

## **Speech Technology for Information Access: A South African Case Study**

Etienne Barnard and Marelle H. Davel and Gerhard B. van Huyssteen

Human Language Technologies Research Group

Meraka Institute, CSIR

South Africa

### **Abstract**

Telephone-based information access has the potential to deliver a significant positive impact in the developing world. We discuss some of the most important issues that must be addressed in order to realize this potential, including matters related to resource development, automatic speech recognition, text-to-speech systems, and user-interface design. Although our main focus has been on the eleven official languages of South Africa, we believe that many of these same issues will be relevant for the application of speech technology throughout the developing world.

**Index Terms:** spoken language technology for development, resource-scarce languages