

Samsung to add real-time translation to smartphone model

November 10 2023



Samsung will roll out a real-time call translation service using AI technology next year, the firm says.

Samsung Electronics will roll out a real-time call translation service using AI technology next year, the firm told AFP Friday, claiming it

would make conversing across languages as easy as "turning on closed captions".

Samsung is among a host of tech companies spending billions in a global artificial intelligence gold rush, which has so far seen chatbots that mimic human speech and software that can generate lifelike images and videos.

The firm, the world's largest smartphone maker, says the new real-time translation feature will be incorporated into its new Galaxy flagship model, which will launch early next year.

It will enable "real-time translation in audio and text as the callers are on the line", a company spokesman told AFP, adding that it has not been determined how many languages will be supported.

The translation will be enabled even if a call partner uses a non-Samsung smartphone, as the new model will use "on-device AI technology".

Speaking to someone in a foreign language using the feature will be "as simple as turning on closed captions" on streaming shows, Samsung said in a press release, with private conversations safely locked in on the phones.

Analysts said it would be a "significant achievement" and sign of real technological progress if Samsung's AI could offer real-time translation of voice calls—but questioned how it would work.

"The whole process will take at least three to four seconds during which the AI will understand an original content and translate into a foreign language and then verbalises it to a listener," said Lee Won-kang, head of AI-based translation startup XL8's South Korea operation.

"We will have to actually see and use it ourselves to see how good it is, including whether translated contents will be spoken in AI voice or original voice."

AI sprawl

The unveiling comes as the South Korean firm is racing to develop its generative AI model called Samsung Gauss, which comes in three fields of language, code and image, and is currently used among company staff.

The company will incorporate the AI system into its wide range of products in the near future, it said, without specifying timing or the models.

Samsung's language AI will be able to help with everything from composing emails to summarising documents, while the code AI will help developers to "code easily and quickly", the company said.

Samsung's AI on images will be capable of converting low-resolution images to high-resolution, and also both generating and editing images, it added.

Embedded generative AI "will change how we think about our phones forever", Choi Won-joon, head of Samsung's smartphone R&D sector, said in a statement.

While AI firms have hailed the technology's potential to facilitate major breakthroughs in science, medicine and public services, governments and watchdogs have raised alarms about data privacy and disinformation.

US President Joe Biden issued an executive order last month on regulating AI, the latest in a series of government measures aimed at

curtailing the potential dangers of the technology.

Samsung said in a statement on Thursday that GalaxyAI will run on its devices, and "private conversations never leave your phone".

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Citation: Samsung to add real-time translation to smartphone model (2023, November 10)
retrieved 9 May 2024 from
<https://techxplore.com/news/2023-11-samsung-real-time-smartphone.html>

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