

DOES BRIDGET JONES WATCH EASTENDERS OR THE LOVE BOAT? Cultural and linguistic issues in the translation of chick lit novels

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Abstract – Chick lit is a genre comprised of books chiefly written by women for women. These books are mainly characterized by the tone, which is very confidential and personal, and often relies on the use of colloquial and slangy (and occasionally obscene) expressions, by the use of humour, and by the numerous references to popular culture. This paper aims at analyzing the strategies used in the Italian translation of one of the best-known examples of the genre, Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary*, taking two frames of reference. First of all, the analysis will try to identify in the target text the distinctive universal features observed in computer-based corpus translation (Baker 1996), namely explicitation, simplification and normalization. Secondly, it will consider the translation in terms of Venuti's dichotomy of translation strategies into domestication and foreignization (1995).

Keywords: chick-lit translation; universal features of translation; domestication; foreignization.

1. Chick lit

Chick lit is a genre which comprises novels mainly written by women for women: *chick* is an American slang term for a young woman, and *lit* is the abbreviation of *literature*. The genre became particularly popular in the late 1990s, with bestselling novels such as *Bridget Jones's Diary* by Helen Fielding (1996) and *Sex and the City* by Candace Bushnell (1997), which were also adapted into films and television series (Harzewski 2011, introduction).

The majority of chick lit novels are set in a contemporary world (though there is also historical chick lit) and one of the features that characterize the genre is that the main characters are embedded in pop culture. They are usually single women in their twenties or thirties, who mostly work in the publishing or the advertising sectors, and have an obsession with appearance and especially with their weight.

Since chick lit often includes romantic elements, it has sometimes been considered as a subcategory of the romance novel genre. However, regardless of its romantic features, it differs from the latter, mainly because the sentimental relationships of the protagonists are not the only important issue in the plot. Indeed, their friends (who are usually either female or gay) are very important in their lives, just as their career is. Moreover, chick lit is characterized by a very personal and confidential tone and by the constant presence of humour. The language used is usually informal and colloquial, using slang and occasionally obscene terms (see Baratz-Logsted 2005; Ferriss and Young 2006; Harzewski 2011; Montoro 2012).

2. Translating chick lit. Case study: *Bridget Jones's Diary*

Bridget Jones's Diary is a novel written by Helen Fielding in 1996 and is considered one of the best-known examples of the genre (Ferriss 2006, p. 71; Harzewski 2011, introduction). It is written in the form of a personal diary and narrates the life of the protagonist – Bridget Jones – throughout a whole year.

Bridget is a single woman in her early thirties who lives in London and, as the book begins, works in the advertising sector of a book publishing company, although she later resigns and finds a new job with a television channel. She is obsessed with her love life and is constantly looking for a stable relationship. Moreover, the diary is filled with notes on her weight, on her daily intake of calories, on the quantity of alcohol consumed and on the number of cigarettes smoked.

The tone of the book is very confidential - in line with what would be expected from a diary - humorous and light-hearted, and it often relies on the use of colloquial, slangy, and also taboo words and expressions.

Finally, the novel abounds in references to contemporary popular culture, especially British, as Bridget often mentions names of TV presenters and titles, names of characters of TV programmes, as well as names of brands and shops.

This paper analyses the strategies used in the Italian translation of the book, *Il diario di Bridget Jones*, by Olivia Crosio (1998), taking two frames of reference. First of all, the analysis aims to identify in the target text the distinctive universal features observed in computer-based corpus translation (Baker 1996; Laviosa 2002), namely *explicitation*, *simplification* and *normalization*. Secondly, it will consider the translation in terms of Venuti's dichotomy of translation strategies into *domestication* and *foreignization* (1995).

3. Universal features of translation

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, several translation scholars noted some specific recurrent features “which typically occur in translated texts rather than original utterances and are not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems” (Baker 1993, p. 243). According to Baker (1993, p. 246), such features can be considered as “a product of constraints which are inherent in the translation process itself, and this accounts for the fact that they are universal” and “they do not vary across cultures”.

Indeed, more recent research in corpus based translation research (see Baker 1996) has confirmed the recurrence of three specific features in translated texts, namely the features of *explicitation*, *simplification*, and *normalization*.

The following section will analyze the three universal features of translation mentioned above in the Italian translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, showing that such features can be observed also in studies based on manual analysis of parallel texts, and not necessarily through the aid of corpus linguistic tools.

3.1. *Explicitation*

According to Baker (1996, p. 180), the translators' inclination towards explicitation can be seen in the fact that “there is an overall tendency to spell things out rather than leave them implicit in translation”. This statement is supported by the fact that translations are usually longer than original texts, regardless of the languages concerned. In translations, indeed, it is common to observe the use of “explanatory vocabulary” and conjunctions which are added to the text (Baker 1996, p. 181). Addition, in fact, is the strategy through which the tendency to explicitate is accomplished. According to Delabastita (1993, p. 36), the insertion in the translated text of information that is absent in the original text can be due to the translators' “concern for clarity and coherence, which prompts them to disentangle complicated passages, provide missing links, lay bare unspoken assumptions, and generally give the text a fuller wording”.

In the Italian translation we can observe various cases when the translator has opted for the strategy of amplification with the aim of making what was implicit in the source text more explicit in the translation, to make the text easier to understand by the Italian reader.

In Table 1 we can note that in the source text there is an implicit reference to two of the most popular novels in British literature. Mr Darcy is the name of the male protagonist of *Pride and Prejudice* (by Jane Austen), who is a rather antisocial and snobbish person. This is why Bridget thinks that it is quite bizarre for someone called Darcy (one of the two male

protagonists in *Bridget Jones's Diary*) to stand on his own looking aloof at a party. Then Bridget compares such a situation (being called Darcy and behaving exactly like *Pride and Prejudice's* Mr Darcy) to another very well-known and recognizable literary context, namely Heathcliff's behaviour in *Wuthering Heights* (by Emily Brontë), calling for his love Cathy. We can notice that in the target text the translator has opted for a strategy of amplification (adding the Italian title of the novel, *Cime tempestose*), making the second reference explicit. Presumably, she assumed that the Italian lay reader would not catch the reference. However, the translation does not maintain the original comparison that Bridget makes between being called Darcy and being called Heathcliff. Hence, the target text not only explicitates the reference to the novel, but it also changes the meaning of the original, saying that Heathcliff would be quite ridiculous doing what he actually does in the book.¹

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 13) It struck me as pretty ridiculous to be called Mr Darcy and to stand on your own looking snooty at a party. It's like being called Heathcliff and insisting on spending the entire evening in the garden, shouting 'Cathy' and banging your head against a tree.	(p. 21) Chiamarsi Darcy e starsene tutto solo con aria sdegnosa a una festa mi ha subito colpita come una cosa abbastanza ridicola, un po' come se, in <i>Cime tempestose</i> , Heathcliff passasse tutta la serata in giardino a gridare 'Cathy' e a sbattere la testa contro un tronco.	Being called Darcy and standing on your own looking snobbish at a party immediately struck me as a pretty ridiculous thing, as if in <i>Wuthering Heights</i> , Heathcliff would spend the night in the garden shouting 'Cathy' and banging his head against a trunk.

Table 1.
Explicitation of a novel title.

In Table 2 we can observe another example of explicitation of an implicit reference:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 19) Alice Cooper eyes	(p. 27) <i>occhi cerchiati peggio di Alice Cooper</i>	<i>circled eyes which were worse than Alice Cooper's</i>

Table 2.
Explicitation of a singer's trademark feature.

¹ Interestingly the translator has explicitated the reference to *Wuthering Heights*, whereas she has left the reference to *Pride and Prejudice* implicit.

In this case we can note that the translator has explicitated the reference to Alice Cooper's eyes, by adding information explaining the singer's trademark eye makeup.

Other examples of explicitation found in the text are listed in Table 3 with the corresponding back translation:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 16) I said	(p. 24) ho ironizzato	I said <i>ironically</i>
(p. 20) "Shhh, shhh"	(p. 28) "Zitta! Abbassa la voce!"	" <i>Shut up! Speak in a lower voice!</i> "
(p. 70) a nurse	(p. 76) infermiera in un reparto maternità	A nurse <i>in a maternity ward</i>
(p. 82) shepherd's pie	(p. 89) torta salata del pastore: una tipica ricetta inglese a base di carne trita e pure di patate	Shepherd's pie: <i>a typical English recipe with mince meat and mashed potatoes</i>
p. (101) Poohs and Piggies	(p. 108) orsetti Pooh e maialine Piggy	Pooh <i>bears</i> and Piggy <i>piglets</i>
(p. 123) all formal and English	(p. 130) formali come solo noi inglesi sappiamo essere	formal <i>as only us English can be</i>
(p. 183) Ivana bloody Trump	(p. 189) Ivana ex Trump.	Ivana <i>Ex</i> Trump.
(p. 219) she has topped herself	(p. 225) si è buttata giù dalla finestra	she <i>jumped from the window</i>
(p. 229) said Una	(p. 235) ha borbottato Una	<i>muttered</i> Una
(p. 245) said Jude, burping again	(p. 251) ci ha zittite Jude, con un altro ruttino discreto	Jude <i>silenced us</i> , with another <i>delicate burp</i>
(p. 295) field telephone	(p. 299) Il telefono da campo sta squillando	The field telephone <i>is ringing</i>

Table 3.
Various instances of explicitation.

3.2. Simplification

According to Baker (1996, pp. 181-182), simplification is "the tendency to simplify the language used in translation", so that things are made "easier for the reader (but not necessarily more explicit)". Baker had previously stated that translators often omit translating words or expressions if the meaning is not vital for the development of the text "to justify distracting the reader with lengthy explanations" (1992, p. 40). Indeed, "omitting words, phrases, sentences or sections of the original text is the most direct way of simplifying a translation" (Kruger 2002, p. 91).

As in the case of explicitation, in the Italian version of *Bridget Jones's Diary* we can observe various instances where the translation presents cases of omission to simplify the text, as in the examples reported in Table 4:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 18) such <i>Sloaney</i> arrogance	(p. 26) così arroganti	so arrogant
(p. 40) <i>Sloaney</i> milch cow	(p.48) vacca da latte	milch cow
(p. 247) blond <i>Sloane</i> hair	(p. 253) capelli platinati	platinum blond hair

Table 4.
Simplification by omission of a slang term.

In this case we can note that the translator has omitted translating the adjective *Sloaney* (or the corresponding noun *Sloane*), a slang term used to refer to British girls who go to expensive public schools and are arrogant and snobbish. As in Italian there is no such word with the same denotative and connotative meaning, the translator has probably opted for a strategy of omission to simplify the target text.

Another case of omission can be noticed in the translation of the name of the house where Bridget's parents live, namely *The Gables* (see Table 5). The references are either omitted, or generalized to *casa* [house], avoiding an element which is not vital to understanding the sentences. The result in both cases is a simplified target text:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 45) Maybe <i>The Gables</i> has been cut off by the snow?	(p. 53) Forse sono rimasti isolati dalla neve?	Maybe they have been cut off by the snow?
(p. 281) when we got back to <i>The Gables</i>	(p. 285) quando siamo tornati a <i>casa</i>	when we got back home
(p. 282) "I think <i>The Gables</i> might be saved..."	(p. 285) "Chissà, forse salveremo almeno la <i>casa</i> ."	"Who knows? Maybe we will save at least the house."

Table 5.
Simplification by omission or generalization of a proper noun.

The strategy of omission to simplify the text can be noticed especially in the case of references to brands and household names, as in the examples reported in Table 6. Moreover, this strategy is also common in the case of references to people who might be considered unfamiliar to the Italian lay reader, as in the examples reported in Table 7.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 70) <i>Baby Gap</i> G-strings	(p. 77) mutandine ridottissime	tiny panties
(p. 123) credit notes from <i>Boules, Warehouse, etc.</i>	(p. 129) note di accredito	credit notes
(p. 128) eight <i>Cullens</i> carrier bags	(p. 134) otto borse di carta stracolme	eight bulging paper carrier bags
(p. 132) the witch in the <i>Whistles</i> suit	(p. 138) la strega con il tailleur	the witch in the suit
(p. 133) the most wonderful <i>Joseph</i> shift dress	(p. 139) il tubino più bello del mondo	the most wonderful sheath dress in the world
(p. 145) my <i>Gossard Glossies</i> ones would be perfect	(p. 151) Ho già in mente quali	I already have them in my mind
(p. 228) a <i>Body Shop</i> Terracotta Essential Oil Burner	(p. 234) un fornello di terracotta per bruciare gli oli essenziali	a terracotta essential oil burner
(p. 242) 1600 volts, <i>Salon Selectives</i>	(p. 247) Milleseicento volt	One thousand six hundred volts
(p. 253) a <i>Lynx</i> aerosol	(p. 257) un aerosol a ultrasuoni	an ultrasound aerosol
(p. 257) a <i>Hubble</i> telescope	(p. 261) un telescopio astronomico	an astronomical telescope
(p. 286) ‘ <i>Stocking Filla</i> ’ catalogues	(p. 290) cataloghi	catalogues
(p. 289) the <i>PACT</i> party	(p. 293) una festa	a party
(p. 289) £ 145 <i>English Eccentrics</i> knickers in textures black velvet	(p.293) mutandoni lunghi in velluto nero elasticizzato da 145 sterline	£ 145 stretch black velvet long johns
(p. 293) Magda’s <i>Conran Shop</i> rug	(p. 297) tappeto persiano di Magda.	Magda’s Persian rug.

Table 6.
Omission of brands and household names.²

² Gap is an American clothing retailer and Baby Gap is specialized in collections for babies and children; Boules, Warehouse, Whistles and Joseph are fashion shops; Cullens is a British chain of convenience stores; Gossard Glossies is a collection from the English underwear brand Gossard; The Body Shop is an English chain of cosmetic shops; Salon Selectives is a line of hair care products; Lynx is a brand of male grooming products; The Hubble Space Telescope is a space telescope carried into orbit in 1990; Stocking Fillers are British catalogues that sell toys and other gifts for Christmas; PACT stands for Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television; English Eccentrics is a London-based fashion design label; the Conran Shop is a retailer of household furnishing.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 11) He did a jokey <i>Bruce Forsyth</i> step	(p. 18) Ha accennato goffamente a un passetto di danza	He clumsily made a dance step
(p. 15) Una threw herself across the room like <i>Will Carling</i>	(p. 23) Una si è lanciata attraverso la stanza nemmeno fosse una centometrista	Una threw herself across the room as if she was a 100 metres sprinter
(p. 30) <i>Denis Healey</i> eyebrows	(p. 38) le sopracciglia a cespuglio incolto	unkempt bushy eyebrows
(p. 47) over-exposure to <i>Noel Edmonds</i> , popular television	(p. 55) eccessiva esposizione alla TV spazzatura	over-exposure to junk TV
(p. 76) and now suddenly you're <i>Jeremy Paxman</i>	(p. 83) E adesso tutto a un tratto ti metti a fare la femminista	And now, you suddenly start acting like a feminist
(p. 100) without the <i>Frank Bough</i> -style diamond patterned sweater	(p. 107) senza il maglione a rombi	without the diamond patterned sweater
(p. 166) some crashing <i>Geoffrey Boycott</i> character	(p. 172) qualche tipetto tutto azzimato	some dressed up guy
(p. 186) as if I were <i>Sara bloody Keays</i> or someone	(p. 192) nemmeno fossi chissà chi	as if I were goodness knows who
(p. 197) a denim shirt and red <i>Christopher Biggins</i> spectacles	(p. 204) la camicia di jeans e degli occhialini rossi e tondi	a denim shirt and red and round spectacles
(p. 229) exaggerating her lip movements like <i>Les Dawson</i>	(p. 235) parlando in punta di labbra	speaking on the tip of her lips
(p. 244) subtle-as-a- <i>Frankie-Howerd</i> -sexual-innuendo-style irony	(p. 249) un'ironia sottile tipo allusione sessuale fatta da uno scaricatore di porto	a subtle irony similar to a sexual innuendo by a docker
(p. 254) a fluid sheath of shot-silk-effect <i>Yves Klein</i> blue...	(p. 258) a un velo fluente azzurro marezzato tipo seta...	a flowing watery silk-like veil

Table 7.
Omission of references to people.³

³ Bruce Forsyth is an English TV host and entertainer; Will Carling is a former English rugby player; Denis Healey is a retired British Labour politician; Noel Edmonds is an English broadcaster; Jeremy Paxman is an English journalist, author and broadcaster; Frank Bough is a retired English TV presenter; Geoffrey Boycott is a former England cricketer; Sara Keays is the former mistress and personal secretary of British Conservative politician Cecil Parkinson; Christopher Biggins is an English actor; Leslie "Les" Dawson was an English comedian; Frankie Howerd was an English comedian; Yves Klein was a French artist.

Moreover, examples of omission as a strategy of simplification are also sometimes found when Bridget refers to fictional characters, presumably, also in this case, in order to make the target text easier and more immediate to the Italian lay reader (Table 8):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 2) Obsess about Daniel Cleaver as pathetic to have a crush on boss <i>in manner of Miss Money Penny</i> or similar.	(p.11) Lasciarsi ossessionare da Daniel Cleaver, nel senso che prendersi una cotta per il capo è patetico.	Letting oneself be obsessed about Daniel Cleaver, meaning having a crush on one's own boss is pathetic.
(p. 30) long curly fingernails like <i>Struwelpeter</i> ...	(p. 38) le unghie lunghe e adunche come quelle di un'arpia...	long and hooked nails similar to those of a harpy...
(p. 103) I said, in a pre-programmed <i>Stepford Wife</i> sort of way...	(p. 110) ho risposto (una risposta programmata in anticipo)...	I answered (an answer which had been planned in advance)...
(p. 40) I feel as if I have turned into <i>Miss Havisham</i> .	(p. 48) mi trasformo in una specie di paguro bernardo.	I turn into a sort of hermit crab.

Table 8.
Omission of names of fictional characters.⁴

3.3. Normalization (conservatism)

According to Baker (1996, p. 183), normalization or conservatism is “a tendency to exaggerate features of the target language and to conform to its typical patterns”. Moreover, Baker claims that this tendency is probably influenced by the status of the source text and the source language, so that the higher the status of the source text and the source language, the less the tendency to normalize.

In the translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*, we can observe various cases of normalization. This does not come as a surprise, considering what has been previously mentioned: the low status of the source text and of the source language.

First of all, the chick lit genre has often been dismissed by critics as low literature. As Ferriss and Young (2006, p. 1) state:

⁴ Miss Money Penny is a fictional character in Ian Fleming's *James Bond* novels and in the film series; Struwelpeter is the character of a German children's book by Heinrich Hoffman; Miss Havisham is a significant character in Charles Dickens's novel *Great Expectations*; *The Stepford Wives* is a 1972 satirical thriller novel by Ira Levin in which the housewives living in a Connecticut neighbourhood are robots created by their husbands.

On the one hand chick lit attracts the unquestioning adoration of fans; on the other it attracts the unmitigated disdain of critics. Such criticisms have become almost as common as the genre's ubiquitous pink, fashion-conscious covers. Highbrow critics, perhaps inevitably, have dismissed chick lit as trashy fiction.

Secondly, a personal diary is a kind of text that is not generally written with the intention of being published, and consequently its status is usually not considered high. As Lanford and West (1999, p. 11) claim "few diaries are accepted as canonical cultural documents, and then often only as a result of the public status of their writers".

Last but not least, we cannot but take into consideration the status of the author. Though *Bridget Jones's Diary* was Helen's Fielding second novel, her first one, *Cause Celeb*, (1994) only became famous following the success of *Bridget Jones's Diary*.⁵ Thus, when the novel was translated into Italian, Fielding could not have been considered as an important name in the literary world.

The *Diary's* very colloquial and informal style is achieved partly through the use of abbreviations, interjections, and onomatopoeic words. Abbreviations, in particular, are most often used at the beginning of the entry of each day, where Bridget makes a summary of the situation (in italics) and usually reports her weight, the number of alcohol units that she drank the previous day, the number of cigarettes smoked, the number of calories ingested, and the number of instant lottery tickets bought. She usually puts a comment into brackets after each data, and such comments are usually in an abbreviated form, such as: *v.g.* for *very good*, *v.v.g.* for *very very good*, *v.b.* for *very bad*, *esp.* for *especially*. As a general rule, in these cases the abbreviations have been maintained in the Italian translation. The phrases reported above have been translated as: *m.b.* for *molto bene*, *m.m.b.* for *molto molto bene*, *m.m.* for *molto male*, and *spec.* for *specialmente*.

However, abbreviations sometimes also occur in the text itself, but in most cases they have been normalized in the target text, as can be seen in Table 9.

As far as onomatopoeic interjections are concerned, the translator is not always consistent. In some cases they are transposed with commonly used Italian interjections. However, often they are standardized. The most common onomatopoeic interjections used are *ugh*, *argh*, *humph*, and *hmmm*. *Ugh*, used to express disgust, aversion, horror, and the like, is often standardized to *diavolo* [*devil*]. *Diavolo* can be used in Italian as an exclamation (similar to the English exclamation *hell*), even though it is not currently very common in the Italian language with such a function. Nevertheless, in the Italian translation of the book, there are eight cases where the translator has opted

⁵ In fact, all the pictures of the book cover available by browsing Google images report the statement "by the author of Bridget Jones's Diary", not to mention the fact that it was published in the United States for the first time only in 2002 and has never been translated in Italian.

for this choice.⁶ On two occasions,⁷ it has been standardized to *ecco*, an Italian adverb used to intensify what the speaker is about to say, more or less equivalent to the English expression *so there*. In other cases,⁸ it has been translated with the onomatopoeic interjections *bleah* and *puah*, which well convey the functional and connotative meaning of the original and maintain the same level of informality and colloquialness. Sometimes, however, it is not transposed at all.⁹

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 3) <i>Poss</i> start pension also.	(p. 12) <i>Se possibile</i> cominciare a pagare anche una pensione.	<i>If possible</i> , start paying for a pension.
(p. 77) Have woken up v. <i>fed up</i> .	(p. 84) Mi sono svegliata <i>stufa marcia</i> .	I have woken up <i>sick and tired</i> .
(p. 78) Have had v.g. idea about birthday.	(p. 86) Ho avuto un' <i>ottima</i> idea per il mio compleanno.	I have had an <i>excellent</i> idea for my birthday.
(p. 93) <i>V. late</i> now.	(p. 99) Sono in <i>ritardissimo</i> .	I'm <i>very late</i> .
(p. 106) feeling v. <i>full</i> of myself.	(p. 112) Ero <i>piena</i> di me.	I was <i>full</i> of myself.
(p. 109) A v. <i>posh</i> sheep-voice bleated...	(p. 115) Una voce <i>molto chic e sottile</i> ha belato ...	A <i>very posh</i> and subtle voice bleated...
(p. 125) ... but creates v. <i>bad</i> situation in head.	(p. 131) ... ma crea una <i>pessima</i> situazione in testa.	... but creates a <i>very bad</i> situation in head.
(p. 184) Head state v. <i>bad</i> again.	(p. 190) Sono di nuovo in un <i>pessimo</i> stato mentale.	I'm in a <i>very bad</i> mental state again.
(p. 194) <i>V. bad</i> night.	(p. 200) Una <i>pessima</i> nottata.	A <i>very bad</i> night.

Table 9.
Normalization of abbreviations.

As far as the onomatopoeic interjection *aargh* (or its variation *aaargh*) is concerned, we can see that the translator has not always opted for the same strategy. In some cases she has standardized it by translating it as *aiuto* [help].¹⁰ In two cases,¹¹ the same interjection has been standardized to *diavolo*, the same translation equivalent that is mostly used in the book to translate the interjection *ugh*. On one occasion,¹² it has been standardized to *oddio* [oh my God]. Finally, in other cases,¹³ the onomatopoeic interjection

⁶ Pages 7/15, 10/18, 19/25, 59/66, 68/74, 146/152, 268/271.

⁷ Pages 190/196.

⁸ Pages 189/195 and 247/252 respectively.

⁹ Pages 187/193, 215/220, 216/221, 266/270, 272/276, 277/281.

¹⁰ Pages 83/91, 84/91, 152/158, 153/159, 154/160, 295/298, 295/299.

¹¹ Pages 147/153, 148/154.

¹² Pages 271/275.

¹³ Pages 25/33, 118/124, 153/159, 154/160, 261/265.

aargh has been maintained in the target text (although it has been normalized to the Italian *argh*), keeping the informal style of the original.

The onomatopoeic interjection “humph” is most often translated as *uffa*,¹⁴ an Italian interjection which expresses bore or annoyance, more or less corresponding in its functional and connotative meaning to the original interjection. In these cases, the target text successfully transposes the colloquial and informal character of the source text. On one occasion,¹⁵ however, it is not translated at all.

Finally, the onomatopoeic interjection “hmm” (or “hmmm”, “mmm”, “um”) is very common throughout the text to express thoughtful absorption, hesitation, doubt, or perplexity. Also in this case, the translator has not always adopted the same strategy. In many cases,¹⁶ she has transposed it with the equivalent Italian onomatopoeic interjection *mmm*. On other occasions, however, it has not been transposed at all.¹⁷ In one interesting case,¹⁸ the translator has explicitated the interjection, translating it as *Niente male, eh?* [Not bad, eh?].

Examples of normalization can also be observed in some cases when Bridget deliberately distorts word spelling. Such words are sometimes written in italics, so to give a more precise idea of how they are pronounced or to add emphasis. The translator, instead, has translated them with proper Italian spelling, as shown in Table 10.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 50) “ <i>Shud-urrrrrrrrp</i> ”	(p. 58) “ <i>Fatela tacere!</i> ”	“ <i>Make her shut up!</i> ”
(p. 26) <i>Yesssss! Yesssss!</i>	(p. 34) <i>Ma sì! Vai così!</i>	<i>Yes! Way to go!</i>
(p. 75) “ <i>Yeeeeees</i> , next weekend”	(p. 82) “ <i>Sì</i> , il prossimo”	“ <i>Yes</i> , the next one”
(p. 75) “ <i>Oooh. Yes, please</i> ”	(p. 82) “ <i>Oh</i> , ma certo, sicuro!”	“ <i>Oh</i> , of course, sure!”
(p. 96) “ <i>Byeee!</i> ”	(p. 103) “ <i>Addio!</i> ”	“ <i>Farewell!</i> ”
(p. 253) 8st 13lb 8oz (<i>yesss!</i>)	(p. 257) Kg 57,2 e mezzo (<i>vai!</i>)	Kg 57.2 and a half (<i>way to go!</i>)

Table 10.
Normalization of spelling.

However, we should note that whenever Bridget misspells entire sentences because she is drunk, or because she is reporting utterances spoken by drunk people, the translator has not normalized the target text. Indeed, the Italian

¹⁴ Pages 43/51, 77/84, 81/88, 104/111, 106/112, 129/135, 142/148, 152/158, 155/161, 229/235, 243/249, 244/249, 256/260, 295/299.

¹⁵ Pages 31/39.

¹⁶ Pages 25/32, 45/52, 104/110, 128/134, 167/173, 218/224, 231/237, 235/241.

¹⁷ Pages 27/35, 84/91, 163/169, 213/219, 235/241, 262/266, 285/289, 293/297.

¹⁸ Pages 58/65.

translation is misspelt too, managing to convey the connotative meaning implied in the original, as can be observed in Table 11.

Source text	Target text	Target text properly spelt
(p. 68) Argor sworeal brilleve with Shazzan Jude. Dun stupid care bout Daniel stupid prat. Feel sicky though. Oops.	(p. 74) Magnifica scerata moolto scimpatica con Shazzan e Jude. Basta pensare a quel Daniel sciocchina. Ma come mi sento male. Aiut.	Magnifica serata molto simpatica con Shazzer e Jude. Basta pensare a quel Daniel sciocchina. Ma come mi sento male. Aiuto.
(p. 146) Argo res wororriblr. Am olapassit. Face collapsing.	(p. 152) Una scerata terribile. Sto per svenire. A faccingiù.	Una serata terribile. Sto per svenire. A faccia in giù.
(p. 187) Gor es wor blurry goofun tonight though. Oof. Tumbled over.	(p. 193) Dio se è tardi. Mamela sono spassata un mondo, stascera. Uff. Sciono caduta per terra.	Dio se è tardi. Ma me la sono spassata un mondo, stasera. Uff. Sono caduta per terra.
(p. 245) “Look. Shuddup,” said Jude, burping again. “Shagernothebol Chardonnay?”	(p. 251) “Scentite, scmettela”, ci ha zittite Jude, con un altro ruttino discreto. “Ordiniamunaltrosiardonné ?”	“Sentite, smettetela”, ci ha zittite Jude, con un altro ruttino discreto. “Ordiniamo un altro Chardonnay?”

Table 11.
Transposition of misspellings.

Last but not least, talking about normalization, in the source text Bridget very often omits subjects, auxiliaries, articles, prepositions, and possessive adjectives, as in a genuine diary. However, in the target text most of the times the translator has standardized these features, by adding the missing words, as shown in Table 12.¹⁹

Though the subject is not rendered in Italian either, it ought to be noted that Italian is a pro-drop language. Consequently the ellipsis of subject is the default option, and the omission of the subject in the translated version does not convey the connotations of such an omission in the source text. The text, then, is standardized due to the insertion of articles, copulas, and possessive adjectives.

¹⁹ See also Table 9, where in most of the extracts the first singular subject and the definite or indefinite articles are missing.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p.2) Obsess about Daniel Cleaver as [<i>subject and copula omitted</i>] pathetic to have a crush on boss...	(p.11) Lasciarsi ossessionare da Daniel Cleaver, nel senso che prendersi una cotta per <i>il</i> [<i>article</i>] capo è [<i>copula</i>] patetico.	Letting oneself be obsessed about Daniel Cleaver, meaning having a crush on the boss is pathetic.
(p. 82) [<i>subject omitted</i>] Have had [<i>article omitted</i>] v.g. idea about [<i>possessive adjective omitted</i>] birthday.	(p.86) Ho avuto <i>un'</i> [<i>article</i>] ottima idea per il <i>mio</i> [<i>possessive adjective</i>] compleanno.	I have had an excellent idea for my birthday.
(p. 93) [<i>subject and copula omitted</i>] V. late now.	(p.99) <i>Sono</i> [<i>copula</i>] in ritardissimo.	I am very late.

Table 12.
Standardization through addition of missing words.

To conclude, we can confirm the presence of universal features of translation (*explicitation*, *simplification* and *normalization*). In the next section we will discuss the use of Venuti's (1995) domestication and foreignization translation strategies in the translation of *Bridget Jones*.

4. Domestication vs. Foreignization in the Italian translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*

Venuti bases his concepts on Schleiermacher's (in Venuti 2008, p. 15) notion of translation methods, according to which "either the translator leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him", therefore *domesticating* the text, or "the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him" (Venuti 2008, p. 15), thereby *foreignizing* the text.

The scholar states that domestication is by far the strategy preferred by translators in the Western world, where the main aim seems to be making the target text smooth and fluent by trying to avoid any estrangement effect in the reader.

In the Italian version of *Bridget Jones's Diary* we can identify many instances in which the main aim of the translator is apparently just that. This can be observed both on a semantic and on a syntactic level. In this paper I will only focus on the transposition of culture-specific items. The most common translation strategies used to domesticate a text are: omission, generalization, and replacement with other elements deemed to be more familiar. In the Italian translation of *Bridget Jones's Diary* we can observe all such strategies.

4.1. Omissions

In the section on simplification we have already analyzed many cases where the strategy of omission had been adopted presumably for the benefit of the Italian reader unfamiliar with the British culture.

Indeed, as we could note, the strategy of omission is most commonly implemented in the case of references to brands, household names and people who might be considered unfamiliar to the Italian reader. The translator most probably decided to omit all these references so as to avoid a potential estrangement effect on the Italian reader. Consequently, the strategy of omission has been used in this book in order to domesticate the text.

4.2. Generalization

Generalization is an activity which involves the substitution of an element in the source text with a hyperonym in the target text, usually an expression whose literal meaning is wider and less specific than the expression used in the source text. Also in this case, the text turns out to be domesticated. Indeed, through the strategy of generalization an unfamiliar, and hence potentially disturbing element is replaced with a generic one that can be easily understood without difficulty.

The strategy of generalization with the aim of domesticating the text is sometimes used in the case of references to people (Table 13):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 37) Apparently there is a <i>Martin Amis</i> character who is so crazily addicted that he starts wanting a cigarette even when he's smoking one.	(p. 45) Pare che esista un <i>personaggio televisivo</i> così nicotina-dipendente che comincia a desiderare un'altra sigaretta quando sta ancora fumando quella precedente.	Apparently there is a <i>television character</i> who is so nicotine-addicted that he starts wanting a cigarette when he is still smoking the previous one.

Table 13.
Generalization of a reference to a fictional character.

In the example above, Bridget refers to Martin Amis's character Richard Tull in *The Information* (1995): a frustrated writer, who talks about smoking a cigarette in between each cigarette. In the Italian translation, Bridget generically refers to a television character. So, besides being generalized, the reference has also shifted from the field of literature to that of television. It is interesting to note, however, that in the book there is another reference to Martin Amis and in that case the translator has maintained it in the target text (Table 14). The name of the writer is not contextualized in either case,

therefore the choice to omit it in one case but maintain it in the other appears rather odd:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 96) ... saying, “ <i>Martin Amis!</i> Nelson Mandela! Richard Gere!”...	(p. 103) ... dicendo: “ <i>Martin Amis!</i> Nelson Mandela! Richard Gere!”...	... saying, “ <i>Martin Amis!</i> Nelson Mandela! Richard Gere!”...

Table 14.
Maintenance of reference to a British writer.

Generalization is also used in the case of specific brands or household names, as can be seen in the examples reported in Table 15:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 18) some <i>Stilton</i>	(p. 26) del <i>formaggio</i>	some <i>cheese</i>
(p. 47) dressed as a <i>Morris dancer</i>	(p. 55) vestito come un <i>ballerino folcloristico</i>	dressed as a <i>folk dancer</i>
(p. 72) <i>Jaeger</i> and <i>Country Casuals</i>	(p. 78) <i>boutique di lusso</i>	<i>luxury boutiques</i>
(p. 122) in <i>Warehouse</i>	(p. 128) in <i>un grande magazzino</i>	in a <i>chain store</i>
(p. 122) buy a few choice items from <i>Nicole Fahri, Whistles, and Joseph</i>	(p. 128) comprare pochi articoli scelti in <i>negozi super chic</i>	buy few choice items from <i>super chic shops</i>
(p. 127) three boxes of <i>Milk Tray</i>	(p. 134) tre scatole di <i>cioccolatini</i>	three boxes of <i>chocolates</i>
(p. 135) on to my <i>River Café</i> <i>cookbook</i>	(p. 142) sul mio <i>libro di cucina preferito</i>	on to my <i>favourite cookbook</i>
(p. 159) six cans of <i>Fosters</i>	(p. 165) sei lattine di <i>birra</i>	six cans of <i>beer</i>
(p. 258) “Box of <i>Milk Tray</i> ?”	(p. 262) “In una scatola di <i>cioccolatini</i> ?”	“In a box of <i>chocolates</i> ?”
(p. 304) the <i>Magimix</i>	(p. 307) il <i>frullatore</i>	the <i>blender</i>

Table 15.
Generalization of brands and household names.²⁰

²⁰ *Stilton* is an English cheese; *Morris dance* is a traditional English folk dance; *Jaeger*, *Country Casuals*, *Warehouse*, *Nicole Fahri*, *Whistles* and *Joseph* are fashion shops; *Milk Tray* is an English brand of chocolates; *The River Café* *cookbook* is a recipe book by the *River Café* restaurant founders; *Foster’s* is an internationally distributed Australian brand of beer; *Magimix* is a French brand of food processors and blenders.

The references to Princess Diana are interesting, as the translator does not show a consistent behaviour in her translational choices. In some cases she has generalized the reference, as in the extract reported in Table 16:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 53) with a look of melancholy bravery I swear she copied from <i>Princess Diana</i> .	(p. 61) con un'espressione di malinconico coraggio che, scommetto, ha copiato da <i>qualche testa coronata</i> .	with a look of melancholy bravery that, I bet, she copied from <i>some crowned head</i> .

Table 16.
Generalization of reference to Princess Diana.

Here, Princess Diana has been turned into a generic reference to any crowned head (*testa coronata*). Such translational behaviour cannot be easily ascribed to a presumable intention of making the target text more familiar to the Italian lay reader, as Princess Diana was definitely known to Italians. In the extract in Table 17, on the other hand, the reference has been maintained:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 218) We ended up, for some reason, talking about <i>Princess Diana</i> .	(p. 224) Chissà perché, abbiamo finito per metterci a parlare della <i>principessa Diana</i> .	Goodness knows why we ended up talking about <i>Princess Diana</i> .

Table 17.
Maintenance of reference to Princess Diana.

Further on in the text, however, another reference to Princess Diana has been omitted, as reported in Table 18.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 269) she adopted her wounded <i>Princess Diana</i> look.	(p. 273) ha adottato lo sguardo da <i>cucciolo bastonato</i> .	she adopted her <i>wounded puppy</i> look.

Table 18.
Elimination of reference to Princess Diana.

Though functional equivalence is achieved, with the image of a wounded puppy, it is difficult to understand why the reference to Princess Diana has been deleted.

Moreover, towards the end of the book there is one more reference to Princess Diana, which has been eliminated (Table 19):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 297) So glad decided to be festive Home Alone Singleton like <i>Princess Diana</i> .	(p. 300) Sono felice di aver deciso di essere una Single che Festeggia in Casa da Sola... come una <i>reietta</i> .	I'm glad I've decided to be a Single Woman who Celebrates Staying Home Alone... like an <i>outcast</i> .

Table 19.
Elimination of reference to Princess Diana.

As we can see above, in the original version Bridget compares herself to the princess because of their shared status as single women, while in the translation she describes herself as an outcast (*una reietta*).

Other interesting cases of generalization can be noticed throughout the text whenever Bridget refers to the brand of cigarettes she and her friends smoke, namely Silk Cut. Most of the times the translator has generalized the references, referring simply to “cigarettes”.²¹ It is a fact that Silk Cut cigarettes are not well-known in Italy. However, they are available, and there is also an Italian Silk Cut Wikipedia page.²²

Interestingly, there are two cases when the original references to cigarettes have been totally omitted and the translation has completely altered the meaning of the source text, as can be seen in Table 20:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 28) Panic stricken, I reached for the <i>Silk Cut</i> .	(p. 36) In preda al panico, <i>avrei voluto tagliarmi le vene</i> .	Panic stricken, <i>I wanted to cut my veins</i> .
(p. 46) I went round the corner, shaking, for some <i>Silk Cut</i> .	(p. 54) Sono arrivata tremando fin dietro l'angolo per comprare <i>da bere</i> .	I went round the corner, shaking, to buy something <i>to drink</i> .

Table 20.
Elimination of reference to cigarettes and alteration of original meaning.

4.3. Substitution

The strategy of substitution in translation involves replacing a culture-specific item or expression in the source text with a target language item that describes a similar concept in the target culture likely to have a similar impact on the target readers. The ultimate aim of this strategy is once again the minimization of the potential estrangement effect that an unfamiliar

²¹ Pages 126/132, 127/133, 188/133, 190/197, 209/214, 301/304.

²² In the trivia section of the Italian page (but not in the English one), it is reported that the brand is the preferred one by comic book character John Costantine, by writers Warren Ellis and Tom Stoppard, by singer Robbie Williams and by literary and cinematographic character Bridget Jones.

reference may arouse in the target reader. Here follow some examples of the use of substitution in the Italian translation of the novel (Table 21):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 18) while watching <i>EastEnders</i> .	(p. 26) intanto ho guardato <i>Love Boat</i> .	while watching <i>The Love Boat</i> .
(p. 98) Want to [...] watch <i>EastEnders</i> .	(p. 104) Voglio [...] guardare <i>Love Boat</i> .	I want to [...] watch <i>The Love Boat</i> .

Table 21.
Substitution of reference to a TV show.

In the examples above (to which the title of this essay refers) we can note that the translator has replaced the references to *EastEnders* with *The Love Boat*. *EastEnders* is a BBC television soap opera set in a fictional borough in the East End of London. It has been broadcast since 1985 and is one of the UK's highest rated programmes. *The Love Boat*, instead, is an American television series set on a cruise ship. Whereas *EastEnders* has never aired on Italian TV channels, and consequently is unknown to most Italians, *The Love Boat* was broadcast in Italy from 1980 till 1990, and is familiar to the majority of Italians who lived in that period. This substitution domesticates the target text, avoiding any estrangement effect in the reader.

Interesting cases of substitution can be observed also in case of references to food items which are thought to be unfamiliar to the Italian reader, and consequently are replaced with other items which are better known in Italy. Throughout the book there are various references to Milk Tray, which we have already noted has been generalised due to the fact that the product is unknown in Italy. There are other cases, however, when the translator has opted for substituting the reference to this specific chocolate product, as well as to others, as can be seen in Table 22:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 7) 12 <i>Milk Tray</i>	(p. 15) 12 <i>Quality Street</i>	12 <i>Quality Street</i>
(p. 51) the last <i>Milk Tray</i>	(p. 59) l'ultimo <i>Quality Street</i>	the last <i>Quality Street</i>
(p. 115) 1 <i>Milky Way</i>	(p. 121) 1 <i>Quality Street</i>	1 <i>Quality Street</i>
(p. 242) You bring me <i>Diary Box</i> , please, instead of <i>Quality Street</i> ?	(p. 247) Potresti portarmi degli <i>After Eight</i> invece delle <i>Quality Street</i> ?	Could you bring me some <i>After Eight</i> , instead of <i>Quality Street</i> ?
(p. 242) Get us a <i>Twix</i> and a <i>Lion</i> bar	(p. 247) Prendici una <i>Fiesta</i> e un <i>Mars</i>	Get us a <i>Fiesta</i> and a <i>Mars</i>

Table 22.
Substitution of brands of chocolate products.

As we can note, in two cases Milk Tray has been replaced with references to Quality Street chocolates, available also in Italy. Thus, by replacing an unknown food item with a familiar one, the translator has domesticated the text.

Quality Street has also been used to substitute a reference to the Milky Way chocolate, which is not available in Italy. Diary Box chocolates (also not available in Italy), instead, have been substituted by After Eight, a British confectionary product which is distributed in Italy. Finally, and oddly, references to Twix and Lion bars have been replaced with references to Fiesta and Mars respectively, even though Twix and Lion bars are also very popular in Italy.

Examples of substitution used as a strategy of domestication can also be found in the case of fashion shops. For instance, a reference to Nicole Farhi has been substituted with Laura Ashley, again better known to Italians (Table 23):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 123) something really nice from <i>Nicole Farhi</i>	(p. 129) qualcosa di veramente carino da <i>Laura Ashley</i>	something really nice from <i>Laura Ashley</i>

Table 23.

Substitution of names of fashion shops.

This strategy is also used on a few occasions when Bridget refers to famous people:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 176) Usually once he gets going he will see things through to their logical conclusion come earthquake, tidal wave or naked pictures of <i>Virginia Bottomley</i> on the television.	(p. 182) Di solito, quando comincia, porta le cose alla loro conclusione logica, e questo che venga un terremoto, un'inondazione o che compaia sullo schermo TV l'immagine nuda di <i>Cicciolina</i> .	Usually, once he has started, he brings things to their logical conclusion, it doesn't matter if an earthquake comes, a flood, or if the naked image of <i>Cicciolina</i> appears of the TV screen.

Table 24.

Substitution of names of people.

In the example above Bridget makes a reference to naked pictures of ultra-Conservative party MP, Virginia Bottomley. She would never appear naked in public, which is why Bridget correlates it to an earthquake and a tidal wave. In the target text the reference to Virginia Bottomley has been replaced with a reference to Cicciolina, a porn star and former politician. Seeing her naked on TV is by no means an extraordinary event. The target text here has

been domesticated, as Cicciolina is definitely famous in Italy. However, functional equivalence is not achieved.

Another instance of substitution can be observed in Table 25:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 214) I'm thinking studio: <i>Frank Skinner and Sir Richard Rogers</i> on furry seats...	(p. 220) Pensate a uno studio televisivo: <i>Tony Blair e Major</i> su assi ricoperte di pelliccia ...	Think of a television studio: <i>Tony Blair and Major</i> on furry seats...

Table 25.
Substitution of names of people.

Bridget's boss refers to two popular British personalities, namely writer and comedian Frank Skinner and architect Sir Richard Rogers. In the target text both have been replaced with references to British politicians who are very well known to all Italians: Tony Blair and John Major.

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 76) We stared at each other transfixed like two African animals at the start of a fight on a <i>David Attenborough</i> programme.	(p. 83) Ci siamo fissati come due animali selvaggi in procinto di iniziare un combattimento in un documentario di <i>Richard Attenborough</i> .	We stared at each other like two wild animals about to start a fight on a <i>Richard Attenborough</i> programme.

Table 26.
Substitution of names of people.

An interesting case of substitution can also be observed in Table 26, in which Bridget refers to a TV programme by David Attenborough, who is surprisingly replaced by his older brother, Richard Attenborough. The former is an English broadcaster and naturalist, Richard, instead, was a famous film director (e.g. *Gandhi*). The strategy of substitution in this case, however, does not seem to be ascribable to domesticating purposes and the reasons underlying such a translational choice are rather obscure.

Attenborough's documentaries are also mentioned in another part of the text, though this time they are used in the target text as a substitution strategy when the source text refers to a fictional character unknown to most Italians (Table 27):

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 108) Except in the case of <i>Mr Blobby</i> , who should have been punctured at birth.	(p. 108) Tranne nel caso dei <i>documentari di Attenborough</i> che avrebbero dovuto essere stroncati alla nascita.	Except in the case of <i>Attenborough's documentaries</i> which should have been torn apart at birth.

Table 27.

Substitution of a fictional character with a TV programme.

Mr Blobby was a character on Noel Edmond's Saturday night variety television show *Noel's House Party*. He was a bulbous pink figure covered with yellow spots who only said the word "blobby". The translator has replaced the reference with Attenborough's documentaries (this time first names are not mentioned). Although the target text somehow manages to avoid estrangement effects by eliminating potentially disturbing elements (Mr Blobby), functional equivalence is not achieved, as Attenborough's documentaries are highly valued products and the character who is speaking (Perpetua, Bridget's colleague) is an educated person who would not be expected to criticize them.

One more interesting instance of substitution of a reference to a popular person is reported in Table 28:

Source text	Target text	Back translation
(p. 47) "I'll just clean the house like <i>Germaine</i> sodding <i>Greer</i> and the <i>Invisible Woman</i> ".	(p. 55) "Darò una bella ripulita in casa ... come <i>Luisa</i> che <i>comincia presto, finisce presto e di solito non pulisce il water.</i> "	"I will clean up the house... like <i>Luisa</i> who starts early, finishes early, and usually does not clean the toilet bowl."

Table 28.

Substitution of a person with a fictional character.

In this example, the speaker (Bridget's mother) makes reference to outspoken feminist Germaine Greer. "Luisa", on the other hand, is a fictional character from a popular Italian TV advertisement in the 1980s, whose catchphrase was "Luisa comincia presto, finisce presto e di solito non pulisce il water".

5. Conclusions

This study analyzed the Italian translation of the novel *Bridget Jones's Diary* taking two frames of reference, the distinctive universal features observed in computer-based corpus translation, namely *explicitation*, *simplification* and *normalization* and Venuti's dichotomy of translation strategies into domestication and foreignization (1995). The manual analysis has basically

confirmed the results of previous studies about translational behaviour in both cases.

The analysis reveals numerous cases of explicitation, simplification and normalization, as well as a vast number of examples of domesticating strategies of various kinds, in line with Venuti's assertion that domestication is the strategy preferred by translators in the Western world.

However, it is worth noting that fluency of the text is not the only result of the acts of manipulation that have been observed. In fact, these translational behaviours have also affected characterization, especially that of Bridget.

First of all, Bridget Jones turns out to be less typically British. The original text has a considerable number of references to well-known British people or cultural items, many of which are lost in translation. In fact, out of 69 references to famous British characters, 25 have either been omitted, generalized or substituted, and the same has happened to 36 British culture-specific elements (some of which are referred to many times in the source text), whereas only 11 have been maintained.

Interestingly, not *all* references have been lost. Indeed, some of them have been maintained, many of which are definitely known to most Italians (for example, among the references to British people, Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher, Hugh Grant, Nick Hornby, and, among the references to culture-specific items, Marks & Spencer, Pimms, Quality Street). However, some others are probably not exactly familiar to Italians (such as Bonnie Langford, Kathleen Tynan, Katie Boyle, Wendy Cope or Graham and Greene, *Anne and Nick Show*, *Newsnight*).

Secondly, the Italian Bridget Jones appears to be less educated than the original one. Indeed, in the source text Bridget often mentions or refers to politicians, academics, writers, journalists, documentarists, literary characters, novels, and artists. In the Italian translation many of these references have not been transposed. The general effect is that the Italian Bridget Jones is a more simple and less cultured person than her English counterpart.

To conclude, *Il diario di Bridget Jones* turns out to be a fluent translation, a pleasing, entertaining and amusing book which reads smooth and easily. It also succeeds in maintaining the confidential, humorous and light-hearted tone of the original. However, it is undeniable that the omission of the very many references to British contemporary popular culture, as well as to literary novels, authors, and politicians has an impact on the characterization of the main character.

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