ability scale. Substantial rating variability is also observed.
• Generally good agreement with previous SSQ studies (Banh et al., 2012; Demeester et al., 2012) using young, normally-hearing listeners is noted.
• SSQ results from a hearing-impaired population (Demeester et al., 2004) generally fell in the lowest quartile of the data from normal-hearing listeners.
• Together, these results suggest that the present dataset has normative value.

REFERENCES