
Ethi:CS -- The Weekly Ethicacy

Week #3: Yenmin vs Shana

The AI startup erasing call center worker accents: is it fighting bias – or perpetuating it?

Week #3: Yenmin vs Shana

Summary of issue...

Call centers have been around since the 1950's, but in the early 1990's, India began to see more business. US/UK businesses outsourced call centers particularly in India due to low labor costs, and large English-speaking population, and enough people to work night hours in order to offer service. Recently, a Silicon Valley startup, called Sanas, created an AI program that alters the workers voice in real time.



- ❖ [Watch the magic](#)
- ❖ [Co-founder Interview](#)

Fighting bias...

- ❖ [Watch the magic](#)
- ❖ Purpose is to help call center workers from around the world sound 'westerners' at the exact time when they need it the most during the phone call.
- ❖ This AI program provides a shortcut to the laborious and often unsuccessful 'accent neutralization' training that call center workers receive.
- ❖ Lessens the discrimination that the call center workers receive because of their accent.
- ❖ Boasts confidence of workers to have conversations without the bias of the customer because of their accent. It can be frustrating to not be understood because of your accent.
- ❖ It is optional. Agents can opt in and out at any time they choose.



Fighting bias...

❖ Sanas, is guided by three principles under its detailed code of ethics:

- 1) individual choice (Sanas is speaker-controlled, at the push of a button ensuring no one is forced to use Sanas),
- 2) personal control (Sanas is only operates on outgoing audio, meaning it can never alter the sound of the client), and
- 3) flexibility (Access to a multitude of accents, so you can choose the way you're heard at any given moment. A user can never be forced to sound a certain way.)



What does the code look like...

- ❖ Sample coding of Accent Translation
- ❖ Real Time Foreign Accent Conversion by DongyaoZhu



Perpetuating bias...

- ❖ Argument #1
- ❖

