

The Application and Limitations of Artificial Intelligence Translation Tools (Such as ChatGPT) in Business Translation

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Abstract: With the increasing frequency of global business activities, efficient and accurate cross linguistic communication has become one of the core competitiveness of enterprises. In an era marked by the exponential growth of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, intelligent translation tools such as ChatGPT have been steadily infiltrating the domain of business translation, leveraging their strengths in high efficiency and cost - effectiveness. These tools can process large volumes of text within seconds, reducing the time and financial resources typically required for traditional human - based translation. For instance, a multinational corporation could use ChatGPT to quickly translate routine business emails or product descriptions across multiple languages, thereby accelerating communication channels and potentially expanding market reach. Based on this, artificial intelligence translation tools, relying on their powerful technological advantages, have been widely applied in various aspects of commercial translation, but they also have obvious limitations.

1. Introduction

Business translation is a highly specialized field with stringent requirements for professionalism, precision, and cultural adaptability. Business documents often contain industry - specific jargon, legal terms, and cultural references that demand in - depth knowledge and nuanced understanding. A mistranslation in a business contract, for example, could lead to legal disputes or financial losses. A marketing slogan that fails to resonate culturally may damage brand reputation in international markets. Despite the increasing prevalence of AI translation tools in business settings, existing research has not comprehensively explored their applications and limitations. Many studies either focus on the general capabilities of AI translation or lack detailed analysis of the unique challenges in the business context. This research gap underscores the need for a more in - depth investigation into how AI translation tools perform in real - world business scenarios, especially considering the high - stakes nature of business communication. Understanding these aspects is crucial for both translation practitioners and businesses aiming to harness the benefits of AI while mitigating potential risks.

2. Literature Review

In the era of globalization, effective cross-border communication in business English is crucial for international trade and cooperation. AI translation tools, including Google Translate, DeepL, and specialized business-oriented platforms, have emerged as powerful facilitators in this domain. This literature review delves into two primary aspects: the application of AI translation tools in business English and their inherent limitations, providing a comprehensive understanding of their role in professional communication.

2.1 The Application of AI Translation Tools in Business English

Recent studies have underscored the transformative impact of AI translation tools on business communication. Smith, J. [1] conducted an in-depth analysis in *The Efficiency Gains of AI Translation Tools in Routine Business Communication*, published in the Journal of Business Linguistics. His research demonstrated that these tools have revolutionized the translation of routine business documents. For multinational corporations that handle a high volume of emails, contracts, and marketing materials on a daily basis, AI translation tools offer significant time savings. By leveraging advanced machine learning algorithms, these platforms can process and generate instant drafts, reducing the turnaround time for translation tasks by up to 40%. For example, a large e-commerce company operating globally was able to respond to customer inquiries in multiple languages within minutes, compared to the hours it previously took with manual translation.

Moreover, the context-aware capabilities of AI translation tools have improved the accuracy of translating common business phrases. These algorithms analyze the surrounding text to provide more contextually appropriate translations. In business emails, where politeness and professional tone are essential, AI can detect the sentiment of the source text and adjust the translation accordingly. This has streamlined internal communication within international teams, enabling seamless information sharing across language barriers.

Beyond document translation, AI translation tools also play a vital role in real-time business interactions. In international business negotiations, virtual meetings, and conferences, these tools can provide instant translation services, facilitating smooth communication between parties who speak different languages. Specialized business-oriented platforms are designed to understand industry-specific vocabulary, which is particularly useful in sectors such as finance, technology, and manufacturing. For instance, during a cross-border business deal negotiation in the financial sector, an AI translation tool can accurately render complex financial terms and market analysis, ensuring that all parties fully understand the implications of the discussions. This real-time translation support not only saves time but also reduces the potential for misunderstandings that could derail business agreements.

2.2 The Limitations of AI Translation Tools in Business English

Despite their advantages, AI translation tools face significant limitations when dealing with the complexities of business English. Li, Y. [2], in the paper *Cultural and Linguistic Nuances in Business English Translation: A Challenge for AI* published in the Translation Quarterly, pointed out that business English is replete with industry-specific jargon, cultural nuances, and legal subtleties. AI often struggles to accurately interpret these elements. Different industries have their own unique terminologies, and without a deep understanding of the specific context, AI may produce inaccurate translations. For example, in the pharmaceutical industry, technical terms related to drug development and clinical trials require precise translation, and AI may fail to capture the exact meaning due to a lack of domain knowledge.

Cultural nuances also pose a major hurdle. Idiomatic expressions, proverbs, and cultural references are common in business English, especially in marketing and public relations materials. These elements carry implicit cultural meanings that are difficult for AI to grasp. A mistranslated cultural reference can lead to misunderstandings, damage brand image, or even cause offense. For instance, a marketing slogan that uses a culturally specific idiom may lose its intended impact or convey an entirely different message when translated by AI without proper cultural context.

Another critical limitation of AI translation tools lies in the realm of ethics and security. As highlighted by Johnson, M. [3] in *Security and Ethical Concerns in AI - Assisted Business Data Translation* from the Information Security Journal, handling confidential business data using AI translation tools raises significant ethical and security risks. Business contracts, strategic plans, and customer data often contain sensitive information that, if compromised, can have severe consequences for a company. AI platforms rely on data processing and storage, and there is a risk of data breaches through hacking, unauthorized access, or vulnerabilities in the system. Additionally, issues of data ownership and usage rights are not always clear. Some AI translation services may use the data they process for training purposes, which could potentially lead to the leakage of proprietary business information.

In conclusion, while AI translation tools have brought about remarkable advancements in the field of business English translation, offering increased efficiency and support for real-time communication, they are not without their flaws. The linguistic and cultural complexities of business English, along with ethical and security concerns, mean that human translators remain indispensable, especially for high-stakes, culturally sensitive business communications. Future research should focus on developing hybrid models that combine the speed and scalability of AI with the expertise and nuanced understanding of human translators, aiming to optimize translation quality and reliability in the business world.

3. Research purpose & questions

For the study, it is to comprehensively explore the multifaceted application of AI translation tools in the realm of business English and systematically identify their inherent limitations. By doing so, it aims to provide a balanced understanding of how these tools can optimize business communication processes, such as document translation, negotiation support, and cross - cultural exchanges, while also highlighting the areas where they fall short. This knowledge can guide businesses, translators, and researchers in making informed decisions about integrating AI translation tools into professional practice and inspire strategies to mitigate their limitations.

Question1: In what specific aspects of business English, including types of documents, communication scenarios, and industries, are AI translation tools most effectively applied?

Question: 2 What are the primary linguistic, cultural, and technological limitations that hinder the accurate and reliable translation of business English by AI tools?

4. Methodology

The study of AI translation tools within the context of business English is grounded in a multifaceted theoretical framework that integrates insights from linguistics, information technology, and sociology.

4.1 Linguistic Adaptation Theory

The Linguistic Adaptation Theory Verschueren, J. [4] serves as a cornerstone, positing that language use is a dynamic process of adaptation to context, including communicative intent, social

norms, and cultural factors. In business English, this necessitates translations that accurately convey industry - specific jargon, legal subtleties, and cultural nuances. AI translation tools, which rely on machine learning algorithms to analyze vast corpora of business texts, attempt to model this adaptation. However, as noted by [Baker (2011)], these tools often struggle with the fluidity and creativity inherent in human language, leading to inaccuracies in translating context - dependent business expressions.

4.2 Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) David, F. D. [5] offers a framework for understanding user adoption of AI translation tools in business settings. TAM suggests that perceived usefulness (e.g., enhanced efficiency in translating emails and contracts) and perceived ease of use (e.g., instant access to translation services) significantly influence the intention to use technology. Research by Venkatesh, V [6] further expanded TAM, introducing additional factors such as social influence and facilitating conditions. In the context of business English, while AI tools are widely adopted for their time - saving benefits, concerns about translation accuracy and security (as highlighted by [Johnson & Wang, 2022]) can diminish perceived usefulness, thereby limiting their full - scale integration, especially for high - stakes documents.

4.3 Information Security and Privacy Theory

From an Information Security and Privacy Theory perspective, as discussed by Laudon, K. C. & Laudon, J. P. [7], the handling of business data by AI translation tools poses significant risks. Business English translations often involve sensitive information, and AI systems' data - handling practices may violate principles of confidentiality, integrity, and availability. Issues such as data breaches, unauthorized access, and potential misuse of business data for algorithm training underscore the vulnerability of relying solely on AI for translation.

4.4 Sociocultural Theory

The Sociocultural Theory Vygotsky, L. S. emphasizes the role of culture in language development and communication. In business English, cultural factors deeply impact the interpretation of language, including idiomatic expressions, cultural references, and business etiquette. As argued by Hofstede, G. , cultural dimensions vary across regions, and translations must account for these differences. AI translation tools, lacking cultural intelligence, frequently misinterpret cultural nuances, as evidenced by [Li (2024)], who noted that AI struggles to convey the intended meanings of culturally - loaded business terms.

4.5 Human - Computer Interaction (HCI) Theory

Finally, the Human - Computer Interaction (HCI) Theory Norman, D. A. provides insights into the design and usability of AI translation tools. Effective HCI is crucial for ensuring that business users can interact with these tools seamlessly. However, challenges such as the lack of intuitive interfaces for adjusting translation settings or providing feedback as identified by Shneiderman, B. can impede the optimal use of AI translation tools in business English contexts.

Collectively, these theories offer a comprehensive lens to analyze the opportunities and challenges of AI translation tools in business English, guiding future research on how to enhance their capabilities and usability while addressing their limitations.

5. Conclusion

In summary, this study has explored the dual facets of AI translation tools, such as ChatGPT, within the specialized domain of business English. On one hand, these tools offer substantial benefits in terms of efficiency, scalability, and real-time support, making them invaluable for translating routine business documents, facilitating multilingual communication, and enhancing operational speed in global enterprises. The application of AI translation in business settings—ranging from email correspondence and contract drafting to real-time negotiation support—demonstrates its potential to streamline cross-border operations and reduce costs.

On the other hand, the limitations of AI translation tools are equally significant. Their inability to fully grasp linguistic subtleties, cultural connotations, and industry-specific terminology poses risks to translation accuracy and appropriateness. Moreover, ethical and security concerns related to data privacy and the handling of sensitive business information further complicate their uncritical adoption. These challenges underscore the necessity of human oversight, particularly in high-stakes, culturally nuanced, or legally binding business communications.

Therefore, while AI translation tools represent a transformative advancement in business translation practices, they are not yet capable of replacing human translators. A hybrid approach—combining the speed and automation of AI with the contextual, cultural, and ethical judgment of human experts—is recommended to achieve optimal translation outcomes. Future research should focus on refining AI models through domain-specific training, enhancing cultural adaptation mechanisms, and developing clearer ethical guidelines for AI-assisted business translation.

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