

Enhancing Language Technology for Oral Communities

Marty Heaton

tawq.in, Utah, USA

Email: marty@heaton.biz

Abstract:

This research extends the participatory design and evaluation of a technology tool aimed at preserving and sharing the oral language of the Jibbali people in southern Oman. The previous phase successfully identified key features for the tool and established a baseline for user perception using the technology acceptance model (TAM2). The challenges of language shift, where younger generations adopt dominant languages, are not unique to Oman. This next phase focuses on refining the tool based on user feedback, with an emphasis on enhanced usability and cultural appropriateness. We will employ an iterative design process, incorporating user-centered feedback to optimize the tool's interface and functionality -- ensuring that the technology is shaped by the very people who will use it. The impact of these refinements will be evaluated through expanded user testing and analysis of user-generated content. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on inclusive technology design for oral communities and empowers multilingual users to create and share their own narratives with a useful and usable tool; current version available at <https://tawq.in>. It also highlights the potential of technology to strengthen community bonds and promote linguistic diversity, offering valuable insights for language revitalization efforts in a global context.

Keywords: second and foreign languages, translation & interpreting, globalisation, subtitling

