

## The use of travel narratives to foster intercultural sensitivity and language awareness in the ESP and EAP classrooms: The case of *A House in Sicily* by Daphne Phelps and its Italian translation *Una Casa in Sicilia*<sup>1</sup>

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### ABSTRACT

**EN** This study argues for the use of English travel narratives and their interlingual translations as vehicles to foster intercultural sensitivity and language awareness in the EAP classroom. Both travel writing and interlingual translation have been, in fact, successfully used in academic environments, as shown by an increasing scholarly interest over the past decades. Moreover, the relationship between travel and language can be explored, in Cronin’s words, “in the context of a nomadic theory of translation” where “the translating agent like the traveller straddles the borderline between the cultures” (Cronin, 2000, p. 2). In light of these considerations, this study performs a comparative analysis of Daphne Phelps’s British travel narrative *A House in Sicily* (1999) and its Italian translation *Una casa in Sicilia* (2001) to show how travel writing (also in translation) may be an excellent opportunity for a reappraisal of what literature may have to offer in the EAP context.

**Key words:** TRAVEL, WRITING, TRANSLATION, PHELPS, EAP

**ES** Este estudio aboga por el uso de narrativas de viajes en inglés y sus traducciones interlingüísticas como vehículos para fomentar la sensibilidad intercultural y la conciencia lingüística en el aula de EAP. Tanto las narrativas de viajes como las traducciones interlingüísticas se han utilizado con éxito en entornos académicos, tal como demuestra el creciente interés por su estudio en las últimas décadas. Además, la relación entre los viajes y la lengua puede explorarse, en palabras de Cronin, “in the context of a nomadic theory of translation” donde “the translating agent like the traveller straddles the borderline between the cultures” (Cronin, 2000, p. 2). A la luz de estas consideraciones, este estudio lleva a cabo un análisis comparativo de las narrativas de viajes británicas de Daphne Phelps en *A House in Sicily* (1999) y su traducción italiana *Una casa in Sicilia* (2001) para mostrar cómo la narrativa de viajes (también traducida) puede ser una excelente oportunidad para reevaluar qué puede ofrecer este tipo de literatura al contexto de EAP.

**Palabras clave:** VIAJES, ESCRITURA, TRADUCCIÓN, PHELPS, EAP

**IT** Il presente studio presenta la narrativa di viaggio inglese e la sua traduzione interlingue come veicoli di una possibile spinta verso una sensibilità interculturale e una consapevolezza linguistica all’interno delle classi EAP. Tanto la narrativa di viaggio che la traduzione sono, infatti, stati usati con successo in diversi contesti accademici come dimostrato dal crescente interesse scientifico nei loro riguardi negli ultimi decenni. In più, la relazione tra viaggio e lingua può essere esplorata, secondo Cronin, “in the context of a nomadic theory of translation” where “the translating agent like the traveller straddles the borderline between the cultures” (Cronin, 2000, p. 2). Alla luce di tali considerazioni, questo lavoro propone un’analisi comparata tra la narrativa di viaggio *A House in Sicily* (1999) di Daphne Phelps e la sua traduzione italiana *Una casa in Sicilia* (2001) al fine di dimostrare come scrivere il viaggio (anche in traduzione) possa rappresentare un’eccellente opportunità di rivalutazione di quanto la letteratura possa offrire in contesti di apprendimento EAP.

**Parole chiave:** VIAGGIO, SCRITTURA, TRADUZIONE, PHELPS, EAP

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## 1. Introduction

An important strand in the development of successful ESP (English for Special Purposes) and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) programs implies what Richards et al. called “the process of determining the needs for which a learner or a group of learners requires a language and arranging the needs according to priorities” (1992, p. 242). If so, the needs to be taken into account in devising syllabuses, materials and courses involve the subject matter and specific language skills. However, as Jordan notes, learners may feel they have some “wants” too, “which may conflict with the views of sponsors, course designers, etc.” (1997, p. 26). For example, “a language course may focus on reading and writing because that will be the core of the subject-course the students will be attending. The students, however, may feel they want to develop their spoken English more, as this is their weakest skill.” (Jordan, 1997, p. 26) At first sight, “needs and wants” seem to follow logical procedures, being steadily interpreted as static and inflexible. However, this engenders from the false assumption that learning itself can be only a systematic *affaire*. On the contrary, studies in cross-cultural disciplines and a *non-essentialist paradigm*, as sustained by Victoria and Sangiamchit, recognise that “individuals can simultaneously belong to different small cultures (Holliday, 1999), such as a sports club, a volunteer organisation, and an occupational membership. (...) Furthermore, there is recognition that an individual’s identity is not about ‘some fundamental essence of character’ but rather ‘a continuous process accomplished through actions and words’ (Baxter, 2016, p. 28, qtd. by Victoria and Sangiamchit 2021, pp. 4-5)<sup>2</sup>.

Accordingly, the multifaceted nature of culture defies teachers’ choices as regards their instructional methods, intended tasks, and materials, especially when dealing with foreign language learning and intercultural competence. In this respect, ESP/EAP environments may incorporate some intercultural activities in order to help students to fulfil what Zaghar calls “three elemental aims, cognitive, affective and behavioural” (2017, p. 505), and teachers are expected to design syllabuses based on the improvement of their learners’ intercultural aptitudes and managerial skills. This leads to a wealth of published books and articles<sup>3</sup> on the implementation of teaching methods and learning tasks, which can stand on students’ perceptions of their communicative needs, learning-centred approaches, and the multidimensional nature of the teaching/learning process. Indeed, the main trends of ESP have been variously investigated in the last decades, in order to outline, as Ostbye noted in 1997, all the possible boundaries “between ESP and English for Academic Purposes (EAP), or ESP and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), such as the classification purposed under the aegis of the British Council in 1975” (p. 94).

However, within such a “repertoire of options” (Hyland, 2004, p.46), in the 1980s Swales (1981) in particular demonstrated how a *genre* perspective could offer some interesting insights and meaningful tools for thoughtful teaching of communicative events even in ESP and, consequently, in EAP contexts, as content and style are relevant issues of *genre* analysis in ESP, drawing on “concepts of community and social purposes” (Hyland, 2004, p. 44), and thus showing individuals within their own frameworks while they are telling their stories. For these reasons, an ESP and EAP approach to *genre* in teaching may offer teachers and students possible advantages, such as:

- An efficient way of identifying the texts learners will need to write in a particular context;
- A means of sequencing and grouping texts;
- A description of the typical features of key genres that students can draw on for their own communicative purposes in their professional or academic lives;
- An ability to understand what happens in real-world-interactions and a means to participate in these interactions;
- A way of seeing how genres are interrelated in real life and an authentic context for developing skills in a range of spoken and written genres;
- An understanding of the roles and purposes of writers and readers – why someone would write and read the genre. (Hyland, 2004, pp. 46-47).

<sup>2</sup> Conversely, *the essentialist model* sees individuals as “passive bearers of a stable set of characteristics and identities that they share with a group of people. This view is associated with a large culture, nation-based perspective favouring geographic borders as a way of conceptualising culture,” see Victoria and Sangiamchit, 2021, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> See, among the others, Guardado and Light 2020; , Hafner and Miller, 2019; Hyland and Wong 2019.

As genres are not strictly rule-governed systems, they also include a series of choices and constraints that can be effectively incorporated to ESP and EAP language classrooms. Furthermore, some genres in literature can be seen as useful vehicles more than others in fostering intercultural sensitivity and language awareness.

In light of these considerations, this paper investigates English travel narratives and their Italian translations according to a “revisited” genre perspective that establishes literature as a vital intercultural tool in ESP and EAP classes and, more generally, in language teaching. In fact, both travel writing and interlingual translation have been successfully used in academic environments, as demonstrated by an increasing scholarly interest over the past decades (see, among others, Bayyurt & Akcan, 2015; Beaven & Borghetti, 2014; Buden et al., 2009; Byram & Feng, 2006; Wu, 2021). Against this background, the study performs a comparative analysis of Daphne Phelps’s British travel narrative *A House in Sicily* (1999) and its Italian translation *Una casa in Sicilia* (2001). Venuti’s strategies of domestication and foreignization, together with the “deforming”<sup>4</sup> tendencies of Berman’s negative analytic of translation, will be key tools in evaluating Phelps’s novel and its Italian version. Thus, the potential EAP learner will be made aware of all the critical interculturally-sensitive areas of the source text and how these are mirrored in translation. In the same vein, the study will illustrate how travel writing (also in translation) can be interestingly explored as a good way to serve EAP learners’ needs, being, as such, an excellent opportunity for a reappraisal of what literature may have to offer in the EAP context.

## 2. The use of travel narrative as EAP curriculum renewal

Literature is rarely found in ESP or EAP syllabuses or EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks. This stems from the general belief that a focus on literary items and vocabulary could even hinder the language learning process. On the contrary, literature and English language teaching have always been intertwined, especially when asked to foster learners’ language awareness, critical thinking and intercultural understanding. In Tatzl’s words,

Foreign language education (FLE) and general English teaching have traditionally comprised literature as a form of art in classrooms. According to Ur, students in FLE should learn to use the language to build personal relationships, work in business, and embark on further studies. These goals are rather universal, as also ESP aims at such competencies, but the texts used in general English and ESP differ fundamentally. Literature in ESP is closely linked to reading for information and comprises subject-specific texts (e.g., from biology or mathematics), journalistic texts (e.g., from newspapers or magazines), instructional texts (e.g., from manuals, guidelines, or standards), and descriptive texts (e.g., from travel guides or commercial brochures). Literature in general English, however, is often connected with reading for pleasure and rests on popular literature (e.g., contemporary fiction) and literature as art in the forms of poetry, drama, and prose in the canon. Notwithstanding this established and reasonable demarcation, there may be *niche roles* of literature in ESP contexts as well. (2020, Introduction, *emphasis added*)

Of course, there may be possible disadvantages of using literature in ESP/EAP classes, as it may generally involve difficult and bookish language and long texts that are time-consuming to teach. Moreover, the cultural context of some works may be alien to students, leading them to consider literature irrelevant for their academic tasks. In contrast, fiction abounds with descriptions of scenery and landscapes, which may be strongly beneficial to certain ESP/EAP goals, as they may support descriptive writing tasks in the context of travel-related activities or advertising in business. For example, in Jiménez’s words, “most contemporary travel books depict the changing conditions of modernising societies, reflecting the philosophical and existential views of the traveller. (...) Moreover, most travel books offer a vehicle for students to challenge assumptions, explore various critical topics, and discuss new ideas from diverse perspectives” (2001, p. 85).

Numerous studies have reported that the relationship between reading and writing is a beneficial one, both for native and non-native English-speaking learners (see Gillespie & Lerner, 2008; Gonzalez and Miller, 2020; Grabe 2003; Strickland, Mandel Morrow, 2000). Thus, a literature-based syllabus can design cognitive strategies for EAP students in terms of the use *of* the language, thinking *in* the language and valuing *the* language

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<sup>4</sup> The expression deformed refers to the system of textual deformation in TTs that prevents the foreign coming through. Berman’s examination of the forms of deformation has been called negative analytic of translation (see Berman (1985) 2000, pp. 284-297).

they are learning. Moreover, literature is an entrancing and entertaining guide in building vocabulary, an essential skill for ESP and EAP students in improving their composing process and syntactic flexibility. In fact, according to Perkins and Jiang (2020), the use of literary texts in EAP classes requires teachers to use a broad spectrum of techniques in order to foster the conscious use of reading selections and regulate class discussions about them. Such a battery of tests might include the following:

(1) cloze exercises; (2) teaching lexical sets and semantic functions; (3) establishing set discriminations; (4) practice infrequently occurring collocational groups of particular fields; (5) identification of the base form of words; (6) affix drills; (7) paired-associate compositions; (8) synonym and antonym exercises; and (9) contextualised practice with word forms (for further information, see Wright, 2015, pp. 160-161). (Perkins & Jian, 2020, p. 52)

Indeed, these are all language activities of higher education contexts where English is the medium of an elaborate language experience that advocates some gradual release of responsibility from a teacher-centred instruction to a student-centred high performance. However, while EAP generally deals with “the teaching of English with the specific aim of helping learners to study, conduct research or teach in that language” (Flowerdew and Peacock, 2001, p. 8), academic writing (and teaching) is not as rigid or literate as it used to be. Admittedly, it is distinguished by the following characteristics:

- EAP is goal directed – students learn English because they need it;
- EAP courses are based on needs analyses – which specify clearly what students have to do in English;
- Most EAP courses are fixed term – short professional courses or longer foundation courses – in preparation for academic courses;
- Students may need specialist language, but not necessarily – courses are defined by the activities the students will engage in.
- A very high level of proficiency may not be required - students need to succeed in their aims. (Robinson 1991, pp. 2-5) qtd. by Frydrychova Klimova (2012, pp. 311-312)

Nevertheless, in terms of dealing with setting up curriculum renewals, EAP programs may significantly vary due to different organizing constraints and perspectives on language learning. These may involve change and innovations in order to nurture a receptive working and learning environment, which stimulates students' willingness and responsiveness to their needs. Certainly, “the extent to which innovations are accepted by potential adopters is strongly influenced by perceived attributes of innovations. Some attributes (e.g. visibility, trialability, feasibility) lead to positive attitudes, whereas others (e.g. complex) can create immediate barriers” (Stoller, p. 2001).

For these reasons, can the use of narrative and literary texts be discussed in terms of EAP curriculum renewal? If EAP methodology and pedagogy go further in writing about teaching, the answer may be yes, especially when actively encouraging learners in an EAP environment who are most typically adults and usually have “more maturity, more personal agency, and a greater sense of purpose” (Bell, 2022, p. 6). The way language is used on particular occasions cannot be wholly predetermined by the untroubled theoretical issues of those EAP concerns “generally regarded as a hand-maiden to those ‘proper’ disciplines which are more directly engaged in the serious business of constructing knowledge or discovering truth” (Hyland, 2006, p. 34). As such, the use of literary texts in EAP contexts can be evaluated in terms of pointless concerns or exceedingly ambitious tasks; however, it is certainly worth mentioning in terms of possible EAP curriculum renewal. More specifically, travel narrative implicitly involves skills such as self-awareness, managing conflict and stereotypes and evaluating cultural differences, all things that are much needed in contexts of student mobility and higher education. In addition, while many readers believe the most important focus of travel narrative deals with specific places or definite destinations, as Carr points out, “works of travel are also about sampling the tastes of other times and places, of course, and yet they are also about looking for something else. The best of them appear to extend well beyond the constraints of travel, a term that seems almost incidental to the writers' intention” (Carr, 2004, p. 59). As the quote highlights, it is a matter of definition. At first, determining what travel narratives are and what they are not may seem to be a relatively straightforward matter; however, it is not. Unquestionably, as Burgin notes, “travel narrative means a book in which one or more travellers take a voluntary trip to one or more places and share their personal thoughts, perceptions, reactions, and experiences. These narratives are intended to be read and enjoyed in a linear manner, from start to finish, and not referred

to simply on an as needed basis” (2013, p. XIV). In the same way, travel implicitly involves questions of identity and self, and other relationships, pointing up how complex and strongly heterogeneous these notions may be.

### **2.1. Interlingual translation of travel narrative in EAP classrooms**

Critical writing on travel should also offer some interesting room for the relationships between travellers and languages. The use of appropriate language choices, a focus on practical writing exercises and the discussion of students’ experience of travel in terms of language knowledge and practice, confirms travel as being clearly endowed with high educational potential. Likewise, studies in travel writing now adopt critical positions that account for competing forces and fruitful domains of scholarly and academic inquiry. They negotiate with “translation, transculturation, cosmopolitanism and world literature as symptoms of the globalised university’s growth ambitions” (Culbert, 2018, p. 346). This wealth of material intersects conditions of intercultural knowledge, which makes texts converge between languages and cultures; such a crossing frontier can fruitfully work in EAP learning contexts as well. In fact, as Bassnett notes,

Moreover, just as translators exercise a high degree of individual creativity in their rewriting, so the travel writer negotiates between cultures, bringing to a target audience his or her subjective impressions of a journey undertaken. This role is akin to that of the translator, who is, above all, a mediator between cultures, a *Janus-faced being* who inhabits two different worlds and whose task is to bring those worlds into contact. (Bassnett, 2019, p. 550, *emphasis added*).

When dealing with translating travel narratives, creativity, rewriting and mediation are all translation strategies specifically engaged in abridgments, paratextual commentary, or localising practices, according to specific contingencies of the target audience. As such, translation-based activities in ESP/EAP teaching/learning contexts can also disclose important issues that have been hitherto very scarcely researched for a seemingly obvious but unsubstantiated reason. As Mažeikienė argues in fact, “translation as a teaching method was associated with the grammar-translation method for a very long time and, consequently, the use of translation in teaching a foreign language (and the use of L1 in L2 instruction) have been unduly criticised” (2019, pp. 513-514). Rather, Leonardi (2009) maintains that “translation is more and more frequently evaluated as a positive form of interference aimed at enriching rather than harming learners’ competence and performance skills. The use of translation in language classes might, of course, have some limitations but also benefits should be explored and taken into consideration” (2009, p. 143). For example, among some of the problems that have been historically faced by translators of travel narratives, there is the translation of terms from exotic *realia*, hardly untranslatable words that can carry the bulk of the source text they are rendering in a foreign language. Thus, translators have drawn on a wide range of strategies in order to handle such unfamiliar concepts, ranging from cases of extensive omissions to glosses, borrowings, foreignizing or domesticating versions to the use of “lexical exoticism” effects, for which, as Cronin argues,

words become the souvenirs brought home to the expectant reader (...). They operate as signs of the untranslatable but is a space of translation. The reality that is happening in a foreign language is being conveyed to the reader in the language of the narrative; in other words, it is being continuously translated into that language but foreign words remain as witting or unwitting reminders of how fraught the process of translation is in the first place (2000, p. 40).

With many societies around the world confronting complex issues of globalisation and cultural hybridisation in all literary contexts, and with the new critical frameworks that have emerged in travel writing studies since the 1980s, travel writing itself “situates” experiences, feelings and scenarios within fictitious or real geographical spaces more than other genres. In this sense, it works as a felicitous medium to discuss the areas visited or travelled to, providing information such as location, landscapes, food, aspects of nature, religious beliefs, traditions and customs, among others. This means that the relationship between travel and language (also in translation) can be explored, in Cronin’s words, “in the context of a nomadic theory of translation,” where “the translating agent like the traveller straddles the borderline between the cultures” (2000, p. 2). It seems that, just as the translation of non-fictional writing was overlooked for many years, as scholars of Translation Studies focused almost solely on fictional forms, so the role of the translator as facilitator in the international transmission of knowledge has only recently attracted critical attention.

Likewise, translation is a real-life and natural activity; this means that the quality of translation can be discussed in classroom, thus encouraging students to spot mistakes, adaptations, omissions, etc. so as to provide suggestions which can improve the target text in terms of their language awareness. Since academics should speak as well as they write *and translate*, translation can definitely be considered a prestigious “textual, communicative, and cognitive activity, involving decision-making, problem-solving skills and expert knowledge” (Fois, 2021, p. 61). These skills are all part of the EAP agenda.

In view of all this, the following section focuses on Daphne Phelps’s British travel narrative *A House in Sicily* (1999) and its Italian translation *Una casa in Sicilia* (2001) in order to show how “translation is not only the means of producing travel writing, in a metaphorical sense, but very often also the represented subject in travel writing. Such representation is sometimes disguised, as though everything happens in the traveller’s language, and is sometimes marked by salient linguistic foreignness.” (Wu 2021, pp. 404-405) The results of such an interlingual relationship between the two texts will be looked into in terms of positive intervention during the learning progress and acquisition of EAP skills.

### 3. *A House in Sicily*: one narrative, two “translations”

Settling in a “house” abroad does not just refer to the title of the memoir at hand, *A House in Sicily* (1999), but to a literary subgenre that has gained marketing fortune since the 1990s, particularly in Italy. Known under an array of definitions (settlement literature, home-abroad books, relocation memoirs, etc.), these narratives reiterate the “*topos* of life among the locals” (Mastellotto, 2013; Ross, 2010, p. 122), in which expatriates have to grapple with the challenges of living in an alluring foreign land while their identities are reassessed and reconstructed through the transformative experience of building or renovating a home abroad.

The story of Daphne Phelps (1911-2005) only partially re-enacts this paradigm. Casa Cuseni – today a guest house and a museum located in the touristic site of Taormina – was neither built nor renovated; in fact, the reader learns about the author’s misadventures when trying to *sell* the house she had inherited from her uncle, Sir Robert Kitson, in the gloomy aftermath of WWII. She eventually rescued Casa Cuseni from being torn apart or sold to local *mafiosi*, and profitably converted it into a *locanda* for artists, poets and intellectuals.

More a collection of tales than a memoir, Phelps’s writing resists dwelling on her *inner* world and makes room for the newness and inconsistencies of her *outer* world. Much like her uncle did in painting, she sketches vivid and unconventional portraits of local inhabitants and famous guests, peeking into the lives of a small, evolving community, whose nuances - and voices - she catches with an insightful eye across half a century.

One may wonder what makes this travel memoir an interesting read in the EAP classroom. Empirical evidence of the potential of travel writing in enhancing intercultural sensitivity and defamiliarization has foregrounded the key role of learners’ cultural positionality - their *localness* - in the aesthetic experience (Giuffrida, 2016). This potential is best unlocked when learners act as *unintended* readers of travel narratives featuring *home environments*, with their own cultural patterns variably displayed, albeit refracted, by a foreign authorial stance. I have named this kind of reader, and the associated reading strategy, *locally-situated* (LS):

The Locally-Situated Reader (LSR) is a de-centring device predicated on subverting the ideological construct of the *implied* reader, by having *local* readers, to whom the text is *not* addressed, flout the instructions set out by the writer to invite preferred interpretations. As a result of using the LSR strategy, the referential pact between the writer and the reader is sabotaged, and LS learners are encouraged to construct their own meanings rather than the official ones, opening up the possibility of new, alternative semiosis (Giuffrida, 2016, p. 37).

A case in point is Phelps’s memoir and its Italian rendition, *Una casa in Sicilia* (2001), translated by Anna Lovisolò. Though it may seem naturally built into it, the LSR strategy is, in fact, challenged by the Italian translation, as the LS reader – now *intentional* and Italian-speaking – is *meant* to inhabit the same socialisation space as the *other*, thus allowing for a domestication of the foreign element and a flattening of its forms of hybridization. To restore a foreignizing lens, a dialogic framework, where the source text and the target text are compared and contrasted using a set of analytical tools, is therefore needed. This is to counter the domesticating effects of the Italian-speaking readership, which the English account was never intended for, not to mention the interpretive bias of the Italian translator (born and based in Milan), which will be assessed reflectively. Within this framework, *localised* students of EAP will be able to observe their discursive community from an anglophone perspective across two intersecting layers of translation:

- 1) a *cultural translation*, where the author “translates” the Italian-speaking community for English-speaking readers;
- 2) an *interlingual translation*, where that very same community is “translated” back into Italian for Italian readers.

Interestingly, the two texts exhibit contrasting translational strategies. Phelps’s English departs from current standard usage at many levels, reflecting how multifarious and transformative her Sicilian life had been, culturally and linguistically. Her narrative highlights discursive heterogeneity and resists assimilation to domestic codes in ways that will be illustrated in section 4. In translational terms, her strategy can be referred to as “foreignizing” (Venuti, 1995).

Lovisolò’s dominant strategy, on the other hand, is largely “domesticating”, insofar as she minimizes or utterly conceals the foreign identity of the source text, thus prioritizing transparency over opacity, message content over language texture, homogenization over heterogeneity. Her preference for standard Italian and no register variations stems from a need for a broader, interregional audience. The demand for a readable and, therefore, *marketable* story is consistent with the publishing decision to allure Italian readers, who are also targeted as prospective tourists, the ultimate goal being not so much the life of an unknown British author as, in fact, promoting Casa Cuseni. This is illustrative of how fluency is always ideologically laden and translation a purposeful act subjected to commodification, as well as to political and economic constraints. This therefore represents major issue for EAP students to reflect upon.

#### 4. Translation manipulations for EAP students

As shown by the empirical data I have collected (Giuffrida, 2016), as well as the textual analysis that follows, the LSR strategy can be a crucial factor when designing EAP courses in which intercultural understanding and language awareness are fostered by reading and translating travel literature. In terms of teaching practice, I advocate a kind of travel literature in which *local* learners will benefit from a cognitive vantage point as *insiders* within the intercultural dynamic at play. Here they will find themselves somehow mirrored in the culture(s) represented through a *dual* defamiliarising lens: the foreign-language text and its L1 translation. This kind of setting is conducive to alternative hermeneutic ways, not to mention its potential for intercultural sensitivity development. The focus on *localization* acts as a magnifying glass, allowing local readers to *see* more insightfully than someone alien to the cultural practices being explored. For instance, my knowledge of the Sicilian dialect has allowed me to detect its absence in the translated text and, at the same time, its disguised presence in the source text; this, in turn, has brought to light manipulative interventions on the source text that would otherwise have gone unnoticed to light.

This unusual perspective can be tremendously beneficial to the EAP learner in terms of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) as well as cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). What I envisage as catalyst to these skills is not just the sheer act of translating, but a broader range of tasks where intercultural communication and language awareness intertwine and enhance each other: namely, reading effectively and reflectively, commenting on and comparing translations, evaluating and negotiating viable solutions, focusing on the process rather than the end result, manipulating and reshaping the target text, assessing one’s own interpretive bias (critical cultural awareness). My commentary, which is meant to *model* such tasks, will tackle some critical intercultural-sensitive areas where translation manipulations are most likely to occur (from punctuation and culture-specific lexis to more complex stylistic features, such as idiolects), sometimes providing alternative renditions as a comparative and reflective tool.

##### 4.1. Narrator speech: domesticating effects on interlanguage and local color

In the FL (Foreign Language) classroom, a *third perspective* is the symbolic space where learners can find their own meanings when using the foreign language and one of the central goals of intercultural learning (Kramsch, 2009). Quite similarly, Phelps carves out a dimension in which she is simultaneously an *outsider* and an *insider*, a “Third Space” where she accommodates to cultural differences and eventually finds a *voice* of her own (Bhabha, 1994). While *creatively* embedded in the textual geography and in the articulatory structures of the source text, this space of negotiation and meaning reconstruction is flattened out in translation.

*A House in Sicily* provides a close rendering of the *foreign* at prosodic, syntactic and lexical levels. Local dialects are often echoed in speech utterances, and Italian-sounding structures and registers are easily detectable. Phelps constructs her *persona* as a speaker *and* a translator of the Italian language. Accordingly, she



portrays herself while performing oral or written translations, sometimes even counterfeiting the message to save the day. A unique interlanguage flavor saturates the narrative, building on “code switching” and “code mixing” effects (loanwords and instances of non-translation, calque renderings). In the target text, in contrast, calque renderings are inevitably made invisible and naturalized due to literalism in the translator’s strategy. There are countless examples of this in this domain. Let us note a few:

Table 1  
*Interlanguage effects*

Calques from Italian	Target Text
I can arrange myself (p.164)	riesco ad adattarmi (p. 215)
she “adapted herself” (p.190)	si arrangiava (p. 248)
preoccupied by (p.117)	preoccupato (p.165)
embracings (p.119)	abbracci (p.160)
he reproved me (p.126)	mi rimproverava (p.166)
ingratiante (p. 21)	ingraziarsi (p. 44)
denounced (p. 53)	denunciata (p. 75)
‘disobligated’ himself (p. 64)	si è sdebitato (p. 93)
inaugurate (p.155)	inaugurare (p. 205)
advise (p.156)	avvisare (p 205)
brought to the light of day (p. 75)	ha dato alla luce (p. 106)

Unsurprisingly, the narrative is also interspersed with *lexical exotica*, which bring *local color* to the conversation, either blending in or colliding with the author’s discourse. In Phelps’s account, they are always italicised and construct effects of code mixing and code switching (e.g. “I was *una persona seria*,” p. 164, “It sounded very *mafioso*”, p. 31”, “my uncle never missed a *festa*”, p. 29, “he used these to *fare la fuga*”, p. 70). Lexical exotica are further used to:

- show the impossibility for the writer to bridge a cultural gap and translate the *other* in her own terms;
- allow native voices to resonate in *their own* idiom;
- signal that the conversation took place in the foreign language so as to authenticate the portraits being shown;
- encapsulate cross-cultural adaptive behaviors or cultural conflicts.

Sometimes, when tackling a culture-specific phrase, the writer provides the anglophone readers with an imperfect explanation, which is omitted in translation on account of its redundancy to an Italian audience. The effect of this intervention is *subtractive*, causing a major loss in hybrid formations and meaning variance. In the source text, this kind of redundancy entails interesting – linguistic and cultural – clashes, as words are sometimes mistranslated (*terroni*, or people of the earth, p. 80; ‘*Lo ho due muglieri*’ - I have two women, p. 78; ‘*Tiriamo*’ – we drag along, p. 195), or misspelled (*sotto voce/sottovoce*, *femina/femmina*). Such incorrect renderings engender coinages, creative adaptations or false cognates which, if left undomesticated, would add to the productivity of the target text and enhance its “foreignness.”

#### **4.2. Narrator speech: domesticating effects on diction, syntax and discourse**

A Bakhtinian perspective is well known to have opened up new possibilities for exploiting the distinctive heteroglossia of the travel genre. Phelps’s narrative also invites a dialogic reading, as it is the *locus* where multiple speech styles and socio-ideological languages intertwine with the authorial voice. This polyphonic quality generates instances of cultural hybridization involving the narrator and the character discourse, which pose great challenges for the translator.

As it journeys back into Italian, Phelps’s travel memoir undergoes some major manipulations, which mostly affect discursive heterogeneity. Sections 4.2 and 4.3 provide evidence of noticeable discrepancies in narrator, as well as in character, speech. The analysis carries out a comparative reading of the translation and the source text so as to foreground various expressions of difference; it draws on Venuti’s strategies of



domestication and foreignization (Venuti, 1995), alongside Berman's negative analytic (2000). Lewis's notion of "abusive" fidelity epitomizes the main argument among these scholars, that is, to redirect translators' attention "to the chain of signifiers, to syntactic processes, to discursive structures, to the incidence of language mechanisms on thought and reality formation" (2000, p 270). In keeping with the EAP agenda and its focus on language awareness, the analysis sets out to reflect upon the translator's interpretive choices and the social determinations underlying them.

#### 4.2.1. Patterns of punctuation

Punctuation markers encode Phelps's own voice, her timbre, her unique pacing. They are revealing of her character and can be seen as part of her stylistic signature. Let us consider the following extracts:

Table 2

##### Patterns of punctuation in translation

Source text	Target text
My strange Sicilian life had its roots at the turn of the century, but I was only born eleven years later. In 1900 Robert Hawthorn Kitson, my mother's brother, arrived in Sicily. He had travelled down through Italy <b>looking for</b> the perfect place to build his house, and when he came to Taormina on the east coast of the Island, he was enchanted by its magical beauty and by the overwhelming view of Etna – <b>the highest and most active volcano in Europe</b> .(p. 1, my bold)	La mia singolare vita in Sicilia affonda le radici alla svolta del secolo scorso, <b>benché (lit. although)</b> io sia nata soltanto undici anni dopo. Robert Hawthorn Kitson, il fratello di mia madre, approdò in Sicilia <b>nel 1900, dopo aver attraversato (lit. after having crossed)</b> l'Italia verso sud <b>alla ricerca del (lit. in search for)</b> luogo ideale dove costruirsi una casa. Quando giunse a Taormina, sulla costa orientale dell'isola, rimase incantato dalla sua bellezza magica, <b>mentre (lit. while)</b> la vista dell'Etna, <b>il vulcano attivo più alto d'Europa</b> , lo lasciò <b>senza fiato</b> .(p. 13, my bold and my English translations)
At Messina I changed into my deepest black. It was only five months since my uncle's death and I had <b>never</b> worn mourning. But I was thankful I had changed in time. To have appeared in ordinary clothes would have led to disaster at the very beginning. I would have shocked everyone <b>profoundly</b> . (p.17, my bold)	Appena arrivata a Messina, mi vestii di nero da capo a piedi. La morte di mio zio era avvenuta cinque mesi prima e <b>naturalmente (lit. naturally)</b> non mi ero messa a lutto, tuttavia ringraziai il cielo per essermi cambiata in tempo, <b>perché (lit. because)</b> mostrarmi con abiti normali avrebbe causato una vera catastrofe: avrei scioccato tutti. (p. 32, my bold and my English translations)

Both excerpts are telling examples of "transparent" translation. Though seemingly faithful, they both fail to deliver the author's intended register (informal, straightforward) and tenor (blunt without being judgmental). Furthermore, the second excerpt, by simply replacing "never" with "naturalmente", endows the narrative with an ironic undertone that was not explicit in the source text.

The major translation manipulation, according to Berman's analytic, is "rationalization" (along with clarification, expansion, and many others), which primarily subverts punctuation, sentence structuring and sequencing. Standard Italian norms of fluency value hypotactic phrasing over fragmentariness and parataxic order, and seek to enhance cohesion via the "explicitation" of clause connectors (e.g. "mentre" "naturalmente", "perché", etc), order of syntax and degree of abstraction (e.g. the noun "ricerca" in place of the verb "looking for"). This inevitably winds up disrupting the rhythmic flow and destabilizing meaning. As illustrated in the next section, phrases like "the highest and most active volcano in Europe" lose their prominence when typographical markers such as em-dashes are replaced by commas.

#### 4.2.2. Narratorial "asides": parenthesis and em-dashes

A distinctive feature of Phelps's style is her slightly Dickensian use of round brackets and em-dashes to set off narrative *asides* and drag her readers out of the narration. In particular, the extensive use of these devices enables the author to

- enclose questions, doubts, reactions, and passing comments, which are often humorous or ironical;
- construct a foreign eye's observations as a voice over;

- convey a unique *oral* quality to the narrative;
- create an internal structure emulating the writer's thought processes.

A parenthetical styling affects rhythm and pace in ways that are not always acceptable according to reception standards. Unsurprisingly, the Italian translator keeps most of the bracketed comments, but favors the use of commas over em-dashes. Let us assess the fallout of these manipulations in the next set of examples:

Table 3  
*Em-dashes in translation*

Source text	Target text
The Corso was the nightly setting for the <i>passeggiata</i> , when all social classes would walk slowly up and down to meet their friends and to drink, gossip and gamble. At least, the men of the working classes did – <b>they kept their women at home</b> . (p. 3, my bold).	Il Corso era il luogo della passeggiata serale, dove i cittadini di ogni ceto sociale si incontravano con gli amici per bere e per fare pettegolezzi e scommesse. Soltanto gli uomini, <b>però, perché (lit. but, because) le donne dovevano stare chiuse in casa</b> . (p. 15, my bold and my English translation).
As children in England, we had all been excited by my uncle's many, brightly coloured paintings of the Sicilian puppets theatre, with its crowded audiences of men, old and young – <b>there never seemed to be any women</b> . (p. 150, my bold).	Ricordo che in Inghilterra noi bambini ci emozionavamo di fronte ai dipinti di mio zio che raffiguravano a vivaci colori il teatro delle marionette siciliano, con la sua folla di spettatori, composta di uomini vecchi e giovani, <b>dove però (lit. but where) non comparivano mai le donne</b> . (p. 199, my bold and my English translation).
There, on steps high above and in front of what seemed the whole male population Noto – <b>there wasn't a woman in sight</b> – I had to jab an unsterilised needle into her thigh. (p. 143, my bold).	Là, in cima ai gradini e di fronte a quella che sembrava l'intera popolazione maschile di Noto, dovetti infilare un ago non sterilizzato in una coscia. (p.189).

These passages are about the old-fashioned custom of Sicilian men to “keep their women at home” at social gatherings, much to the writer's dismay. Due to the removal of dashes (replaced by cohesive devices) and the rationalizing of syntax and grammar, the repeating sentence loses much of its original trenchancy. Undoubtedly, Phelps intended to exploit the *interruptive* effect of the em-dashes to make an emphatic statement about women's segregation, thus creating a “subtext that carries the network of word-obsessions” (Berman, 2000, p. 292). The last excerpt illustrates how this subtext crumbles in translation. Here a disjointed aside re-enacting the statement about women is omitted to preserve coherence, thus silencing the writer's voice altogether.

#### 4.2.3 Typographical devices: *emphatic italics*

Emphatic italics enable the author to strategically draw attention to certain words. Associated with prosodic patterns in spoken language, they confer tonic prominence and emphatic vigor. Dialogue lines are charged with emotional hues that can only be appreciated by reading them out loud. In Phelps's narrative they highlight culture-specific patterns and encode intonation. However valuable, they disappear in translation, since the only italicized items are the *lexical exotica*.

Table 4  
*Emphatic italics in translation*

Source text	Target text
Despite my original amazement, I have followed Don Roberto's example and so far – I touch wood as <i>we</i> do and iron as <i>Italians</i> do – I have not regretted it. (p. 24)	A dispetto del mio iniziale stupore, ho seguito le sue orme e fino a ora, toccando legno come facciamo noi e ferro come fanno gli Italiani, non mi sono pentita. (p. 40)
"Then you must get a medical certificate saying you <i>must</i> stay here for your health.' (...) 'Of <i>course</i> I can get one, but I prefer to stay here on honest grounds.' 'Signorina, please be reasonable!	"Allora si deve procurare un certificato medico in cui si affermi che lei deve restare qui per problemi di salute'. (...)” Naturalmente me lo posso procurare, ma preferirei restare qui senza sotterfugi”. "Signorina, per favore, sia ragionevole!”
'I wasn't sure who was being <i>unreasonable</i> . (pp. 48-49)	Non ero sicura di sapere chi di noi due fosse irragionevole. (p. 71)

As a result, conversation is impoverished and depersonalized. For instance, as both dashes and italics are dropped in the line “I touch wood as *we* do and iron as *Italians* do”, the resolution of the chiasmic *we/Italians* in a tertiary space of negotiation is softened. In the second extract, translation fails to convey the frustration of a young, inexperienced Daphne as she struggles with *red tape*, and weakens the cultural clash inscribed in the dichotomy *reasonable/unreasonable*.

### 4.3. Character speech: domesticating effects on idiolects: the case of “Don Ciccio”

Halfway between individualization and typization, Don Ciccio – the local Don and Phelps’s unsolicited protector – first appears as a caricature resembling Anglophone superheroes or villains. His act is paralleled to *Superman* (“arms folded, eyes flashing”, p. 102), the *Godfather* (“the head of the Mafia”, p. 102; “leader of men”, p. 122), and *Robin Hood* (“he gives to the poor”, p. 103). He is ironically introduced in the foreigner’s terms, as this is how he would be understood by a contemporary anglophone readership. These domesticating images, however, are deconstructed as his personality is unfolded and fleshed out in conversation.

The chapter dedicated to Don Ciccio – an ensemble of all the encounters Phelps had with him over thirty years – takes the reader on a journey peppered with unexpected incidents, jarring revelations and comic scenes. Don Ciccio’s developing portrait is reassessed and reshaped at every meeting, adding more contradictory and intriguing features to a characterization which is by no means easy to pinpoint.

Phelps gifts her “protector” with a unique and recognizable voice that brings him alive. Being an uneducated peasant, Don Ciccio’s Italian is clumsy, rooted in dialect and therefore often calqued or untranslated. His popular, uncultivated register lends a distinctive color to his speech. Language quirks and idiosyncrasies are key to *individualizing* a character. They form what is commonly referred to as “idiolect,” which, in the case of Don Ciccio, includes a great repertoire of rhetorical devices:

- malapropisms, misspellings and deviations from standard pronunciation of English (“we have excellent communications in *Newi Yorki*”, p. 107);
- Sicilian-sounding syntax and dialectal interferences;
- simplified grammar, limited range of vocabulary;
- non-standard Italian register;
- emphatic, “pontifical” tone, achieved through repeated usage of anaphoric structures;
- taglines, expressive colloquialisms and local color;
- intersections with narratorial asides, with comic effects.

Table 5  
Don Ciccio’s idiolect

Taglines and recurring rhetorical devices	
– <b>Shut up!</b> (all occurrences at p. 104)	– <b>Of course</b> (meaning “certainly”, possible calque of Sicilian “ca certu”, often italicized, p.104,121,127)
– <b>You know nothing about it!</b> (p. 106, 107)	– <b>Very + adjective</b> (calque of Sicilian “veru”, p. 106, 113 and three times at p. 124 )
– <b>You plug it in and nothing happens.</b> (twice at p. 106)	– <b>“All you have to do”</b> and <b>“you have but to do”</b> (calque of Sicilian form of obligation “aviri a farì”, p. 105, 106, 107)
– <b>Under my protection</b> (p. 105, 106)	– <b>night and day</b> (calque of the Sicilian phrase “notti e journu”, used emphatically, p 106, 118)
– <b>At my disposal</b> (p. 106, 107, 108)	– <b>Signorina</b> (seven times, p. 105, 109, 111)
– <b>An individual</b> (meaning “a bad, unpleasant person”, p. 105)	– <b>beautiful</b> (five times, p. 106, 113, 115, 118, 124)
– <b>Trouble</b> (as in “problem”, calque of Sicilian “trùbbulu”, p. 105, 106)	
– <b>Simple!</b> (used as interjection, especially in Sicilian, meaning “easy”, p. 105)	

Sicilian dialect is, for Don Ciccio, “his usual form of speech” (p. 104). The strips of conversation that Phelps is piecing together from memory cannot have been in Italian, a language that her character hardly knew, but in “the very different dialect into which he kept slipping” (p. 104). Being an essential part of Don Ciccio’s idiolect, a touch of Sicilian cadence resurfaces in his talk through punctuation markers, emphatic italics and rearranged syntax. For example, when Don Ciccio’s genuine affection for Daphne (“Mr Dafferty”) – and perhaps his twisted sense of “chivalry” – makes him announce: “But Mr Dafferty it is for *you* that I would wish to do

something” (p. 124), his line echoes the Sicilian “Ma è pi tìa ca vulissi fari quacchi cosa”. Two clues make it noticeable. Firstly, the phonological surface of “would wish” is a better imitation of “vulissi” than the more common “wish” or “would like”; secondly, the italics allow the author to stress the pronoun “you”, thus marking Don Ciccio’s dialectal inflection. Lovisolo’s translation “Ma, Mr Dafferty, è per lei che io desidero fare qualcosa” (p. 164), drops the italics and prefers the polished and polite “desidero” over the more direct and vernacular-sounding “voglio” or “volessi”; on the contrary, the English rendering reverberates some accents and phonological traits that a *local* reader would hardly miss.

**4.3.1 Don Ciccio’s idiolect in translation**

The stylistic idiosyncrasies that make up Don Ciccio’s linguistic footprint are smoothed out into a domesticated translation that privileges standard usage and polished Italian. This section not only exemplifies the extent to which a domesticating translation impinges on a character’s discursive patterns; it also aims to assess alternative, perhaps more “abusive” translations – prompted by a *local* reader such as myself – in order to experiment with the “chain of signifiers,” as should occur in the EAP classroom.

Let us look at two brief excerpts, both featuring major manipulations: rhetorization and destruction of vernacular networks.

Table 6  
*Don Ciccio’s idiolect in translation – set 1*

Source text	Target text	My translation
'Signorina, I know this world. <b>You must trust no one, neither</b> your brother, <b>nor</b> your sister, <b>nor</b> your father, <b>nor</b> your aunt. <b>Only your mother can you trust</b> – she is of the same flesh. ' (p.109)	“Signorina, io conosco questo mondo: non si deve fidare di nessuno, nemmeno di suo fratello o di sua sorella, di suo padre o di sua zia. Solo di sua madre si può fidare, che è carne della stessa carne. (p.149)	“Signorina, io conosco questo mondo: <b>di nessuno si deve fidare, né</b> di suo fratello <b>né</b> di sua sorella, <b>né</b> di suo padre, <b>né</b> di sua zia. Solo di sua madre si può fidare, che è carne della sua carne.
Don Ciccio furiously slapped him down, shrieking: 'You shut up. <b>You know nothing about it, shut up!</b> (...) I will speak and when I reach a suitable place I will stop and the Signorina will translate. You shut up!(p.104)	...ma Don Ciccio lo stroncò subito con ira gridando: “Stai zitto. Non ne sai niente, tu; taci”. (...) “Parlo io, e quando arriverò a un punto appropriato mi fermerò e la signorina tradurrà. Tu taci!” (p.144)	Don Ciccio lo stroncò subito con ira gridando: “Tu statti muto, <b>che</b> non ne sai niente. <b>Muto!</b> ”. (...) “ <b>Io parlo, e quando arrivo al punto giusto mi fermo e la signorina traduce. Tu muto!</b> ”

A conspicuous discrepancy in translation, one that Venuti would deem “symptomatic” of its status, occurs when a character’s speech register does not match his sociolinguistic background. This is most evident in the improper use of “taci” (“shut up”) instead of a coarser, more conversational “zitto” or “muto”, the last being closer to vernacular use (“mutu”). It seems rather improbable that an illiterate man like Don Ciccio would communicate in spotless, standard Italian. One can hardly miss, for instance, the underlying Sicilian inflection of the italicized *no one*, which brings valuable information to the translator. The tonic prominence of *no one* suggests reversing the word order instead of translating literally. This allows the text to mirror the symmetrical “only your mother can you trust,” and stress the anaphoric structure (nor/né) of the source text, thus preserving Don Ciccio’s knack for emphatic speech. Furthermore, “will” forms should always be rendered with the present indicative (“parlo,” “mi fermo,” “traduce”), as synthetic future does not exist in Sicilian. My rendering of “you shut up. You know nothing about it” is an example of popular (slangy) Italian, as it incorporates the multipurpose “that” (“che” *polivalente*) to make it sound “incorrect” (“Tu statti muto, **che** non ne sai niente”).

In the last passage, a proud Don Ciccio tells Daphne about the time he bravely rescued a young Baroness from being raped and “dishonoured.” This piece depicts the comical effects conveyed by the narrator’s bracketed asides in character speech, where the intertwining of contrasting registers becomes apparent and adds to the enjoyment of the reader.

Table 7 – set 2

*Don Ciccio's idiolect in translation – set 2*

Source text	Target text	My translation
<p>'I will give you an example; I will tell you the story of the little Baronessina. She was <b>very</b> young, she was <b>very</b> beautiful and <b>very</b> rich. An elderly <i>avvocato</i> wished to marry her and asked her parents for her hand. But he didn't please them.' (<b>The Baronessina evidently wasn't consulted.</b>)  <b>So</b> they said no. <b>So</b> he kidnapped the Baronessina. You realise of course, Mr Dafferty, that had there been any publicity, had the police or the press known, she would have been unmarriedable.  <b>So</b> they summoned me and within twenty-four hours she was back at home <i>perfetta</i> and <i>completa</i>'. (<b>The kidnapper was clearly a slow starter.</b>) 'Of course Mr Dafferty <b>I hope that never...</b> But if...' (p.124, my bold)</p>	<p>"Le faccio un esempio; le racconterò la storia della baronessina. Era <b>molto</b> giovane, <b>molto</b> bella e <b>molto</b> ricca. Un anziano <i>avvocato</i> desiderava sposarla e ne chiese la mano ai suoi genitori. Ma lui non risultò simpatico alla famiglia". (La baronessina evidentemente non era stata consultata.) "<b>Così</b> dissero di no. <b>Allora</b> lui rapì la baronessina. Lei capisce, Mr Dafferty, che se ci fosse stata pubblicità di sorta, se la polizia o la stampa l'avessero saputo, per lei poi sarebbe stato molto difficile sposarsi. <b>Dunque</b> mi convocarono e nel giro di ventiquattr'ore lei era di nuovo a casa, perfetta e completa". (Il rapitore evidentemente non aveva avuto molta fretta.). <b>Naturalmente</b>, Mr Dafferty, <b>spero che mai...</b> Ma se dovesse..." (p.164)</p>	<p>"<b>Ci</b> faccio un esempio; <b>ci</b> racconto la storia della baronessina. Era giovanissima, era bellissima e ricchissima. Un vecchio <i>avvocato</i> se la voleva maritare e ci chiese la mano ai suoi genitori. Ma a loro non ci piaceva". (La baronessina evidentemente non era stata consultata.) "<b>Allora ci</b> dissero di no. <b>Allora</b> lui rapì la baronessina. <b>Certo</b> Mr Dafferty, lo capisce che se facevano pubblicità, se lo veniva a sapere la polizia o i giornali, lei non si poteva maritare più. <b>Allora</b> mi vennero a chiamare e nel giro di ventiquattr'ore lei era di nuovo a casa, perfetta e completa". (Il rapitore evidentemente non aveva avuto molta fretta.) <b>Certo</b> Mr Dafferty <b>non sia mai...</b> Ma se..."</p>

The following table comprises some of the "abusive" interventions I made on Lovisolo's translation in the tale of the "Baronessina" so as to retain some of the rhetorical effects of the original text and counteract the homogenizing bias of standard Italian usage. Unlike the previous examples, this excerpt lends itself to a more creative, rather than a literalist, rendition. My adjustments have attempted to restore the amusing counterpoint between the author's discursive patterns and Don Ciccio's eccentric style.

Table 8

*Don Ciccio's idiolect in translation*

Foreignizing alternatives to Lovisolo's translation of the tale of the "Baronessina".	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Future tenses ("I will give" "I will tell") are shifted to present ("ci faccio" "ci racconto"), as it is the case with non-standard Italian varieties. They have taken up the "ci" particle pleonastically, in compliance with Don Ciccio's illiterate register.</li> <li>- The repetition of "very" is likely to have marked a sequence of three superlative forms in Don Ciccio's original tale. This is because the structure "very + adjective" is an Anglicism (e.g. "very long" translates into "veru longa" in Sicilian dialect).</li> <li>- The verbs "piaceva" and "maritare" ("maritari" in Sicilian) are a calque of "please" and "marry".</li> <li>- The repetitive "So" constructs a pattern that needs restoring and is translated as "Allora", more colloquial and idiomatic.</li> <li>- Personal pronouns are omitted, unless used emphatically.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A reversed order in "se lo venivano a sapere la polizia o i giornali", "se la voleva sposare", "lo capisce" is more common in spoken Italian;</li> <li>- The adverb "of course" is a recurrent pattern in Don Ciccio's idiolect and appears twice in this passage, which suggests opting for the same word ("Certo"), to stress its rhetorical effect;</li> <li>- The words "pubblicità di sorta" and "stampa" are replaced with less abstract alternatives.</li> <li>- The idiomatic "non sia mai" is preferred over the literalist "spero che mai".</li> <li>- An uneducated peasant such as Don Ciccio would likely not be familiar with conditionals and subjunctives ("se ci fosse stata" "l'avessero saputo" "sarebbe stato"), which are thereby shifted into the Italian imperfect ("facevano", "venivano a sapere" "non si poteva").</li> <li>- The verbal phrase "mi vennero a chiamare" is a more colloquial rendition of "they summoned me".</li> </ul>

## 5. Closing remarks

Both travellers and translators negotiate linguistic alterity, but “while travel writing is associated with recasting the foreign textually and visually for readers back home, translation is similarly concerned with transporting the foreign into the target language and culture and adapting it to meet the target audience’s expectations” (Martin & Pickford, 2012, pp. 1-2). When cultural difference is highlighted, an outsider’s “translation” of the host community tends to rely on foreignizing strategies, such as non-standard language usage, literal translation, dialogism and “local color”. Similarly, when the translating language is the native’s, a “naturalization” of the foreign – and its various forms of hybridization with the traveller’s culture – is to occur, leading to loss at lexical, prosodic and syntactic levels.

Devising EAP programs with an extensive use of reading literary texts (and travel narrative can be one of the most fertile sub-genres within this framework, especially when learners are *locally-situated* and play the role of *natives* in the cultural representation), together with commentaries on the translation of these texts, can play an interesting role in the learning process. Such a process involves collecting and organizing information within a given text and communicating and understanding the concepts with high-order thinking and appropriate cognitive skills. Being so, the notion of travel itself, as self-exploration in terms of language awareness and intercultural understanding, comes to the fore, interweaving BICS and well-developed CALP skills, which enable it to find some room in EAP programs.

Given these considerations, this paper has shown how travel writing may undergo a process of layering and variation that makes it deviate from standard norms in the settlement accounts of expatriates. In narratives such as *A House in Sicily* by Daphne Phelps, where echoes of the native voices and instances of cultural hybridization construct a heterogeneous discourse, the author virtually becomes a *foreigner* in their own language.

Homogenizing translations that minimize foreignness and hybridity will inevitably obliterate this linguistic variation. Hence, the ostensible evocation of the foreign through calque renderings and stylization should evolve from a destabilizing to a stabilizing norm. For this reason concerning pedagogical implications and the possible applications in research, academic and professional settings can benefit from the genre’s focus on such culture-specific variability, which restores literature’s significant potential in promoting language learning in academic communicative practices.

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