

Funny Translation Errors

- **Chinese:**

- The name Coca-Cola in China was first rendered as *Ke-kou-ke-la*. Unfortunately, the Coke company did not discover until after thousands of signs had been printed that the phrase means "bite the wax tadpole" or "female horse stuffed with wax" depending on the dialect. Coke then researched 40,000 Chinese characters and found a close phonetic equivalent, *ko-kou-ko-le*, which can be loosely translated as "happiness in the mouth".
- When translated into Chinese, the Kentucky Fried Chicken slogan "finger-lickin' good" came out as "eat your fingers off".
- In a Hong Kong supermarket: "For your convenience, we recommend courageous, efficient self-service".
- Outside a Hong Kong tailor's shop: "Ladies may have a fit upstairs".
- In an advertisement by a Hong Kong dentist: "Teeth extracted by the latest Methodists".
- On the box of a clockwork toy made in Hong Kong: "Guaranteed to work throughout its useful life".

- **French:**

- Hunt-Wesson introduced its Big John products in French Canada as Gros Jos before finding out that the phrase, in slang, means "big breasts". In this case, however, the name problem did not have a noticeable effect on sales.¹
- Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called Cue, the name of a notorious porno mag