

Microsoft's Skype moves toward auto-translation

December 15 2014



Microsoft announced on December 15, 2014, a new step toward real-time translation: a Spanish-English program through the Skype messaging service

Microsoft announced Monday a new step toward real-time translation, launching a Spanish-English test program using its Skype messaging service.

"Today, we are excited to announce the first phase of the Skype Translator preview program," said Microsoft's Gurdeep Pall.

"The preview program will kick off with two spoken languages, Spanish and English... Skype Translator will open up endless possibilities for people around the world to connect, communicate and collaborate; people will no longer be hindered by geography and language."

The program had its first trial with school children in Mexico City and their counterparts at a school in Tacoma, Washington.

"One classroom of children speaking Spanish and the other speaking English, Skype Translator removed this [language barrier](#) and enabled them to communicate," Pall said.

"Skype Translator relies on machine learning, which means that the more the technology is used, the smarter it gets. We are starting with English and Spanish, and as more people use the Skype Translator preview with these languages, the quality will continually improve."

Microsoft announced in May what it called a breakthrough in real-time voice translation, saying it fulfills a vision of the "universal [translator](#)" in the Star Trek science fiction series.

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Citation: Microsoft's Skype moves toward auto-translation (2014, December 15) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-12-microsoft-skype-auto-translation.html>

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