



词汇: language and translation 语言和翻译

For me, it was bacon. There I was, standing in the streets of Medellin, Colombia, looking hungrily at a delicious empanada. The sign read 'queso y tocino'. Because I'd **got my tongue round** some essential Spanish **vocabulary**, I knew that 'queso' was cheese. But 'tocino'? I typed it into my smartphone **translation** app. What came back? 'Tocino'. I later learned that means 'bacon' in the local **lingo**.

Computer-assisted translation is popular. Google Translate, for example, is used by more than 500 million people. But while convenient and easy to use, they are hardly perfect. Now, dropping the odd **expression** now and again is hardly important on an informal **conversational** level – as might happen to a tourist on holiday. But in more formal circumstances, such as a medical or legal **discussion**, the wrong **vernacular** can be disastrous. So, can a computer translator ever equal a human?

The technology has come a long way. These days, people can wear a 'translation earpiece'. These pick up the foreign **terminology** and translate it directly to the wearer. Andrew Ochoa, chief executive of US start-up Waverly Labs, a producer of one such earpiece, says they work by 'combining a network of algorithms and **speech-recognition** technology'. But they have limitations. Firstly, there's a delay while the phrase is translated. How long often depends on the connection strength. Secondly, they aren't able to communicate human **sentiment** well.

Human conversation is **subtler** than just the words used. It has **tone**, attitude, **nuance**, for example. "If you want to create a relationship... you need a human translator to make it **sound natural**," Zoey Cooper, brand and content director at Wordbank, a global marketing and translation agency, told the BBC.

So, while many professional translators do use computer-assisted translation tools to help them with the repetitive nature of translation, **context** is important. It might work well for a survey or instruction manual, but for important human-to-human speech, and for the time being at least, better to use a translator, or your message might get **garbled** or **lost in translation**.

词汇表

get your tongue round	正确发出……音
vocabulary	词汇
translation	翻译
lingo	语言
expression	表达
conversational	交谈的, 口语的
discussion	讨论
vernacular	本地话, 方言
terminology	术语
speech-recognition	语音识别
sentiment	情绪
subtle	微妙的
tone	口气
nuance	细微差别
sound natural	听起来很通顺、自然
context	语境
garble	让(话语或信息)变得含糊不清, 易引起误会
lost in translation	在翻译中遗失了

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What kind of food did the author want to buy in Colombia?
2. True or false? *No one uses computer-assisted translation these days.*
3. When can a computer-assisted translation error be a big problem?
4. How do translation earpieces work?
5. What are the disadvantages of translation earpieces?

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I'm quite good at languages, but I find Russian difficult to get my _____.

tongue round	tongue down	mouth round	head down
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2. 'Plagiarism' is a word you'll hear a lot in academic _____.

translation	expression	vernacular	sentiment
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3. The radio message was _____ by interference from the storm.

lost in translation	garbled	nuanced	discussed
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4. He says he's sorry, but without _____, so I'm not sure I believe him.

translation	discussion	sentiment	context
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5. I am your teacher, young man, and I don't appreciate your _____.

context	garble	nuance	tone
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答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What kind of food did the author want to buy in Colombia?

The author wanted to buy a 'queso y tocino' (cheese and bacon) empanada.

2. True or False? *No one uses computer-assisted translation these days.*

False. Google Translate, for example, is used by more than 500 million people.

3. When can a computer-assisted translation error be a big problem?

In formal circumstances, such as a medical or legal discussion, the wrong vernacular can be disastrous.

4. How do translation earpieces work?

They combine a network of algorithms and speech-recognition technology.

5. What are the disadvantages of translation earpieces?

There is a delay while the sentence is translated and they aren't able to communicate sentiment well.

2. 选择意思恰当的单词或词组来完成下列句子。

1. I'm quite good at languages, but I find Russian difficult to get my **tongue round**.

2. 'Plagiarism' is a word you'll hear a lot in academic **vernacular**.

3. The radio message was **garbled** by interference from the storm.

4. He says he's sorry, but without **sentiment**, so I'm not sure I believe him.

5. I am your teacher, young man, and I don't appreciate your **tone**.