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### (#英语#流利阅读#笔记)

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# 如果一个人语速快,他的脑子就转得更快吗?



# 今日导读

相信很多人都会有这样一种主观感觉,一些语言的语速相对较快,比如意大利语或西班牙语等等。事实也确实如此,研究显示,意大利人平均每秒能说 9 个音节,而德国人只能说5-6 个音节。可是,你有想过不同语言语速差异的原因吗?最新研究还发现了一个很有意思的现象:同样的一篇文章,当它被翻译成不同语言的时候,虽然字数会有所变化,可朗读者都会在大约同一时间念完,这又是为什么呢?今天的这篇文章就为我们解释了语言学里这一特殊的现象。

## 带着问题听讲解

- 如何理解 trade-off 这个词?
- 研究人员是如何获取语言的信息传递速率的?
- 根据本篇文章,为什么研究人员会将语言比作小鸟的翅膀?

# Why are some languages spoken faster than others?

### 为什么一些语言的语速比其它语言更快?



Were this article written in Japanese, it would be longer. A Thai translation, meanwhile, would be shorter. And yet those reading it **aloud**, in either language or in its original English, would finish at roughly the same time. This **peculiar** phenomenon is the subject of new research which finds that languages face a **trade-off** between complexity and speed.

如果这篇文章是用日语写的,它会变得更长;而它的泰语译文则会更短。但不论用日语、泰语还是文章原版的英语,朗读者都会在大致同一时间念完。这种特别的现象正是一项新研究的课题,研究发现,语言需要在其复杂性和语速间寻求一种平衡。

虚拟语气倒装句型(Were ..., it would │ could │ should │ ...)

使用虚拟语气提出一个和既定事实相反的假设。\*例句\*: If the sun were to rise in the west … "假如太阳从西边升起"文中为虚拟语气的倒装句型,省略 If, 将 be 动词提前: \*Were\* this article written in Japanese …, 相当于 \*If\* this article \*were\* written in Japanese ….

In a study published this month in Science Advances, Christophe Coupé, Yoon Mi Oh, Dan Dediu and François Pellegrino start by **quantifying** the information **density** of 17 **Eurasian** languages, <u>as measured</u> by the ease with which each syllable can be guessed

based on the **preceding** one. Next, they record the rate at which 170 native speakers read 15 texts out loud. Finally, **armed** with data about the information contained in a piece of text and the speed at which it can be spoken, the authors **derive** the rate at which information is communicated.

在本月《科学进展》期刊上发表的一篇研究里,联合作者克里斯托夫·库佩、吴尹美(音)、丹·德迪乌和弗朗索瓦·佩莱格里诺采取了如下步骤: 首先,他们将欧亚语系下的17种语言的信息密度进行量化,方法是衡量根据上一个音节猜出下一个音节的容易程度。接着,他们记录下170位各语言母语者朗读15篇文本的速度。最后,通过分析单篇文本所含信息量及其朗读速度的相关数据,这些作者获得了相应语言的信息传输速率。

#### "as + 过去分词"的用法

"as + 过去分词"是个很常见的表达,这里的 as measured by sth. 就表示"以某种方式衡量的"。as evidenced by sth. 可以用来在写作中引证支持自己的观点。\*例句\*: Trump is an impulsive man, as evidenced by his remarks on social media. (美国总统特朗普冲动鲁莽的性格,正如他在社交媒体上表现出来的一样)

The results suggest that there is an **optimal** range of speeds within which the brain can process information most efficiently. Speakers of simple languages **pick up the pace** to keep conversations brief. Speakers of complex languages **exert** more effort planning sentences and **articulating** syllables, causing discussions to **drag on**. "It is like bird wings," says Dr Coupé, one of the authors, "you may have big ones that need few **beats** per second or you have to really flap the little ones you got, but the result is pretty much the same in **terms of** flying."

研究结果表明,存在一个最佳语速区间,在这个区间内,大脑能够以最高效率来处理信息。说"简单"(信息密度低)语言的人会加快语速,使对话变得简短;而说"复杂"(信息密度高)语言的人则会花更多功夫在遣词造句和清晰吐字上,导致讨论时间拖长。"这就好比鸟的翅膀,"其中一名作者库佩博士说,"你可能有一对大翅膀,每秒只需振翅几下;或者有一对小翅膀,那就真得使劲儿扑扇,不过,在飞行速度上,两者最终基本一致。"

## 重点词汇

#### aloud

əˈlaʊd adv. 出声地,能听见地

相关词汇: loud (adj./adv. 大声, 响亮)

英文释义: not silently

**例句**: Read the story aloud.

搭配短语: think aloud

## peculiar

pɪˈkjuːl.jə adj. 独特的,特别的;奇怪的

**例句**: This is a question of peculiar interest. (独特的)

### trade-off

tre id. arf n. (在需要且相互对立的两者间的) 平衡, 协调

相关词汇: trade (v. 贸易, 交易)

相关词汇: trade off A for B (用 A 换取 B)

英文释义: a balance between two desirable but incompatible things (balance: 平衡;

desirable: 渴望获得的; incompatible: 不相容的)

## quantify

ˈkwaɪn.tə.faɪ v. 量化,表示(或测量)...的数量

相关词汇: quantity (n. 数量) 相关词汇: quality (n. 质量)

相关词汇: qualify (v. 给…做限定)

**例句**: Emotional trauma is almost impossible to quantify.

## density

'den.sə.ţi n. 密度

### Eurasian

jʊrˈe**ɪ.ʒə**n adj. 欧亚的

相关词汇: European (adj.)

相关词汇: Asian (adj.)

## preceding

prəˈsiː.dɪŋ adj. 前面的,在前的

近义词: previous (adj.)

搭配短语: the previous sentence

搭配短语: the preceding sentence

#### arm

arm v. 配备,准备;提供(枪、武器)

**例句**: She armed herself with some background information.

### derive

dīˈraīv v. (从...中) 获得,得到

例句: I derive great pleasure from reading.

### optimal

ˈaɪp.tə.məl adj. 最优的,最理想的

搭配短语: to seek the optimal solution to the problem

例句: I'm afraid this proposal is less than optimal.

## pick up the pace

加速

相关词汇: pace (n. 步伐; 速度; 节奏)

搭配短语: keep pace with sb. (并驾齐驱)

搭配短语: set the pace for sth. (在...上领先、起标杆作用)

**例句**: The Wandering Earth has set the pace for Chinese science fiction movies.

#### exert

*ɪgˈzɜʰt* v. 施加(影响);运用

搭配短语: exert influence

搭配短语: exert all your strength

### articulate

aɪrˈtɪk.jə.leɪt v. 清晰吐字,清晰发音;明确表达(想法、情感等)

**例句**: Knowing when to articulate your thoughts is a bit of an art for many professionals.

### drag on

拖得太久, 持续太久

反义词: pick up the pace

**例句**: The day was dragging on...

### beat

*bist* n. (翅的) 一振, 扑扇

# flap

flæp v. 拍动 (翅膀) ,振翅

in terms of

就...而言,在...方面

## 拓展阅读

### 语速各异 效率相同

法国里昂大学团队的研究人员在分析了 17 种语言之后发现,人类语言传输信息的速度为每秒 39 比特。尽管不同语言有不同的语速,但它们传递信息的效率都大体相同。

研究人员表示,虽然语言的编码策略各有差异,语速也不尽相同,但在信息传输上,没有所谓的"高效"之分。以西班牙语和汉语为例,西班牙语的语速较快,它在较短的时间内使用了许多音节,但实际上每个音节包含的信息量却很少;汉语尽管语速很慢,但每个单词传递了更多的信息;所以不管语速快或慢,语言传达信息的效率是基本一致的。这一发现突出了语言的两面性,即当语言信息变得更加密集的时候,会阻碍大脑处理数据和清晰表达语言的能力,说话人自然需要放慢语速来理解信息,这也是大脑限制语音传输速率的瓶颈所在。