

SFGate.com October 23 2007

The Tech Chronicles

Learn a new language with your cell phone

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We're not at the point yet where we have machines that can translate our speech into another language in real time. But the good people at [edioma](#) are working to leverage the cell phone to help bridge the language divide.

The company on Monday released a new service with Spanish language cellular operator [Movida](#) that allows Spanish speakers to learn helpful English phrases through their cell phone.

The service works in two ways: you can have up to ten kits that have dozens of phrases and words tied to situational needs like banking or shopping. When a speaker needs to say something in English, they just look up the phrase in Spanish and then choose one. On the screen, the English phrase pops up while a voice speaks the words in English. A user can either listen and repeat the words, hand the phone to an English listener or use the service to memorize the phrases for later.

The application also offers educational games that help teach people a second language. The first service for Movida is a soccer-based game called *egoal*, which will be available to 300,000 Movida subscribers. Since the service was first available on Friday, there have already been 8,000 downloads of the game.

The first users will likely be Spanish speakers working in the U.S. who would like to increase their English vocabulary and proficiency. Edioma officials said studies have shown that Spanish speakers in the U.S. can gain \$1 million in lifetime salary if they have English skills.

But the application isn't just for Spanish speakers. Edioma envisions this working for executives working overseas in Spanish speaking countries. You just swap out the words and change some of the phrases and there you go.

The company also has high hopes to release a Mandarin version that will be available to more than 300 million handsets in China. The thinking is that if it can be released by April of next year, it will be a hit with Beijing taxi drivers and hotel workers who want to help English speakers in town for the Olympics. It might also be helpful for English speakers fumbling with the language in China. After Mandarin, Edioma plans to tackle Hindi.

[Sprint](#) is expected to launch the application next month though it's unclear how much each kit will cost. The downloadable application should work on more than 160 million phones in the U.S.