AN APPLICATION: PART 2

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1. Introduction

Last year, while working on a paper, one has uncovered an old attempt at an automated translation using several translation engines which dates back to 2010. (See Figure 1.)

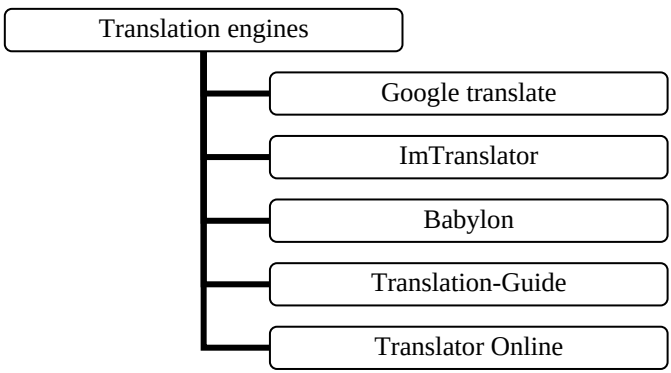


Figure 1: A graphic representation of the list of translation engines used to translate the text in 2010

As one was preparing to write a small article on the topic of automated translation, it was a genuine stroke of luck, as one has found it to be a suitable example for use therein.

For practical purposes one will reiterate the original text, a piece from *From Russia with Love*, by Ian Flemming:

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«The car sped through the deserted streets, past shadowy mosques from which dazzling minarets lanced up towards the three-quarter moon, under the ruined Aqueduct and across the Ataturk Boulevard and north of the barred entrances to the Grand Bazaar. At the Column of Constantine the car turned right, through mean twisting streets that smelled of garbage, and finally debouched into a long ornamental square in which three stone columns fired themselves like a battery of space-rockets into the spangled sky.

“Slow,” said Kerim softly. They crept round the square under the shadow of the lime trees. Down a street on the east side, the lighthouse below the Seraglio Palace gave them a great yellow wink.

“Stop.”

The car pulled up in the darkness under the limes. Kerim reached for the door handle.

“We shan't be long, James. You sit up front in the driver's seat and if a policeman comes along just say ‘Ben Bey Kerim'in ortagiyim’. Can you remember that? It means ‘I am Kerim Bey's partner’. They'll leave you alone.”

Bond snorted. “Thanks very much. But you'll be surprised to hear I'm coming with you.”»

However, despite one’s genuine interest in the topic, due to external conditions beyond one’s control, time was in short supply. Consequently, one could actually do very little. At the very least, though, one was able to fit in a translation of the text. (See Figure 2.)

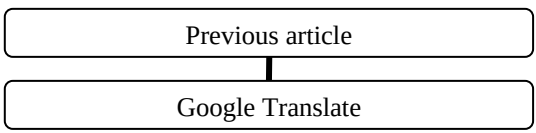


Figure 2: A graphic representation of the translation engine used to translate the text in the previous article

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But one would like to do more in that sense. One would like to write a little bit about the versions of the translation produced at the same time by using other translation engines, namely *ImTranslator*, *Babylon*, *Translation-Guide* and *Translator Online*. (See Figure 3)

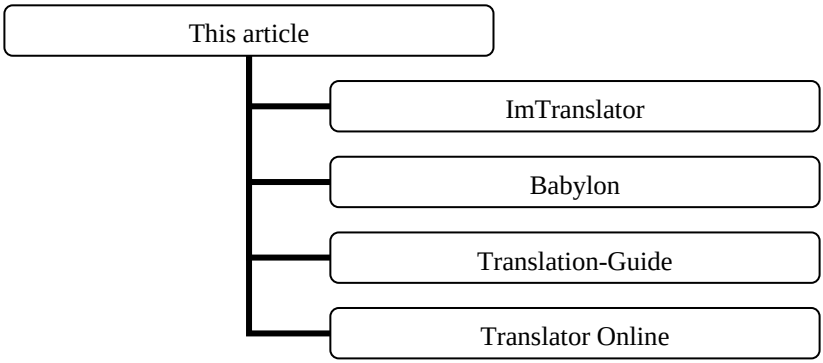


Figure 3: A graphic representation of the list of translation engines used to translate the text in this article

2. Using *ImTranslator*

First, Let us consider this example of round-trip translation of the same text, *From Russia with Love*, this time performed by *ImTranslator* from English to Romanian, then back into English.

The translation from English to Romanian is readable, but only partially understandable. The problems are related to syntax, more specifically to the word order, and to semantics, that is to say figures of speech which are simply not translated:

«Masina accelerat pe străzile pustii, moschei trecut umbre din care minarete orbitor lanced până spre lună trei trimestru, sub Apeductului ruinat şi în întreaga Bulevardul Ataturk şi la nord de intrarile blocate la Marele Bazar. La Coloana lui Constantin masina sa transformat dreptul, prin răsucirea înseamnă străzile că mirosea a gunoi, şi în cele din urmă debouched într-un pătrat ornamentale lung, în care trei coloane de piatra s-au tras ca o baterie de rachete în spațiu-cer împestrițat.

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„Slow”, a spus Kerim încet. Ei s-au strecurat rotund pătrat sub umbra de tei. Pe o stradă pe partea de est, farul de mai jos Palatul serai le-a dat un pupic mare galben.

„Stop.”

Masina tras în sus în întuneric sub limes-ului. Kerim a ajuns pentru mânerul uşii. „Noi nu trebuie să fie lungi, James. Tu stai în faţă pe scaunul şoferului şi în cazul în care un poliţist vine de-a lungul spune doar ‘Ben Bey Kerim'in ortagiyim’. Poate vă amintiţi că? Aceasta înseamnă ‘Eu sunt partener Kerim Bey lui’. Vă vor lăsa în pace.”

Bond inhalat. „Multumesc foarte mult. Dar vei fi surprins să aud eu vin cu tine.’ “»

The back-translation into English is a lot more intelligible than the translation into Romanian. There are very few mistakes, and they relate to word-word translation. But ultimately, the back-translation is fairly similar to the original text:

«The car sped through the deserted streets, past mosques minarets dazzling shades of which three month until the weak quarter, below and around the ruined Aqueduct Ataturk Boulevard and north of the blocked entrances to the Grand Bazaar. Column of Constantine the car turned right, by means twisting streets that smelled of garbage, and finally a square ornamental debouched long, the three stone columns have been drawn as a battery of missiles in space-sky spangled.

“Slow”, Kerim said slowly. They crept round the square under the shade of lime. On a street on the east side, dipped below the Seraglio Palace gave them a big kiss yellow.

“Stop.”

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“Slow”, Kerim said slowly. They crept round the square under the shade of lime. The car pulled up in the dark under the limes. Kerim reached for the door handle. “We should not be long, James. You sit in front of the driver's seat and if a policeman comes along only say ‘Ben Bey Kerim'in ortagiyim’. Maybe you remember that? It means ‘I am his partner Kerim Bey.’ We will leave you alone.”

Bond inhaled. “Thank you very much. But you may be surprised to hear I'm coming with you.”»

3. Using *Babylon*

The second example of round-trip translation of the same text to consider in this article is the one performed by *Babylon* from English to Romanian, then back into English.

The translation from Romanian to English suffers from the usual problem of word-to word translation, choosing the wrong Romanian equivalent, which is probably due to incorrect tagging. There is also defective chunking and parsing. The result is a barely understandable text:

«In masina gonira prin a parasit strada, trecutul intunecat moschei din care orbitor s lanced pana spre a trei sferturi Luna, sub ruine printr si peste ataturk Bulevard si Nord de anuleaza intrarile din marele bazar. La coloana de Constantin in masina s-a transformat dreptul, prin rasucirea inseamna strazi care mirosea de gunoaie, si in cele din urma debouched intr-un lung patrat ornamentale din care trei coloane piatra tras singuri ca o baterie de spatiu-rachete in prin cerul.

„lenta,” declarat kerim incet. Ele se furisa in jurul patrat sub umbra de var pomii. pe o strada pe partea de rasarit, farul sub seraglio Palatul le-a dat o mare galben ochiul.

„oprirea.”

In masina scoase in intuneric sub lamai mici. kerim atins pentru clanta. „Am Sha nu-i fi lunga, James. Ai sta fata in locul soferului si

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daca un politist vine impreuna doar spune ‘Ben bey kerim in ortagiyim‘. Va mai aduceti aminte ca? Ceea ce inseamna ‘Eu sunt kerim bey partenerul lui’. Or sa te las singur.”

Bond pufni. „Va multumesc foarte mult. Dar te vei fi surprins sa aud ca vin cu tine.”»

The back-translation into English is itself very difficult, since it is based on an incoherent text. Moreover it is full of mistakes relating to style like incorrect punctuation and the use of lower case letters where capitalisation is required:

«In the car sped through the deserted streets, past dark mosques in the broad and dazzling s lanced up to three-quarters month under ruins by over ataturk Avenue and north of barred entrances to the Grand bazaar. The column of Constantin machine has turned right, by means twisting streets that smelled of garbage, and finally debouched into a long ornamental Square in which three stone columns pulled ourselves as a poultryhouse of rockets into space-through the sky.

“Slow,” said kerim slowly. They crept around the square under the shadow of lime trees. on a street on the east side, seraglio lighthouse under Palace gave them a big yellow eye.

“Stop.”

In the car pulled out in darkness under limes. kerim reached the doorknob. “I sha not be long, James. You sit face to driver's seat and if a policeman coming together just says ‘Ben bey kerim' in ortagiyim.’ Do you remember that? Which means ‘I am kerim bey's partner’. But to leave you alone.“

Bond snorted. “Thank you very much. But you would be surprised to hear that come with you.”»

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4. Using *Translation-Guide*

The third example of round-trip translation of the same text is, in this article, the one performed by *Translation-Guide* from English to Romanian, then back into English.

The translation from English to Romanian is an interesting mix of text and metatext, i.e. instead of using definite articles, they are just marked, and in the wrong place too. It is also a text sprinkled with the odd English word left in its original form:

«Art.hot. automobil sped gît art.hot. deserted stradă , trecut a umbri mosques de la care dazzling minarets lanced sus towards art.hot. trei - sfert moon , jos art.hot. ruined Aqueduct şi vizavi art.hot. Ataturk Boulevard şi nord de la agrafă de păr intrare la Măreț Bazaar. La art.hot. Columbia de Constantine art.hot. automobil nap right , gît mean twisting stradă that smelled de garbage, şi definitiv debouched into un lung ornamental pătrat înăuntru care trei piatră Columbia ars themselves asemănător un baterie de perioadă - rachetă into art.hot. spangled cer.

„Slow," said Kerim moale. Ei crept rotund art.hot. pătrat jos art.hot. a umbri de la var arbore. Jos un stradă pe est parte , art.hot. lighthouse sub art.hot. Seraglio Palace acordat pe ei un mare galben wink.

„Stop."

Art.hot. automobil împins sus în darkness jos art.hot. var. Kerim reached pentru art.hot. uşă mîner. "We shan't a fi lung, James. Tu sit sus față în şofer scaun şi dacă un polițist a veni along chiar say 'Ben Bey Kerim'in ortagiyim'. Poți tu a-şi aminti that? It means 'I sînt Kerim Bey's partener'. Ei plecare tu alone."

Angajament sforăit. "Thanks foarte mult. Numai you'll a fi surprised la spre inimă I'm venire cu tu."»

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The back-translation from Romanian into English is no different. The only noticeable difference is that it is almost impossible to read. It too is peppered with Romanian, but it is also strewed with strings of letters which make absolutely no sense. Then there is the punctuation, which, put simply, doesn't really help the reader:

«The car sped gît the deserted street, past shade mosques from what dazzling minarets lanced up towards the. three quarter moon , under the. ruined Aqueduct Ĺźi across the. Ataturk Boulevard şi north from agrafă from păr doorway at Marele Bazaar. At the. Columbia from Constantine the. car turnip right gît mean twisting street that smelled from garbage şi finally debouched into an long lace pătrat înăuntru what three stone Columbia fired themselves asemănător an battery from data rachetă into the spangled sky.

"Slow," said Kerim soft. Her crept round the. pătrat under the. shade from lime tree. Under an street pe east side , the. lighthouse below the. Seraglio Castle gave them an great yellow wink.

"Stop."

The car Ă®mpins up Ă®n darkness under the. lime Kerim reached for the uşă mâner. "We shan't be long , James. You sit up față în şofer chair şi dacă an polițist come along just say 'Ben Bey Kerim'in ortagiyim'. Poți you of şi souvenir that? It means 'I sînt Kerim Bey's partner'. Her departure you alone."

Bond sforăit. 'Thanks a lot. But you'll be surprised at at heart I'm coming with you.»

5. Using *Translator Online*

The fourth example of round-trip translation of the same text to consider here, is the one performed by *Translator Online* from English to Romanian, then back into English:

The translation from Romanian to English is simply incomplete. The word order is, at times, difficult. The choice of words can

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sometimes lead to odd constructions. The result is that only two sentences are correct:

«Masina accelerat pe străzile pustii, moschei trecut umbre din care minarete orbitor lanced până spre lună trei trimestru, sub Apeductului ruinat şi în întreaga Bulevardul Ataturk şi la nord de intrarile blocate la Marele Bazar. La Coloana lui Constantin masina sa transformat dreptul, prin răsucirea înseamnă străzile că mirosea a gunoi, şi în cele din urmă debouched într-un pătrat ornamentale lung, în care trei coloane de piatra s-au tras ca o baterie de rachete în spațiu-cer împestrițat.

„Slow", a spus Kerim încet. Ei s-au strecurat rotund pătrat sub umbra de tei. Pe o stradă pe partea de est, farul de mai jos Palatul serai le-a dat un pupic mare galben.

„Stop."

Masina tras în sus în întuneric sub limes-ului. Kerim a ajuns pentru mânerul uşii. „Noi nu trebuie să fie lungi, James. Tu stai în față pe scaunul şoferului şi în cazul în care un polițist de-a lungul vine spune doar 'Ben Bey ortagiyim Kerim.' Poate vă amintiți că? Aceasta înseamnă 'Eu sunt partenerul lui Kerim Bey.' Vă vor lăsa în pace."

Bond inhalat. „Multumesc foarte mult. Dar vei fi surprins să aud eu vin cu tine."»

The back-translation into English is not quite as unfortunate as translation into Romanian. It is a bit more intelligible which may be explained by the fact that it was never really translated in the first place. One could argue that the text was labelled into Romanian, but with keeping its original structure only to be re-labelled back into Romanian. However, this re-labelling is far from perfect:

«The car sped through the deserted streets, past mosques minarets dazzling shades of which three month until the weak quarter, below

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and around the ruined Aqueduct Ataturk Boulevard and north of the blocked entrances to the Grand Bazaar. Column of Constantine the car turned right, by means twisting streets that smelled of garbage, and finally a square ornamental debouched long, the three stone columns have been drawn as a battery of missiles in space-sky spangled.

"Slow, slow" Kerim said. They crept round the square under the shade of lime. On a street on the east side, dipped below the Seraglio Palace gave them a big kiss yellow.

"Stop."

The car pulled up in the dark under the limes. Kerim reached for the door handle. "We should not be long, James. You sit in front of the driver's seat and if a policeman come along only say 'Ben ortagiyim Kerim Bey.' Maybe you remember that? This means 'I am his partner Kerim Bey.' We will leave you alone."

Bond inhaled. "Thank you very much. But you may be surprised to hear I'm coming with you."»

6. Conclusions

One could easily notice that there were different degrees of readability and different degrees of intelligibility. An explanation of this phenomenon may lie in the way each translation engine works. To simplify matters, one could say that some engines are better suited to translate literary texts than others. The have a much larger library or corpus of examples, and, thus make less mistakes.

However, one should also keep in mind the fact that this translation event occurred in 2010. From this perspective, one may come to the understanding that, despite the very obvious multitude of shortcomings, these are true examples of machine translation.

Moreover, in absolute terms, these translations were no better and worse than the one produced by Google Translate at the same time and discussed at length in the previous article.

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Online resources

1 ImTranslator (http://freetranslation.imtranslator.net/)
2 Babylon (http://translation.babylon.com/)
3 Translation-Guide (www.translation-guide.com/free_online_translators.php? retrieved)
4 Translator Online (http://www.translator-online.ro/)

O APLICAȚIE: PARTEA 2

Rezumat

Cuvinte-cheie: *traduceri automate, traduceri dus-întors*

Traducerile din acest articol prezintă diverse grade lizibilitate şi de inteligibilitate. Explicația simplă este că unele servicii de traducere sunt mai potrivite pentru texte literare decât altele. Dacă luăm în considerare faptul că aceste traduceri au avut loc în 2010 când corpusurile acestor servicii nu erau atât de complexe, traducerile sunt totuşi nişte realizări. Mai mult, aceste traduceri sunt, în aproximativ de aceeaşi calitate ca cea a traducerii din articolul anterior pe aceeaşi temă.

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