A SHORT STUDY ABOUT GOOGLE ONLINE TRANSLATION SERVICE: ROMANIAN AND SERBIAN TRANSLATION OF COMPUTER AND TECHNICAL TERMS[1]

Laura SPĂRIOSU
University of Novi Sad

Abstract

This aim of this paper is to investigate the efficiency of online translation services. Bearing in mind the fact that many words do not have a unique translation and sometimes alternate translations have very different meanings on the one hand, that dictionaries may lack some terms that are essential for a correct interpretation on the other hand, it is the intention of the author, using *Google Online Translation Service*, to examine if this kind of service could be useful in translation work. Therefore a corpus of 50 computer terms and a corpus of 50 technical terms from the Romanian language will be translated into the Serbian language and vice versa – from Serbian into Romanian. A success rate of translation and translation accuracy for both categories of terms will be calculated and the research results will be presented statistically.

Key words: *Google Online Translation Service*, *Romanian*, *Serbian*, *category*, *computer terms*

Résumé

Le but du présent article est d'étudier l'efficacité des services de traduction virtuelle. Prénant en considération le fait que bon nombre de mots n'ont pas d'équivalent unique en traduction et que, parfois, d'une part les variantes alternatives ont des significations fortement différentes les unes des autres ainsi que, d'autre part, les dictionnaires courants pourraient-ils avoir ignoré des termes qui peuvent bien s'avérer essentiels en vue d'une interprétation correcte, l'intention de l'auteur est, en faisant usage du *Service Google de Traduction Virtuelle*, de faire savoir si ce genre de service peut ou non être utile à l'œuvre de traduction. C'est pourquoi un corpus de 50 termes techniques et un autre de 50 termes d'informatique vont être traduits du roumain en serbe et vice-versa, du serbe en roumain. Pour les deux catégories de termes, les rendements du succès dans la traduction et de l'acribie de cette dernière vont être calculés et les résultats de notre recherche vont être présentés ensuite sous forme statistique.

Mots-clés: *service de traduction virtuelle*, (*le*) *roumain*, (*le*) *serbe*, *catégorie*, *termes techniques*

[1] This study was written as a part of the Grant No. 178002 *Jezici i kulture u vremenu i prostoru* "Languages and Cultures in Time and Space".

BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)

Theoretical Approach

Dictionaries are changing. Rapidly. Whereas paper dictionaries still ruled the market until a decade ago, the large-scale commercial production of electronic dictionaries has boomed since the mid-1990s. Today, dictionaries on CD-ROM typically come in the back pocket of their hardcopy counterparts, while the number of dictionaries on the Internet already runs into tens of thousands (de Schryver, 2003).

The computer and the Internet have also become indispensable to the lives of educated people. As a result, ways of obtaining information have greatly changed. The readership of the printed media appears to have been gradually decreasing, something that may also happen with dictionaries. It has for example been noted that three media for dictionaries – paper, electronic gadgets, and the Internet – are now about equally popular with students. Gone therefore are the days when paper dictionaries dominated the reference world (Li, 2005).

Although in 1998 there were no less than 400 English online dictionaries on the world wide web, most of them regarded as lacking linguistic completeness (Li, 1998: 21), *world language.com* claims that 1521 dictionary products (are) now available in 161 languages, and *Onlook dictionary.com* has indexed 992 dictionaries, as compared to 188 in 1997 (Li, 2005).

When online dictionaries first came into being, few were produced by major publishers or lexicographers and were not particularly reliable. However, the situation has changed greatly in the past few years. Nearly all major traditional dictionaries now have online versions, whether partial or full, paid or free: they simply cannot afford to lose this battlefield and have tried to develop leading roles in providing language reference products and services on the Internet. Detailed lexicographic information that is almost as good as in traditional hard copies of dictionaries is now available on screen, and it has become possible to copy their content to a file. Quality has improved and speed in finding what one wants has increased, making it possible to look up a word while working on one's computer (Li, 2005).

Although anyone looking for a definition of a word can simply do an Internet search and hope that a definition appears, most librarians would agree that using an online dictionary is the preferred research strategy not only because the results appear quickly, but because most online dictionaries are based on reputable print dictionaries. What follows are recommended free online dictionaries for providing a definition, pronunciation, etymology, and written and audio pronunciation of a word (Bulson, 2010).

At present, the contents of online dictionaries can be as good as their traditional paper equivalents. If a screen does not contain everything one wants, further lexicographic information can be obtained by clicking on a hyperlink (Li, 2005: 17, 18).

Many studies – Atkins (1996), Laufer, & Hadar (1997), Laufer, & Melamed (1994), Luppescu, & Day (1993), Thompson (1987), suggest the importance of bilingual dictionaries in translation. However there are some issues that should be discussed. According to Oard (1997) many words do not have a unique translation and sometimes the alternate translations have very different meanings on the one hand; moreover, dictionaries may lack some terms that are essential for a correct interpretation on the other hand. Bearing all that in mind, we decided to investigate the efficiency of Google Online Translation Service, translating computer and technical terms from the Romanian language into the Serbian anguage and vice versa – from Serbian into Romanian.

BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)

Research Results

Research corpus

The research corpus consists of 50 computer terms and 50 technical terms[2]:

1. Computer terms: *acces/ pristup* "access", *adapter/ adapter* "adapter", *antivirus/ antivirus* "antivirus", *ataşament/ prilog* "attachment", *backup/ bekap* "backup", *baza de date/ baza podataka* "data base", *bit/ bit* "bit", *bluetooth/ blutut* "bluetooth", *browser/ brauzer*, *pregledač* "browser", *byte/ bajt* "byte", *cache/ keširanje* "cache", *CD/ CD* "CD", *chat/ ćaskanje*, *čet* "chat", *cookie/ kolačić* "cookie", *cooler/ kuler* "cooler", *computer*, *calculator/ kompjuter*, *računar* "computer", *cursor/ kursor* "cursor", *domeniu/ domen* "domain", *download, a descărca/ preuzimanje* "download", *driver/ drajver* "driver", *email/ imejl* "email", *hard disc/ hard disk* "hard disc", *hardware/ hardver* "hardware", *homepage/ naslovna strana/ naslovna strana* "homepage", *hyperlink/ hiperlink*, *hiperveza* "hyperlink", *imprimantă/ štampač*, *printer* "printer", *infectare/ zaraza* "infection", *internet/ internet* "internet", *laptop/ laptop* "laptop", *link/ veza*, *link* "link", *login/ logovanje* "login", *modem/ modem* "modem", *monitor, ecran/ monitor, ekran* "screen", *placă de bază/ matična ploča* "motherboard", *mouse/ miš* "mouse", *a naviga/ surfovati* "to surf", *offline/ oflajn* "offline", *online/ onlajn* "online", *pagina web/ veb strana* "web page", *parolă/ šifra* "password", *pixel/ piksel* "pixel", *program/ program* "program", *rețea/ mreža* "network", *site/ sajt* "site", *software/ softver* "software", *spam/ spem* "spam", *tastatură/ tastatura* "keyboard",*USB/ USB* "USB", *viru / virus* "virus", *zip/ zip* "zip".

2. Technical terms: *airbag/ vazdušni jastuk* "airbag", *alarmă/ alarm* "alarm", *alternator/ alternator* "alternator", *ambreiaj/ kvačilo* "clutch", *baterie/ akumulator* "battery", *cablu/ kabel* "cable", *carburator/ karburator* "carburetor", *caroserie/ karoserija* "bodywork", *catalizator/ katalizator* "catalyst", *celular/ mobilni telefon* "cell phone", *compresie/ kompresija* "compression", *condensator/ kondenzator* "capasitor", *consolă/ konzola* "console", *detonație/ detonacija* "detonation", *diodă/ dioda* "diode", *dummy/ lutka za testiranje sudara* "dummy", *electron/ elektron* "electron", *energie/ energija* "energy", *faruri/ svetla* "headlight", *filtru/ filter* "filter", *frână/ kočnica* "break", *izolație/ izolacija* "isolation", *lanțuri/ lanci* "chains", *laser/ laser*, "laser", *leasing/ lizing* "leasing", *mecansim/ mehanizam* "mechanism", *microfon/ mikrofon* "microphone", *motor/ motor* „engine", *navigare/ navigacija* "navigation", *parbriz/ šoferšajbna* "windshield", *platformă/ platforma* "platform", *pneuri/ gume* "tires", *pompă/ pumpa* "pump", *presiune/ pritisak* "pressure", *proiector/ projektor* "projector", *putere/ snaga* "power", *robot/ robot* "robot", *rotație/ rotacija* "rotation", *senzor/ senzor* "sensor", *sondă/ sonda* "sonde", *telecomandă/ daljinski upravljač* "remote", *termostat/ termostat* "thermostat", *tracțiune/ trakcija, prijanjanje* "traction", *transmisie/ prenos* "transmission", *turbină/ turbina* "turbine", *ulei/ ulje* "oil", *vehicul/ motorno vozilo* "vehicle", *vagon/ vagon* "wagon", *viteză/ brzina* "speed", *volan/ volan* "wheel".

Terms from both categories are translated from Romanian into Serbian, as well as from Serbian into Romanian; a success rate of translation and translation accuracy per each category of terms is calculated and the research results are presented statistically.

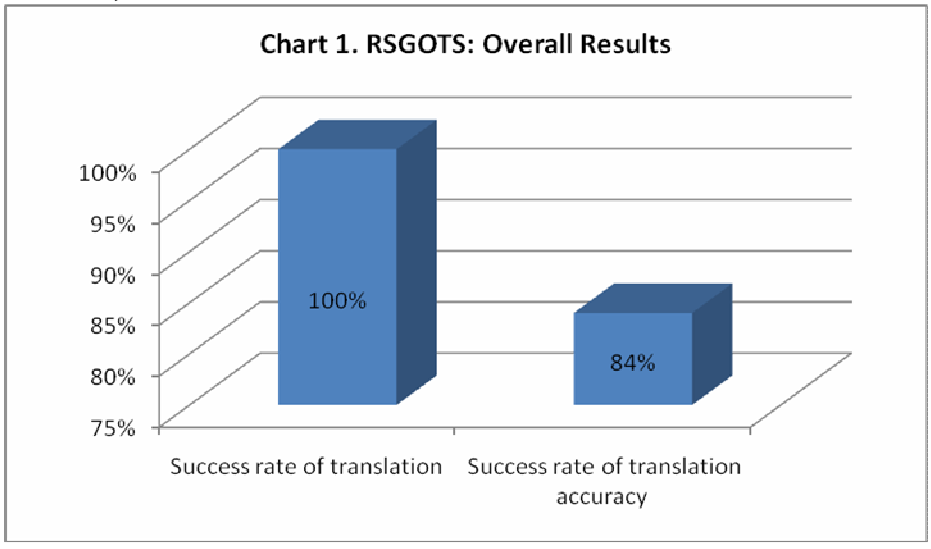
[2] In listing the terms from both categories, the Romanian term is the first, the Serbian term is the second and the English translation is the third.

BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)

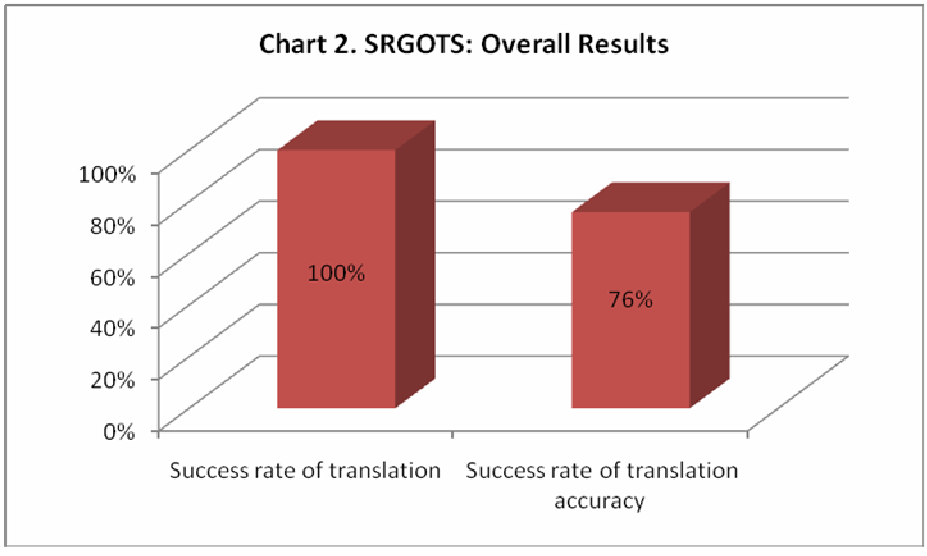
3. Research corpus analysis

3.1. Computer terms analysis

According to the results related to the Romanian-Serbian Google Online Translation Service (RSGOTS), it could be concluded that out of 50 terms, all 50 are translated; for each term there is one translation variant. Based on these results, a 100% success rate of translation is calculated; however the succes rate of translation accuracy is lower: 84%, since 8 translations are inaccurate.



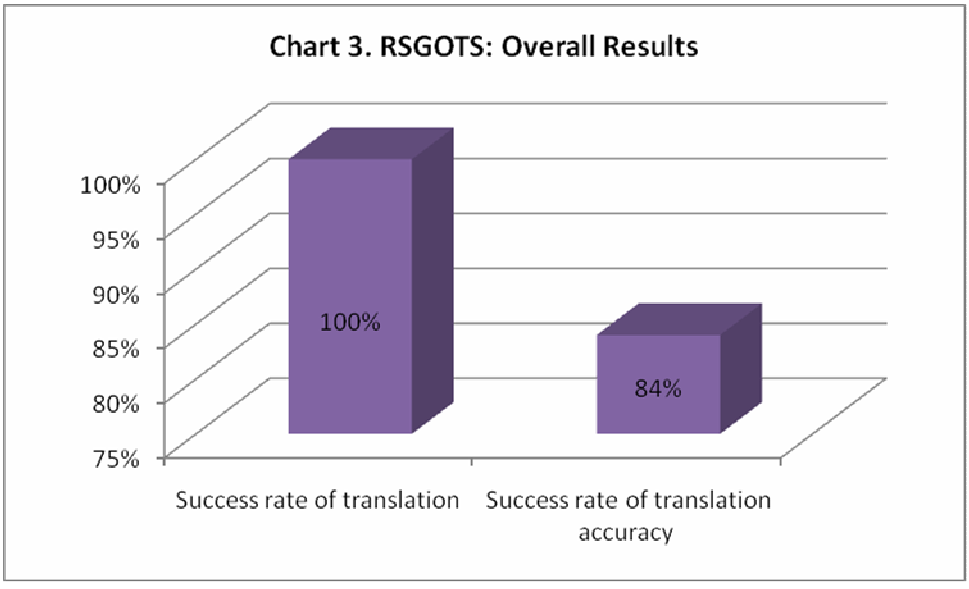
Speaking of the research results related to the Serbian-Romanian Google Online Translation Service (SRGOTS), out of 50 terms, all 50 are translated; for each term there is one translation variant. Based on these results, a 100% success rate of translation is calculated; as in previous case, with 12 inaccurate translations, the succes rate of translation accuracy is also lower: 76%.



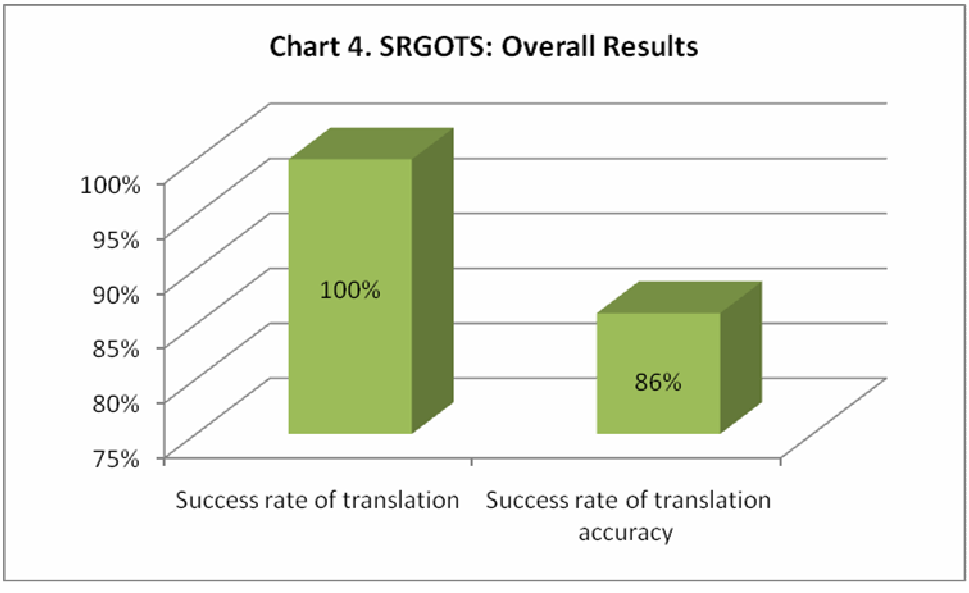
BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)

3.1.2. Technical terms analysis

Results related to the RSGOTS coincide with the results related to computer terms: 50 translated terms out of 50, with one translation variant for each term; a 100% success rate of translation is calculated, but the succes rate of translation accuracy is also lower: 84%, with 8 inaccurate translations.



Speaking of the research results related to the SRGOTS, there are also 50 translated terms out of 50 and one translation variant for each term. Also, a 100% success rate of translation is calculated; still, with 7 inaccurate translations, the succes rate of translation accuracy is lower compared to the translation success rate: 86%.



BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)

Conclusions

According to the research results, it could be concluded that the RSGOTS was more efficient in translation of computer terms than the SRGOTS. In both cases there are no untranslated terms, which makes a translation success rate of 100%. However, there are some issues related to translation accuracy: there are 8 inaccurate translations in the RSGOTS, 12 inaccurate translations in the SRGOTS. Based on these results, success rate of translation accuracy is higher for the RSGOTS than for the SRGOTS: 84% vs. 76%. Moreover, speaking of both translation services, only one translation variant for each term was found.

As for technical terms, there is the opposite – the SRGOTS was more efficient in translation than the RSGOTS. Although in both cases there are no untranslated terms, which makes a success rate of translation of 100%, the success rate of translation accuracy is slightly higher for the SRGOTS than for the RSGOTS: 86% (6 inaccurate translations) vs. 84% (8 inaccurate translations).

Taking into consideration all these results, on the whole, the average rate of translation accuracy is higher for technical terms than for computer terms: 85% vs. 80%.

Based on the above-mentioned data, it could be said that the Google Online Translation Service could be useful in translation work to some extent. Still, further research in this field should be conducted, on a larger corpus and different terminology – common or specific – in order to get a larger picture of online translation services.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Atkins, B.T.S., *Bilingual dictionaries*: *Past, Present and Future*, 1996/04.03.2013 http://www.euralex.org/elx_proceedings/Lexicography%20and%20Natural%20Language%20Processing/B.T.S.%0Atkins%20%20Bilingual%20Dictionaries%20Past,%20Present%20an 20Future.pdf/04

Bulson, C., *Reference on the Web*: *Online Dictionaries*, 2010/27.02.2013 http://www.booklistonline.com/ProductInfo.aspx?pid=4172887&AspxAutoDetectCookieSuppor

Laufer, B., & Melamed, L., *Monolingual, bilingual and* '*bilingualised*' *dictionaries*: *Which are more effective, for what and for whom*, 1994/04.03.2013 http://www.euralex.org/elx_proceedings/Euralex1994/64_Euralex_Batia%20Lauf%20er%20and%20Linor%20Melamed%20%20Monolingual,%20Bilingual%20and%20Bilingualised%20Dictionaries.pdf

Li, L., *The growing prosperity of on-line dictionaries*, 2005/06.03.2013 http://repository.lib.polyu.edu.hk/jspui/bitstream/10397/124/3/English%20Today_21_3_Li_L pdf

Li, L., *Cyberdictionaries*. *English Today* 54, 14 (2)/1998, p. 21-24.

Luppescu, S., & Day, R.R., *Reading, Dictionaries, and Vocabulary Learning*. *Language Learning, 43* (2)/1993, p. 263-279.

Oard, W. D.,Cross-Language Text Retrieval Research in the USA, 1997/28.02.2013 http://glotta.ntua.gr/StateoftheArt/Multilingual-Image Retrieval/cross_language.pdf

Schryver, de G.M., *Online Dictionaries on the Internet*: *An Overwiev for the African Languages*, 2003/03.03.2013 from http://tshwanedje.com/publications/OBDs.pdf

Thompson, G., *Using bilingual dictionaries*, in "ELT Journal", 41 (4)/1987, p. 282-286.

BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech

Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)

SOURCES

http://computerulmeu.ro/index.php?option=com_glossary&func=display&letter=&page=26&catid=18&Itemid=31
http://dexonline.ro/
http://www.dictionar.1web.ro/dictionarIT
http://www.ghidelectric.ro/stiri-electrice-33-Termeni-tehnici-40-G.html
http://www.masinamea.com/documentatie/46-utile-conducatori-auto-incepatori/118-dictionar-termeni-tehnici
http://www.scribd.com/doc/7529899/Dictionar-de-Termeni-Informatici
http://translate.google.com/#ro/sr/
http://translate.google.com/#sr/ro/

BDD-A3908 © 2013 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:01:00 UTC)