Gadget eases speech for stutterers

ELECTRONIC speech aid company VoiceAmp, owned by Cape Town innovation company Korbitec, said it had developed a fluency device for stutterers that it believed had a technology edge over its US rivals in the international market.

VoiceAmp managing director Alan Falck said the technology was unique in that settings for three background noise settings could be preprogrammed, unlike its competitors with one setting.

Falck said a user could preprogramme settings for a noisy or quiet background.

The system is based on the "choral accompaniment" phenomenon, where stutterers experience fluency of speech when they talk or sing in unison with fluent speakers. The device converts the stutterer's speech to fluent speech and replays it through an ear piece in "almost real-time", thus mimicking the phenomenon.

VoiceAmp had successfully completed clinical trials, Falck said. – Sapa