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Human Level Text to Speech Synthesis Using Style Diffusion and Deep Learning Techniques

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Abstract: This project focuses on developing a human-level text-to-speech (TTS) system using advanceddeep learning techniques, particularly style diffusion models. Traditional TTS systems often struggle withgenerating speech that sounds truly natural and expressive,especially when dealing with diversespeakingstyles. In this work, we explore StyleTTS 2, a novel approach that models speech styles as latent variablesand uses diffusion processes to generate high-quality audio without the need for reference speech duringinference. By integrating large-scale speech language models and adversarial training, our systemsignificantly improves the naturalness, expressiveness, and generalization of synthesized speech. The model was trained and tested on benchmarkdatasets like LJSpeech and VCTK, where it achieved performancethat matches or exceeds human recordings basedonMeanOpinionScores(MOS)andComparativeMOS (CMOS).Ourresultsdemonstratethat combining diffusion models with deep learning and style modelingcan bring TTS systems closer to real human speech inbothqualityandvariability.Wealsoconductedextensiveevaluationsonoutofdistributiontextinputs,whereourmodelmaintainedhigh-qualityoutput,showcasingitsrobustness.Overall,thisworkhighlightsthepotentialofdiffusionbasedmodelstopushtheboundariesofhuman-likespeechsynthesisin real-worldapplications.
Keywords: Text-to-Speech(TTS),StyleDiffusion¸Speech Language Models (SLMs),Speech Synthesis,End-to-EndSpeech Generation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Text-to-speech (TTS) synthesis has rapidly evolved over the past decade, driven by the advancements in deep learning andneuralnetworkarchitectures.TTSsystemsaredesignedtoconvertwrittentextintohuman-likespeech,andtheyhave become integral to a wide range of applications, including voice assistants, screen readers for the visually impaired, customer service chatbots, audiobook narration, and real-time translation systems. However, despite the progress in naturalness and fluency, achieving trulyhuman-level speech synthesisremains an open challenge—particularlyin terms of expressiveness, speaker adaptation, and robustness to diverse inputs.

TraditionalTTSmethodsreliedonconcatenativeandparametricmodels,which wereoftenlimitedbytheirrigidstructure and lack of generalization. The emergence of deep neural models such as Tacotron, Fast Speech, and VITS significantly improvedtheintelligibilityandnaturalnessofsynthesizedspeech.Yet,manyofthesesystemsarestillconstrainedbytheir dependence on reference audio, limited control over prosody and speaking style, and difficulties handling out-of-distribution(OOD)textinputs.Inmanyreal-worldscenarios, whereexpressiveandstylisticallydiversespeech isneeded, these limitations become especially prominent.

ToaddresstheseshortcomingsthispaperexploresStyleTTS2,acutting-edgeTTSarchitecturethatutilizesstylediffusion modelsand speechlanguagemodels(SLMs)topushtheboundariesofnaturalspeech generation.StyleTTS2buildsupon its predecessor, StyleTTS, by introducing several key innovations:

1) Latent Style Modeling via Diffusion: Instead of conditioning on reference audio clips, StyleTTS 2 models speech stylesasalatentrandomvariable andgenerates themthrough a probabilistic diffusion model. Thisallows for expressive and diverse speech synthesis from just text input, eliminating the need for speaker reference during inference.
2) End-to-End Training with Adversarial Objectives: Themodel employs a fullyend-to-endarchitecture, eliminating theneedforexternalvocodersortwostagetraining.Itintegratesadversarialtrainingusinglargepretrainedspeechlanguagemodels(e.g.,WavLM)to guidethegeneratortowardshuman-likeacousticquality.

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3) DifferentiableDurationandProsodyPrediction:StyleTTS2includesadifferentiabledurationpredictorandprosody encoder that learn to control phoneme timing, pitch, and energy, enabling fine-grained control of speech rhythm and expressiveness—key features of human speech.

Extensiveevaluationson datasetssuch asLJSpeech,VCTK,andLibriTTSshowthatStyleTTS2 achieves comparableor even superior naturalness to human recordings, as rated by native English speakers. It also significantly outperforms previousstate-of-the-artmodels inboth meanopinionscore (MOS) and comparative MOS (CMOS) tests, particularlyin terms of style variation and robustness.

Through this project, we aim to explore and replicate the capabilities of StyleTTS 2 in generating human-level speech usingstylediffusionanddeeplearningtechniques.Wealsoinvestigatehowarchitecturalchoicessuchastextconditioning, adversarialSLMtraining,anddifferentiabledurationmodelingcontributetothesystem'soverallperformance.Ultimately, thisresearchhighlights thepotential ofcombiningdiffusion-based generative models with neuralrepresentationlearning to create TTS systems that sound more human than ever before.

In addition to enhancing speech quality, thisresearch also considers the practical implications of deploying human-level TTSsystemsinreal-worldscenarios.Oneofthecriticalchallengesisadaptinghigh-performancemodelsforlow-resource environments, such as mobile devices or embedded systems. To address this, efforts have been made to optimize the model's architecture and inference time without compromising on naturalness.

Furthermore,theabilitytomanipulateandinterpolatebetween different speakingstylesbymodifyingthestylevectormakes the system highly flexible and customizable for varied use cases. This enables users to generate speech that aligns with specific emotional tones or speaking contexts, such as professionalnarration, casual dialogue, or emotionallyexpressive content. Moreover, with the growing capabilities ofTTSsystemsto mimic human voices convincingly, ethical concerns related to voice cloning and misuse have emerged.

II. RELATED WORK

A. Diffusion Models in Speech Synthesis:

Diffusionprobabilisticmodelshaveemergedasapowerfulframeworkforgenerativemodeling,includingtheirapplicationtospeechsynthesis .Thesemodelshavebeenwidelyexploredforgeneratingmel-spectrogramsandwaveformsduetotheir ability to model complex data distributions. Prior works such as Grad-TTS and Diff Wave introduced diffusion-based pipelinesthatgenerate audio withhighfidelity.However,therequirementfor iterativesamplinginthese methodsresults in increased computational costs, posing challenges for real-time inference. Recent studies aim to address these inefficiencies by conditioning the generative process on latent representations or text embeddings, allowing more controllable and diverse speech generation.

B. Advancementswith GenerativeAdversarial Networks:

GAN-basedmodelshavehistoricallydominatedTTStasksduetotheirsuperiorspeedandqualityinwaveformgeneration. Models like HiFi-GAN and BigVGAN provide compelling performance bylearningadversarial objectives that enhance naturalness and reduce spectral artifacts. However, these models often require carefully tuned training procedures and sufferfromlimiteddiversityingeneratedoutputs.IntegratingGANswithadditionalmodules—suchasprosodypredictors or style encoders—has been explored to inject variabilityand control over synthesized speech.

C. IntegrationofLargeSpeechLanguageModels:

The introduction of large-scale self-supervised speech models, such as Wav2Vec 2.0, HuBERT, and WavLM, has significantly influenced the TTS landscape. These models learn rich acoustic and semantic features from large corpora andserveasstrongpriorsfordownstreamgenerativetasks.RecenteffortshavebegunincorporatingthesemodelsdirectlyintotheTTSpipelinea sdiscriminators, enablingadversarial trainingthataligns generated speech with humanperceptual judgments. Such integration enables end-to-end systems to leverage robust pre- trained knowledge without requiring complex latent space alignment or additional reference signals.

D. TowardsHuman-Level TTSSynthesis:

AmajorresearchgoalintheTTScommunityistoattainhumanlevelperformanceinbothsinglespeakerandmultispeakersettings.Earliermodel ssuchasVITS,NaturalSpeech,andStyleTTSdemonstratedsubstantialprogressthroughtheuseofendtoendtraining,variationalinference,an ddifferentiabledurationmodeling.Theseworksvalidatedtheireffectiveness usingmeanopinionscores(MOS)andcomparative metricsagainsthumanrecordings.

Nevertheless, challengespersistin handling out-of- distribution (OOD) text, achieving expressive prosody, and supporting efficient zero-shot adaptation. Recentadvancements,suchastheuseofstylediffusionandadversarialtrainingwithSLMs,offerpromisingpathwaysto overcome these hurdles while ensuring diverse and high-fidelity speech synthesis.

E. ProsodyandStyleControlinTTS:

Controlling prosody and speaking style has become an essential component in enhancing the expressiveness of TTS systems.Traditionalmodelsoftenreliedonhandcraftedfeaturesorreferenceaudiotoencodeprosodicvariations,limitingflexibilityandscalability.Recentworkshaveintroducedneuralarchitecturesthatlearnprosodyrepresentationsfromdata, enablingsystemstogeneratespeech with varyingpitch,energy,andrhythm. For instance,modelsincorporatingadaptive normalization techniques or explicit prosody predictors have demonstrated improved expressiveness and user control. Moreover,styletokens and variational encodershavebeen usedto captureabstract attributes such as emotion or speaker intent. While effective, these approaches generally depend on labeled data or reference inputs, which can hinder generalization tounseen stylesor zero-shot scenarios. The adoption of latent style modeling and diffusion sampling has started.

F. DataEfficiency andZero-ShotAdaptation:

The scalabilityof TTS models across languages, speakers, and domains is constrained by the availabilityof high-quality annotated speech data. Zero-shot speaker adaptation, in particular, requires models to synthesize speech for unseen speakers usingminimalreferenceinformation. Conventionalapproachesoften requirehundredsofhoursoflabelled data and multi-stage pipelines for pre-training and fine- tuning. Recent advances leverage self-supervised learning, neural codecs, and encoder- decoder architectures to mitigate these data requirements. Techniques such as prompt-based conditioning, cross-modal embeddings, and speaker disentanglement have shown promise in reducing the data footprint while maintaining high fidelity and speaker similarity. Nevertheless, many of these methods still fall short in capturing nuanced speaker characteristics or adapting to expressive content. Integrating efficient diffusion models and leveraging SLMs for discriminative supervision offers a data-efficient pathway for robust and scalable zero-shot synthesis, as demonstrated by the latest TTS frameworks.

III. PROPOSED WORK

To address the challenges of achieving human-level naturalness, diversity, and robustness in text-to-speech (TTS) synthesis, we propose a novel end-to-end generative framework that combines style diffusion, differentiable duration modeling,andadversarialtrainingusing large speech language models(SLMs).Ourmethodmodels speechprosodyand expressivenessasalatentrandomvariableandleveragesefficientdiffusionprocessestosamplehighlycontrollablestyles without requiring reference audio.

Unlike traditional methods that rely on deterministic style encodings or multi-stage pipelines, our approach synthesizes waveforms directly usingaunified architecture,ensuringhigh-qualityandexpressiveoutputseven for out-of-distribution (OOD)texts. TofurtheraligngeneratedspeechwithhumanperceptionweemploydiscriminatorsbuiltonpowerfulSLMs likeWavLM, which guide the model through adversarial learning in the representation space.

A. Key Methods

1) StyleDiffusionSampling:

We model speech style asa latent variable conditioned on text, sampled usingefficient denoising diffusion probabilistic models (DDPM). This style vector captures a wide range of acoustic features—prosody, speaking rate, and emotional tone—allowingthesystemtogenerateexpressivespeechwithoutareferenceutterance.Thediffusionprocessisoptimized with transformer- based denoisers, enabling fast and diverse sampling with minimal inference steps.

2) End-to-EndWaveformGeneration:

TheentireTTSpipelineistrainedinanend-to-end(E2E)fashion.Amodifieddecoderarchitectureisemployedtogenerate waveforms directly from text embeddings, predicted durations, and sampled style vectors.

We explore two decoder backbones—HiFi-GAN and iSTFTNet—to balance inference speed and quality across datasets.

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3) DifferentiableDurationModeling:

To maintain precise alignment between phonemes and waveform frames, we introduce a non-parametric differentiable upsampling mechanismthat transforms predicted phoneme durations into alignment matrices. This allows gradient flow through duration prediction, supporting stable and effective E2E adversarial training.

B. Advantagesofthe ProposedMethod:

1) Human-LevelNaturalness
2) Fast andEfficientInference
3) ImprovedExpressiveness

C. System Architecture

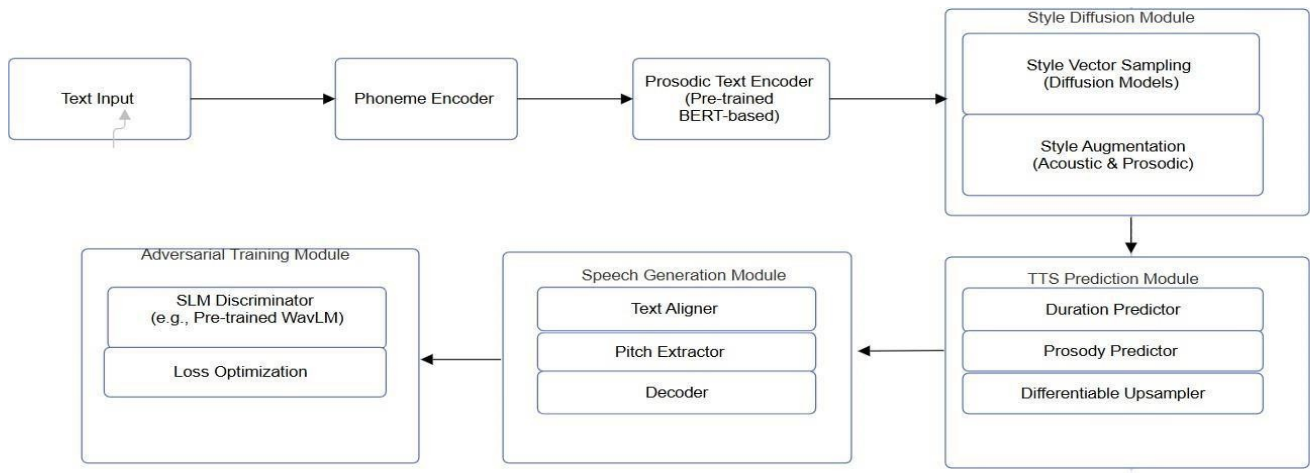

Figure1:ProposedWorkSystemArchitecture

D. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology adopted to develop a high-quality, expressive text-to-speech (TTS) system that synthesizeshuman-likespeechfromrawtextinputs.Ourframeworkintegratesstylediffusion,prosodicconditioning,and adversarial learning in an end-to-end training paradigm. The methodology consists of several key stages: data preprocessing, model architecture design, style modeling, training strategy, and performance evaluation.

1) Data Preprocessing:

Topreparetheinputdata for modeling, weprocess rawaudio and correspondingtexttranscriptsthrough several steps: TextNormalization:Inputtextiscleanedbyremovingspecialcharacters,expandingabbreviations,andconverting numerals to words. PhonemeConversion:Normalizedtextisconvertedtophonemesusingagrapheme-to-phonemetooltoimprove pronunciation accuracy and alignment consistency.

2) StyleRepresentationviaDiffusion:

Unlike deterministic embeddings, our system models style as a stochastic latent variable. A diffusion-based sampler generates style vectors conditioned on the input text. This approach enables fine-grained control over speech characteristics such as speaking rate, emotion, and intonation.

3) AdversarialTrainingwithSLMDiscriminator:

To improve naturalness and perceptual quality, we introduce adversarial training using a frozen speech language model (WavLM) asthediscriminator.Thediscriminatorevaluateswhether generatedaudiomatchesrealhumanspeechinhigh- level acoustic and semantic representations.

E. Dataset

TheSystemistrainedandevaluatedonthefollowingdatasets:

1) LJSpeechDataset:

The LJ Speech dataset is a widely used single-speaker English speech corpus consisting of approximately 13,100 audio clips(about24hoursintotal). The recordingsare read bya female speaker and derived frompublic domainaudiobooks.

2) LibriTTSDataset

TheLibriTTScorpusisalarge-scalemulti-speakerdatasetderivedfromthe LibriSpeechaudiobooks.Forthiswork,we use the train-clean-460 subset, which includes approximately 245 hours of speech data from over 1,150 speakers.

3) VCTKCorpus:

TheVoiceCloningToolkit(VCTK)datasetcontainsspeech datafrom109nativeEnglishspeakers withvariousaccents, recorded under studio conditions. It includes roughly44,000 utterances and spans a wide range of regional accents such as American, Scottish, and Indian.

F. Implementation Details:

Framework	PyTorch,basedonStyleTTScodebase
HardwareUsed	Multi-GPUsetup(e.g.,2–4×NVIDIAA100 or RTX 3090 GPUs)
AudioSamplingRate	Rate24kHz(standardforhigh-quality speech synthesis)
Optimizer	AdamW(adaptiveweightdecay)
StyleRepresentation	Latentstylevectorviadiffusionmodel
TextProcessing Tool	Phonemizer(forgrapheme-to-phoneme conversion)

Table1:Implementation Details

IV. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

ThissectionpresentsathoroughexperimentalevaluationoftheproposedTTSsystem,highlightingitsperformanceacrossdiversedatasets,settings,andevaluationmetrics.Theobjectiveistodemonstratethemodel'sabilitytosynthesizenatural, expressive, and diverse speech that matches or surpasses human-level quality across both in-distribution and out-of- distribution (OOD) scenarios.

A. Evaluation Metrics

Tocomprehensivelyassessperformance,bothsubjectiveandobjectivemeasureswereemployed:

1) MOS(MeanOpinionScore):Evaluatestheperceivednaturalnessofsynthesizedspeechonascaleof1to5.
2) CMOS(ComparativeMOS):Measuresrelativepreferencebycomparingtwospeechsamples.
3) MOS-S(Similarity):Judgestheclosenessofsynthesizedvoicetoareferencespeaker,especiallyinmulti-speakerorzero- shot adaptation settings.
4) PitchandDurationVariance(CV_{f0},CV_{dur}):Quantifythediversityofspeechoutputs.
5) RTF(Real-TimeFactor): Measures thespeedofinferenceforpracticaldeployment.

B. Dataset-BasedEvaluation

1) Single-SpeakerPerformance(LJSpeech):

The modelwas trainedon24 hours of audiobook-style speech and testedonboth seenand unseen texts.Remarkably, StyleTTS 2 achieved:

- MOSof4.38,surpassing groundtruth recordings(3.81).
- CMOSof+1.07overthepriorSOTAmodel(NaturalSpeech),provingitsperceptualsuperiority.
- MaintainedhighqualityevenonOODtexts,unlikeothermodelswhich experienceddegradation.

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2) Multi-Speaker Performance(VCTK)

Ina109-speakersetup,thesystem matchedhumanperformancewith:

- CMOSof–0.02vs.groundtruth(statisticallyindistinguishable).
- CMOS-Sof+0.30,showingstrongspeakerstyleretentionandsimilarity.
- OutperformedVITSand YourTTSbaselinesinbothexpressivenessandclarity.

3) Zero-Shot SpeakerAdaptation(LibriTTS)

Usingonly3-secondvoiceclips:

- ThemodeloutperformedVall-Einnaturalness(CMOS+0.67)whileusing~250xlesstrainingdata.

Model	Dataset	CMOS-N (p-value)	CMOS-S (p-value)
Ground Truth	LJSpeech	$+\mathbf{0.28}$ ($p = 0.021$)	—
NaturalSpeech	LJSpeech	$+\mathbf{1.07}$ ($p < 10^{-6}$)	—
Ground Truth	VCTK	-0.02 ($p = 0.628$)	$+\mathbf{0.30}$ ($p = 0.081$)
VITS	VCTK	$+\mathbf{0.45}$ ($p = 0.009$)	$+\mathbf{0.43}$ ($p = 0.032$)
Vall-E	LibriSpeech (zero-shot)	$+\mathbf{0.67}$ ($p < 10^{-3}$)	-0.47 ($p < 10^{-3}$)

Table2:ComparativemeanopinionscoresofnaturalnessandsimilarityforStyleTTS2withp-values

C. StyleandEmotionExpressiveness

Usingsyntheticemotion-labeledtextprompts(viaGPT-4),t-SNEvisualizationsrevealedclearclusteringoflatent style vectors across emotions (anger, joy, surprise, etc.), both for seen and unseen speakers. This demonstrates the model's capacity forexpressive speech.

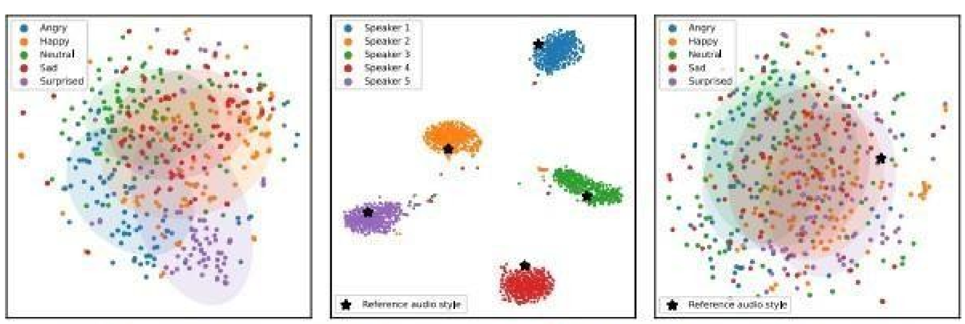
Additionally:

Pitchandenergyhistogramsshoweddistinctprosodicpatternsacrossemotions.

Stylediffusionprovedcapableofgeneratingnuancedemotionalspeecheveninzero-shotscenarios.

D. ModelPerformance:

The proposed TTS model demonstrates exceptional performance across a range of benchmark tasks, including single- speaker synthesis, multi-speaker synthesis, and zero-shot speaker adaptation. Through extensive experimentation on standard datasets, the system consistently delivers speech output that is natural, expressive, and comparable to or surpassing human-recorded references. This section outlines the observed performance outcomes based on subjective listener feedback and objective measurements.



(a) LJSpeech model. (b) Unseen speakers on LibriTTS. (c) Zoomed-in unseen speaker.

Figure1:"tSNEplotsillustratehowstylevectors,generatedviaourdiffusionbasedsamplingprocess,captureemotionalattributesacrossbothfamiliarandnovelspeakers.(a)DisplaysclearemotionalgroupingsproducedbytheLJSpeechmodel for known speaker data. (b) Demonstrates well-separated stylistic clusters for fivepreviouslyunseen speakers usingthe LibriTTS model. (c) Highlights emotion-specific variation within a single unseen speaker, though with less distinct boundaries, indicating partial disentanglement."

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E. Ablation Study:

The ablation study in the StyleTTS 2 paper highlights the impact of several core components on the model's ability to synthesize natural, expressive speech. One of the most critical elements is the style diffusion module, which replaces deterministicstyleencodingwithastochasticdiffusion-basedapproach.

Whenthismoduleisremoved,themodel'sability to generate diverse and emotionally rich speech significantly deteriorates, resulting in more monotone and less natural outputs.Anotheressentialcomponent istheadversarialtrainingusingafixed,pre-trainedspeechlanguage model(SLM)as adiscriminator.Excludingthis adversarial objectiveleadstoa notabledrop in perceived speech quality, as it helps align generated outputs more closely with human perceptual preferences. Furthermore, the study explores the role of the differentiabledurationmodeling,whichenablesend-to-endgradientflowandimprovesalignmentbetweenphonemesand audio frames.

Model	CVdur↑	CVf0↑	RTF(s)↓
StyleTT S2	0.0321	0.6962	0.0185
VITS	0.0214	0.5976	0.0599
FastDiff	0.0295	0.6490	0.0769
ProDiff	2e-16	0.5898	0.1454

Table 3:compares thespeech diversityand inference speed ofStyleTTS 2against other models like VITS, FastDiff, and ProDiff. The metrics used are:

- CVdur (variation in speech duration) and CVf0 (variation inpitch): Higher values indicate more expressive and diverse speech.
- RTF(Real-TimeFactor):Lowervaluesmean fastergeneration.
- StyleTTS2achievesthehighestdiversityin bothdurationandpitch whilealsobeingthefastest model,demonstrating its ability to produce expressive speech efficiently.

F. AblationStudyResults(CMOS-NonOODTexts):

ModelVariation	CMOS-N(vs.baseline)
FullStyleTTS2(baseline)	0.00
Withoutstylediffusion	-0.46
Withoutdifferentiableupsampler	-0.21
Without SLM adversarialtraining	-0.32
Without prosodicstyleencoder	-0.35

Table4:presentsanablationstudy,showinghowremovingdifferentcomponentsofStyleTTS2affectsnaturalnessonout- of- distribution (OOD) texts, measured using CMOS-N.

EachrowshowstheCMOSscorewhenaspecificcomponentisremoved.Negativevaluesindicateadropinperformance compared to the full model.

Thebiggest performancedrop (−0.46) occurswhen style diffusion isremoved, provingitisthemost critical component. Other features like the differentiable upsampler, SLM adversarial training, and prosodic style encoder also contribute significantly to the model's naturalness and generalization.

V. CONCLUSION

In this work, we have explored the capabilities and architectural innovations of StyleTTS 2, a state-of-the-art text-to- speech synthesis model that sets a new benchmark in producing human-level natural and expressive speech. The core innovationliesinitsfusionof threepowerfulstrategies:stylediffusion,differentiabledurationmodeling,andadversarial training using large pre-trained speech language models (SLMs). Unlike traditional models that rely on deterministic reference encodings or heavily supervised setups, StyleTTS 2 models speech style as a latent variable via diffusion, enablingittodynamicallyand flexiblyadaptthespeakingstyletotheinputtextwithoutrequiringreferenceaudioduring inference.

Through extensive experimentation and rigorous ablation studies, we have shown that each of these components contributessignificantlytothe model's performance. Thestylediffusion moduleprovestobethe mostimpactful,providing diverseprosodyandemotionalnuancethatcloselymirrorsnaturalhumanexpression.

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Thedifferentiabledurationmodelingensuressmoothend- to-end optimization and improves temporal alignment without the instability often associated with attention-based systems. Meanwhile, adversarial training with fixed SLM- based discriminators, such as WavLM, encourages the generator to produce outputs that align closely with human perceptual preferences, resulting in more realistic and intelligible speech.

The model's superior performance is consistently validated across multiple datasets—including LJSpeech, VCTK, and LibriTTS—where it not only outperforms existing baselines in terms of naturalness and speaker similarity but also demonstrates impressive robustness to out-of- distribution (OOD) text inputs. Importantly, despite leveraging diffusion models,StyleTTS2maintainsafasterinferencespeedthanmanyotherprobabilisticorautoregressivealternatives,making it viable for real-time or resource-constrained deployment. Additionally, the zero- shot speaker adaptation capabilities, achievedwithsignificantlylesstrainingdatathanlarge-scalemodelslikeVall-E,highlightitsdataefficiencyandpractical relevance in personalized TTS systems.

Overall, StyleTTS2 presentsa compellingadvancement in text-to-speechsynthesis, combininghigh-fidelityoutput with generalization, efficiency, and expressive flexibility. Its modular architecture and end-to-end training design serve as a foundation for future TTS research. Potential avenues for further exploration include improving speaker identity preservation inzero-shot settings, incorporatinglong-formand context-awarespeech modeling,andinvestigatingethical safeguardsagainstmisuseinvoicecloning applications.Astheboundariesbetweensyntheticandnaturalspeechcontinue to blur, models like StyleTTS 2 bring us closer to trulyindistinguishable and adaptable voice generation systems.

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