

Enhancing Communication Equity: Evaluation of an Automated Speech Recognition Application in Ghana



About

This study evaluated Google's Project Relate app, designed to assist people with communication difficulties in Ghana. The research aimed to assess the feasibility of **using mobile technology to aid communication for individuals with speech impairments**, especially in a context with limited speech therapy resources.

Findings

The study involved training local Speech and Language Therapists and 20 individuals with communication difficulties to use the Project Relate app. **Key findings include:**

- **Limited Awareness:** Lack of awareness for the App made it harder for users access the technology effectively. More outreach and guidance were needed to bridge these gaps.
- **Technological Adaptation:** Participants needed customised training to effectively use the app, as it required adjustments for different dialects and accent variations.
- **User Experience:** While some participants reported improved communication, others faced challenges due to the app's limitations in recognising non-standard speech.



Many participants faced challenges with phone ownership or specifications. While the study provided adequate smartphones, many participants noted they would have struggled to afford one independently.

The study concluded that while the app holds promise, it requires adaptation and better support systems to be fully effective in Ghana, addressing issues like language and stigma.

These findings have led to the launch of the **Centre for Digital Language Inclusion**.

