

Translating Non-standard Language Andrea Camilleri in English

Giulia Magazzù¹

Abstract

With the flowering of literary works written in a non-standard variety, especially in dialect, translation studies have tried to partially delineate theories, methods, and models to apply when translating these kinds of work. Despite this, translating a literary work written in dialect always represents a challenge for a translator. This difficulty is due to the main characteristics of dialects: they are spoken in a very restricted area and depict a specific cultural world. An example is represented by the language of Andrea Camilleri's novels. In fact, by examining some linguistic features and expressions taken from the English translation of three of Camilleri's detective novels, this paper offers an analysis of the linguistic choices made by the American translator Stephen Sartarelli, with a particular attention on Sicilian culture.

Keywords

Camilleri; Montalbano; Literary Translation; Dialect; Diatopic variation

Translating non-standard language in literature represents one of the most demanding tasks for a translator, who must find a compromise between the source text and the target text. The translator must take into account not only the unique linguistic characteristics of a non-standard variety, but also the extralinguistic and sociocultural aspects that that variety encompasses. This is why finding the right strategies and solutions requires much ability and a great effort on the translator's part. Hence, the aim of the present study, which intertwines aspects of sociolinguistics, translation theory and translation practice, is to establish whether and to what extent features of a non-standard variety, such as dialect, can be rendered in translation and which translation strategies can be applied. In this regard, the English translation of three of Andrea Camilleri's detective novels by Stephen Sartarelli will serve as example. Extracts from the novels *La forma dell'acqua*, *Lodore*

¹“Gabriele d'Annunzio” University of Chieti-Pescara, Italy, giulia.magazzu@unich.it

della notte and *La luna di carta* will be presented in order to reveal the linguistic choices made by the translator and the translation strategies he adopted in the target text, with a particular focus on Sicilian culture.

1. Translating non-standard language²

As Gavurová (2020) underlines, dialects belong to the world of oral tradition and they present many features that distinguish them from the standard variety. She further points out that the differences are usually not just phonetic, but that dialects are characterised by an original expressive word order, which is the word order of the spoken discourse and orality. Buonocore shares this idea: “*la scrittura dialettale, anche quella poetica, ha privilegiato le caratteristiche dell’oralità*”³ (Buonocore 2003: 23). Moreover, dialects are strongly characterised by the use of idiomatic expressions, which are language-specific and unique (Buonocore 2003). Buonocore (2003) observes that idiomatic expressions, allusions, elliptical constructions, metaphors, adverbial phrases and metonymies represent the thorniest problems for a translator. Bonaffini (1996) believes that the “*punte idiomatiche troppo accentuate*”⁴ do not allow the translator to produce a good translation and they must be removed, if they cannot be rendered. Nevertheless, these elements contribute to the expressiveness of the text, which is one of the major characteristics of a text written in a vernacular form, but also to its implicitness.

Many scholars remark how important it is to understand the function that a dialect may have in the text, before translating it. In fact, as Newmark (1988) points out, the most relevant factor in translating non-standard varieties is the identification of its functions in the original text. Hence, he tried to identify three main functions that a dialect usually has in the source text (ST). It can be used to show a slang use of language, to highlight social class contrasts, and to indicate local cultural features. Once they have been identified and established, the translator can choose what language to adopt in the target text, keeping in mind that these functions should be maintained in the target text (Newmark 1988).

Similarly, Pym (2000) asks whether the markers of linguistic varieties should be translated or not. He admits that the “question is a chestnut allowing any number

² In this article I will mainly refer to prose. Dialectal poetry and theatre in translation imply other issues and problems that will not be treated in this discussion.

³ “The writing system of dialects, even the one used in poetry, reflects the characteristics of orality” (my translation)

⁴ “Too accentuated idiomatic peaks” (my translation).

of platitudes” (Pym 2000: 1). He states that the translator has first to distinguish between the two main functions that a vernacular language may have in a literary text. These categories are: “parody” and “authenticity.” In the first case, vernaculars are used to “lubricate the less intelligent characters” and to amuse the readership (Pym 2000: 2). In this case, the translator is not faced with a linguistic variety as such, but a “functional representation of the variety, shorn to just a few stereotypical elements” (Pym 2000: 2). There are a few markers of the variation and they are continually repeated and reproduced. When markers are seen as “typical” elements of a variety, then parody occurs. In the case of authenticity, the markers of variation are balanced between lexis and syntax in order to make the linguistic variety a “real thing” (Pym 2000). Pym’s solution is to render the linguistic variation from the norm, but he points out that it is not the source-text variety that is to be rendered, but a kind of variety, no matter what it is.

Ramos Pinto observes that generally dialects appear in dialogues, rather than in the narrative voice and their main function is to define the sociocultural background of the characters and their “position in the sociocultural fictional context” (Ramos Pinto 2009: 3) and to contribute to the social stratification of the various characters. Likewise, in 2010 Hejwowski (in Szymańska 2017) stresses that the functions of the language varieties signal differences of the characters concerning social status, education, ethnic identity, the character’s knowledge of a language or his/her foreign origin, but that they also signal temporal distance or introduce linguistic humour.

Hodson (2014) also underlines that the most canonical part of a literary text where one can find dialect is in direct speech; in that case, its main function is to associate a character to a social group. Nevertheless, it is quite common to find dialect or non-standard varieties in the narrative voice and in free indirect speech. In the case of the narrative voice, Hodson (2014) references the novel *Castle Rackrent* written by Maria Edgeworth as an example. In her novel, the narrator is Thady Quirk, an uneducated Irish servant who tells the story from his point of view and in part using his own variety, Irish. As for the free indirect discourse, Hodson’s (2014) example is Alan Sillitoe’s novel *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, whose protagonist’s point of view is rendered through non-standard free indirect speech. This “heteroglossia”, as reported in Hodson’s above mentioned study, is a choice of the writers, who decide to compose their works of multiple voices and languages, including the narrative voice, which adopts a different style to tell the story. Hodson describes the effect of the narrative voice in dialect as “often highly oral, as if the narrator were speaking directly to the reader” (Hodson 2014: 86).

Miszalska (2014) sums up the various functions that the use of dialect may have in a literary work⁵. The first is *cultural* and *symbolic*. The use of sayings, proverbs and expressions typical of dialect evoke stories, beliefs and myths linked to the culture that the dialect conveys. The second function is *expressive* and *aesthetic*, especially in poetry. In this case we may also include what Hodson (2014) defines as “eye dialect.” It is a kind of respelling that “gives the impression of being dialectal when the reader looks at it, but it does not convey any information about the pronunciation when the reader sounds it out” (Hodson 2014: 95). It is used to mark the speech of a character as non-standard, though only visually (that is why it is called “eye dialect”). Dialect may also be used on purpose with the function to contrast the hegemony of the standard language, thus in an *ideological* or *polemical* way. Another function may be *intimate* or “psychoanalytical”, as Miszalska (2014) defines it. The use of dialect in this case sets in motion feelings and thoughts belonging to our subconscious; the dialect is thus a tool that allows the writer to express what is usually considered “taboo.” Writers may use dialect in a *comical* way, that is to say to amuse the audience and the readers. This is typical of dialectal theatre. The last function may be represented by the *realism* that authors want to convey in a text. Therefore, they use dialect to depict everyday life experiences.

2. Camilleri’s Language in the Montalbano Novels

In his detective novels, Camilleri juxtaposes different language varieties. In fact, the books featuring Montalbano teem with a consistent number of characters with different social and cultural backgrounds and many of them make use of one or more linguistic varieties or their own idiolect. Nevertheless, the linguistic mishmash experimented by Camilleri mainly consists of three different varieties: Sicilian dialect, standard Italian and the regional Italian of Sicily. His language, often called *camillerese* or *vigatese*⁶ (Cerrato 2018, Marci 2019), is a “personal language” (Marci 2019) made up of Sicilian words and elements, of words and expressions taken from his familiar idiolect, but also of invented words:⁷ all this occurs with the interference of the Italian language. Camilleri alternates and mixes standard Italian and Sicilian dialect; sometimes the readers find dialectal words and expressions

⁵ These functions are also investigated by Accorsi (1978).

⁶ The term comes from the town “Vigata”, the fictional town where Montalbano lives and investigates.

⁷ Camilleri himself stated that he made use of invented words. Yet it is relevant to say that he plays with both Italian and Sicilian dialect, he does not coin neologisms (Matt 2020).

used in an Italian structure, and it is not unusual to come across a hybrid word whose basis is Sicilian, yet it is influenced by Italian morphology. At other times the characters of the novels speak entirely in dialect while others make use of the code-mixing and code-switching phenomena and so on. This mix is evident everywhere in the novels, both in the narration and in the dialogues, as we will see in the analysis of the texts.

Camilleri felt a sort of unfamiliarity with Italian, and this is why he did not use it in an exclusive way for the kind of novel and narrative style he had in mind (Matt 2020). After all, his family, which belonged to the old Sicilian middle-class, communicated in a blend of Italian and dialectal elements, as many Italian families used to do and still do (Matt 2020). Many words, metaphors or idioms are those heard at home when he was a child and from people from different parts of Sicily and thus having a different pronunciation. In many interviews, in fact, Camilleri explained that this language came from his childhood and, through the novels, he tried to reproduce it. He tried to make his “mother tongue” live again in order to recall the past (Cerrato 2018). Moreover, the use of this mixed language is a way of avoiding a flat and anonymous Italian and of conveying more expressiveness (Caprara and Plaza González 2016), which is achieved through a process of functionalisation of his language, which adjusted to the literary world he was building. As Camilleri himself admitted, the invented words we find in his books are the result of his creativity and imagination, and inherited from his grandmother Elvira. Very often she used to address him with words that she had completely made up to play with her grandson, who had to guess their meanings (Sanna 2019). As Cadeddu (2017) points out, Camilleri’s language is also characterised by the use of different registers. Camilleri’s multilingualism is made up not only of diatopic and diastratic variations, but also of diaphasic variation. While reading, in fact, we can notice that the writer makes use of all those register variations, ranging from the colloquial one to the bureaucratic one. Yet Caprara and Plaza González (2016) admit that sometimes it is difficult to understand whether the writer makes use of a register or of a diatopic and diastratic variety. According to Cerrato (2018), Camilleri moves within the linguistic *continuum* both of the standard language and of the dialect and makes use of every variety within it as he pleases. Vizmuller-Zocco (2001) observes that Camilleri’s linguistic mixture has three functions: the first one is *humorous*, the second is *casual*, and the last one is *definitory*. The particular language used by the writer clearly creates a comic and humorous effect; he achieves this effect by scattering Sicilian terms or invented words without any reasonable criterion. As for the last function, the *vigatese* defines

the characters and helps to separate “*i concetti dai sentimenti*.” Italian is the language of “concepts” of reality, while dialect is the language of “feelings and emotions”; so when Camilleri uses exclusively Italian, he is referring to the concepts, while when he uses dialect, feelings and emotions are usually at play.

3. Camilleri in Translation

Camilleri’s novels on Montalbano, which are edited by Sellerio, have been translated into English by Stephen Sartarelli for the publishing house Penguin. Stephen Sartarelli is an American poet and translator; he has translated important Italian authors such as Umberto Saba and Pier Paolo Pasolini, and he has been working on the translation of Stefano D’Arrigo’s *Horcynus Orca* for fifteen years. He is the translator of Camilleri’s novels on Montalbano both for the American and British book market. Both Camilleri and Sartarelli were awarded the CWA International Dagger Award for Translated Crime in 2012 for the *Il campo del vasaio* (The Potter’s Field). Thanks to Sartarelli’s translations, Camilleri is greatly appreciated by English readers. Sartarelli is faced with Camilleri’s multilingualism, which renders his role full of difficulties; the translator must take into account that the language used by Camilleri cannot be overlooked. However, as Sartarelli (2002) remarks, the dialectal forms used by Camilleri are inherently local and they cannot be rendered with local English varieties in translation. He observes that

Montalbano’s world of cops, hoods, lovely ladies and eccentric petit-bourgeois could hardly be made to speak American ghetto jive or Scots or Faulknerian Mississippian or any other geographically specific idiom without appearing absurd (Gutkowski 2009: 8).

This does not mean that the translator cannot intervene and nudge the language in a certain direction. In fact, Sartarelli decides to create “new spaces” in the target language; for instance, he managed to coin a new expression, *curse the saints*, whose original Sicilian expression was *santiare*, and he noticed that many reviewers cite this expression when praising his work (Sartarelli 2017). Yet, as Sartarelli (2002; 2009; 2017) has reminded his readers on many occasions, the book market in the USA is a rigid one, especially as regards translations. Unlike the British book market, the American one is not tolerant of linguistic experimentation and foreign works need to be “Americanised” in order to be accepted. As he points out, the majority of Americans do not read translated books, do not watch foreign movies or listen to

foreign music (Sartarelli 2002); on the other hand, American authors are constantly translated worldwide.

In this section, three of Sartarelli's translated novels will be examined; they were translated into English with the titles *The Shape of Water*, *The Scent of the Night*⁸ and *The Paper Moon* and were published in 2002, 2007 and 2008, respectively. The purpose is to analyse both the strategies and the solutions adopted by the translator and to understand the reasons for the success of Sartarelli's translated versions.

3.1 The Narrative Voice and Free Indirect Speech

The first chapter of *L'odore della notte* opens with Montalbano's awakening caused by a shutter slamming outside the window of his bedroom (Table 1). The verb *slammed* in Sartarelli's version is the translation of *sbattì*. The same procedure is used with verbs such as *s'arrisbigliò*, *s'arricordò*, *aveva addeciso*, *principiò*, which are rendered respectively with standard English as *woke up*, *reminisced*, *decided* and *began*. Nouns such as *sciato* and *moccaro*, are translated as *breath* and *mucus*. It is relevant to note that from the first pages Sartarelli prefers standard English renderings for the narrative voice; the English equivalents, in fact, belong to standard language. It is inevitable that the non-standard elements of the source text are lost. In her analysis, Gutkowsky (2009) argues that the translator might have opted for less standard terms, such as *snot* rather than *mucus*, which has a more scientific connotation. Yet, as seen before, Sartarelli (2009) himself stated that he preferred to maintain the fluency and naturalness of the discourse rather than creating a linguistic mishmash, which could negatively affect the quality of Camilleri's stories.

Table 1

Original text	English Translation
<p>La persiana della finestra spalancata sbattì tanto forte contro il muro che parse una pistolettata e Montalbano, che in quel preciso momento si stava sognando d'esseri impegnato in un conflitto a fuoco, s'arrisbigliò di colpo sudatizzo e, 'nzemmula, agghiazzato dal freddo. Si susì santiando e corse a chiudere. [...]</p>	<p>The shutter outside the wide-open window slammed so hard against the wall that it sounded like a gunshot. Montalbano, who at that moment was dreaming he was in a shoot-out, suddenly woke up, sweaty and at the same time freezing cold. He got up, cursing, and ran to close everything. [...]</p>

⁸The version for the American public was entitled *The Smell of the Night* and it was published in 2005 by Viking Penguin, New York. The version used for the analysis is the one published in Great Britain in 2007 by Picador. As for *The Shape of Water* and *The Paper Moon*, I used the versions published by Viking Penguin, New York.

Si fece forza, si susì e raprì l'anta dell'armuar dove c'era la roba pesante. Il fetò di un quintale o quasi di naftalina l'assugliò alla sprovista. Prima gli mancò il sciato, poi gli occhi gli lagrimiarono e quindi principiò a stranutare. Di stranuti ne fece dodici a fila, col moccaro che gli colava dal naso, la testa intronata e sintendosi sempre più indolenzire la cassa toracica

(*L'odore della notte*, 9–10).

Making an effort, he got up and opened the armoire where he kept his heavy clothes. The stink of several tons of mothballs assailed his nostrils. At first it took his breath away, then his eyes started watering and he began to sneeze. He sneezed some twelve times in a row, mucus running down from his nose, head ringing, the pain in his chest growing sharper and sharper

(*The Scent of the Night*, 3–4).

In many cases, despite using standard language, Sartarelli renders the idea conveyed in the source text faithfully enough, drawing on colourful terms and expressions belonging to a more colloquial register, as in the case below (Table 2). *Si sbafò* is translated as *he wolfed down*; *sbafarsi* stands for eating greedily and abundantly, while *to wolf down* means eating something very quickly and in big pieces. On the other hand, the translated equivalent of *liccò*, which stands for flirting, is *he reveled in*, which means gaining pleasure from an activity. Though not perfect equivalents, the English verbs used by Sartarelli give the target text the same nuance of meaning that can be found in the original.

Table 2

Original text	English Translation
<p>Conzò il tavolino della verandina e si sbafò la caponatina mentre il pasticcio si quadiava. Then Appresso, si liccò col pasticcio (<i>La luna di carta</i>, 32).</p>	<p>He set the table on the veranda and wolfed down the caponata as the pasticcio was heating up. Then he reveled in the pasticcio (<i>The Paper Moon</i>, 37).</p>

Sartarelli decides to “neutralise” (Berezowski 1997) the non-standard variety of the source text and to translate it with the standard language also in the case of the free indirect speech, which gives voice to Montalbano’s thoughts and points of view. The free indirect speech presents more features of orality than the narrative voice; the features are maintained by Sartarelli, who endeavours to reproduce the same irony the reader can find in the source text (Table 3).

Table 3

Original text	English Translation
<p>Macari questa ci voleva a conzargli bona la giornata! Lui che trimava di friddo e Livia che sinni stava biatamente stinnicchiata al sole! Ecco un'altra prova che il mondo non firriava più come prima. Ora al nord si moriva di càvudo e al sud arrivavano le gelate, gli orsi, i pinguini (<i>L'odore della notte</i>, 12).</p>	<p>This was all he needed to make his day. Here he was, shivering with cold, while Livia would be lying blissfully in the sun. Still further proof that the world was no longer turning the way it used to. Now up north you died of heat, and down south you'd soon be seeing ice, bears and penguins (<i>The Scent of the Night</i>, 6).</p>

3.2 Catarella's Idiolect

The most hilarious character in these novels is Agatino Catarella, one of the police officers working with Montalbano. His main job at the police station of Vigàta is to receive phone calls and to report them to Montalbano. As Cerrato (2018) remarks, at a certain point in the novels it is revealed that Catarella managed to become a policeman thanks to his contacts in politics. Most likely, he was given the job of phone operator because it was the easiest task (Cerrato 2018). Yet his awful relationship with the standard language and its grammar prevents him from doing his job well. In fact, Catarella is “the desk sergeant who answers the switchboard at the police station and mishears almost everything he is told” (Bailey 2006). Catarella's language, or *catarellese* (Vizmuller-Zocco 2010), is a linguistic stew, whose basis is the so-called “italiano popolare.” This variety is also labelled as “semi-literate Italian” and it is the kind of Italian spoken by dialectal speakers, who learned it during their few years of schooling (D'Achille 2010). Catarella's semi-literate Italian, blended very often with bureaucratic formulas and attempts to use formal language, generates malapropisms, linguistic misunderstandings, mispronunciations, solecisms, and hypercorrection phenomena.

Among Catarella's main expressions, the reader can find pleonasms, such as the typical *Vossia di pirsona pirsonalmente è?* (*L'odore della notte*, 12), which is usually rendered by Sartarelli, who tries to reproduce the same pleonasm in English, as *Is that you yourself in person, Chief?* (*The Scent of the Night*, 7). Catarella's language is characterised by a hotchpotch of pronunciation and meaning mistakes, which create extremely ironic situations. Sartarelli shapes a linguistic mixture to render Catarella's idiolect; this mixture is grammatically incorrect, made up of invented words and short forms. In an interview with Tomaiuolo (2009), Sartarelli explains

that he used a Brooklynese accent “with occasional echoes of the character of Curly from the old slapstick comic series of short films of *The Three Stooges*” (Tomaiuolo 2009: 16) in order to create an English version of *catarellese*. He adopts some Brooklynese forms because many of the policemen working in New York City used to come from Sicily or were of Southern Italian origin, as he states in the preface to Gutkowski’s essay (2009). By adopting these solutions, the translator reproduces the same puns and ironic situations we find in the source text, as the conversations between Montalbano and Catarella show:

Table 4

Original text	English Translation
<p>C: “Maria santissima, dottori! Maria, chi grannissimo scanto che mi pigliai! Ancora attremo, dottori! Mi taliasse la mano. Lo vitti come attrema?”</p> <p>M: “Lo vedo. Ma che fu?”</p> <p>C: “Tilifonò il signori e Quistori di pirsona pirsonalmente e mi spiò di vossia. Io ci arrisposi che vossia era momintaneamente asente e che appena che fosse stato d'arritorno ci l'avrebbi detto a lei che lui ci voliva parlari a lei. Ma lui, cioeni il signori e Quistori, mi spiò se c'era un superiori ingrato.”</p> <p>M: “In grado, Catarè?”</p> <p>C: “Quello che è, è, dottori, basta che ci si accapisce”</p> <p>(<i>L'odore della notte</i>, 80-81).</p>	<p>C: “Maria santissima, Chief! What a scare I got! I’m still shaking all over, Chief! Look at my hand.</p> <p>See it trembling, see it?”</p> <p>M: “I see it. What happened?”</p> <p>C: “The c’mishner called poissonally in poisson and axed for you. I tole ‘im you’s momentarily absint an’ a soon as you got back I’d a tell you he wants a talk t’you. But then he axed, the c’mishner did, to talk to the rankling officer.”</p> <p>M: “The ranking officer, Cat”.</p> <p>C: “Whatever is, is, Chief. All ‘at matters is we unnastand each other”</p> <p>(<i>The Scent of the Night</i>, 81-82).</p>

In the first odd dialogue between Catarella and Montalbano, the translator renders the same misunderstanding, which takes place because of Catarella’s mispronunciation of the expression *in grado*, which is turned to *ingrato*. In translation, Catarella’s mispronunciation of *ranking*, which becomes *rankling*, creates the same pun in the text. In this case, the pleonasm di *pirsona pirsonalmente*, which is usually translated as **you yourself in person**, becomes *poissonally in poisson*; the translator’s purpose is to maintain the repetition of the sound, no matter whether *poissonally in poisson* does not make any sense to an English-speaking reader. The distorted form “in poisson” used by Sartarelli creates a double cross-reference; on the one hand, it recalls the expression “in person”, on the other, the term “poison”. The purpose of the translator is to recreate the same oddity we can find in the source text. Moreover, Catarella’s language is redundant and the translator tries to convey the same redundancy in the

target text, as in *but then he axed, the c'mishner did*. In addition, Montalbano addresses Catarella with the diminutive *Cat*, which is closer to an English form, and not *Cataré*, typical of Sicilian noun short forms. Finally, we can notice that the term *dottori* is domesticated and rendered as *chief*, which is the English equivalent.

3.3 Eye-Dialect in Translation: Adelina

Adelina is Montalbano's housekeeper, who expresses herself almost exclusively in dialect. As seen the examples below, in Adelina's speech we can thus find dialectal lexical features (*dumani, figliu, spitali, quattru, peju, adenzia, picciotta*) and also morphosyntactic ones (*Adelina sugnu*). Adelina's dialect in the dialogues is rendered in translation with expressions and ways of speaking typical of a colloquial, informal register, such as *gotta*; the sounds at the end and at the beginning of the syllables are often omitted, as in *an'* (and), *'is* (his), *'em* (them), *er'* (her), *don'* (don't), *younges'* (youngest), as in Table 5. Moreover, in the original text, Adelina addresses Montalbano with the title *dottori*, which is a mix between the dialect *dutturi* and the Italian *dottore*. The solution Sartarelli adopts for Catarella's *dottori* cannot be applied for Adelina's as well, because the English term *chief* denotes someone who is higher in rank; in Adelina's case, Montalbano is not her chief, rather her employer. Sartarelli does not find an equivalent in English and prefers to maintain the Sicilian nuance, borrowing the Italian term *Signore* and not translating it as *Sir*; which is the English equivalent.

Table 5

Original text	English Translation
A: "Nun m'arriconosci, dottori? Adelina sugnu". M: "Adelina! Che c'è?"	A: "Don' you rec'nize me, signore? Is Adelina." M: "Adelina! What's the matter?"
A: "Dottori, ci vuliva fari avvirtenzia che oggi non pozzo avveniri." M: "Va bene, non...".	A: "Signore, I wanted a tell you I can't come today." M: "That's OK, don't..."
A: "E non pozzo avveniri né dumani né passannadumani". M: "Che ti succede?"	A: "An' I can't come tomorrow neither, an' a day after that neither." M: "What's wrong?"
A: "La moglie di mè figliu nicu la portaro allo spitali ch'avi malo di panza e io ci devu abbadari 'e figli ca sunnu quattru e il chiù granni ch'avi deci anni è unu sdilinquenti peju di sò patre". A: "Va bene, Adeli, non ti dare pinsèro" (<i>L'odore della notte</i> , 57).	A: "My younges' son's wife was rush to the hospital with a bad bellyache and I gotta look after 'er kids. There's four of 'em and the oldest is ten and he's a bigger rascal than 'is dad." M: "It's OK, Adelina, don't worry about it" (<i>The Scent of the Night</i> , 56).

On the scraps of paper she leaves for Montalbano (Table 6), Adelina's dialect is adjusted to the written form and becomes a pseudo-dialect; almost none of the forms she writes down belong entirely to Sicilian dialect (*totori, manno, anichi, amangiari, tonno*). She tries to write in what she thinks might be a more correct variety of language, perhaps closer to Italian, because she wishes to appear educated or formal; yet the result is the hyper-correction phenomenon. When translating Adelina's notes, Sartarelli tries to reproduce a non-standard variety in the target text, or rather an "eye-dialect," as Tomaiuolo (2009) points out. He makes use of what Berezowski (1997) identifies as the *speech defect* strategy, which implies the creation of lexical items and syntactic patterns, with the adoption of the target language (TL) spelling conventions and phonology. In fact, Sartarelli takes forms that belong undoubtedly to an informal register (*workin, gonna*), but he also manipulates words and endeavours to find phonetic stratagems in order to give the impression of being dialectal (*Im, neece, somtin, beck, afta, tomorra*). Sartarelli's intention is to mark visually the speech of Adelina as non-standard, as he does with other dialect-only-speaking characters that feature in the novels.

Table 6

Original text	English Translation
<p>"Totori, ci manno a dari adenzia a la me niputi Cuncetta ca è picciotta abbirsata e facinnera e ca ci prepara macari anichi cosa di amangiari io tonno passannadumani?" (<i>L'odore della notte</i>, 88).</p>	<p>Mr Inspector, Im sending my neece Concetta to help out. She's a smart an hard workin girl an she gonna make you somtin to eat too. I come beck day afta tomorra (<i>The Scent of the Night</i>, 89).</p>

3.4 Culture-Specific Items: Food

Culture specific items related to food occupy a relevant part of the novels on Montalbano. One of the main strategies adopted by Sartarelli when faced with food terms is borrowing. For instance, in *The Scent of the Night*, Sartarelli rarely translates the terms related to food, but rather borrows them from the source text. *Pirciati*, (48), *nunnatu* (83), *tumazazzo* (94), *patati cunsati* (94), *biscotti regina* (114), *pasta 'ncasciata* (179) are all left untranslated in the target text. Sartarelli very often adds extratextual glosses to explain the borrowings, such as in the case of *pasta 'ncasciata*:

One of the main forms of southern Italian *pasta al forno*, that is, a casserole of oven-baked pasta and other ingredients. *Pasta 'nscasciata* generally contains small macaroni, *tuma* or *caciocavallo* cheese, ground beef, mortadella or salami, hard boiled eggs, tomatoes, aubergine, grated Pecorino cheese, basil, olive oil and a splash of white wine (*The Scent of the Night*, 233).

Even in the extratextual gloss, whose purpose is to explain the foreign term, Sartarelli draws on borrowings from Italian; this shows how the items related to food are closely connected to and rooted in the culture to which they belong. On many occasions, the translator decides to “Italianise” the Sicilian terms; for instance, *mustazzola* (*L'odore della notte*, 111) is turned into the more Italian *mostaccioli* (*The Scent of the Night*, 114). Sartarelli decides to bring the word phonetically closer to an Italian form, rather than maintaining the dialectal one. In other cases, when the terms are less culture specific or denote dishes whose ingredients are widely recognisable, Sartarelli prefers translation (Table 6), though he does not always find the right English equivalent, as in the case of *pasta di mandorle* (*L'odore della notte*, 111) which becomes *marzipan pastries* (*The Scent of the Night*, 114), which stands for another kind item, different from the original one. Most likely, Sartarelli decides to translate them because otherwise the target text readers would find themselves overwhelmed by foreign words.

Table 7

Original text	English Translation
triglie di scoglio freschissime (La forma dell'acqua, 73).	very fresh striped mullet (The Shape of Water, 74).
pasta ad aglio e olio pasta ad aglio e olio (La forma dell'acqua, 87).	pasta with garlic and oil boiled shrimp (The Shape of Water, 90).
Salami, capocotte, sosizze (<i>L'odore della notte</i> , 27).	a variety of sausages and salami (<i>The Scent of the Night</i> , 22).

In rare cases, Sartarelli seems to overlook the connotation related to food items; an instance is the term *passuluma* (Table 7), which stands for black olives soaked in salt, cooked in an oven and then dressed in olive oil, fennel, and red chili pepper. It is a culture-specific term, perhaps complex to render in translation and for the sake of a fluent text, the translator decides to render it as *black olives*. He opts thus for a neutral term, removing any foreign connotations of the culture-specific items of the

source text; this strategy is defined as “absolute universalisation” by Aixela (1996). The extracts below also show that Sartarelli sometimes adds intratextual glosses, such as *cheese* after *caciocavallo* in order to explain the term to the foreign reader.

Table 8

Original text	English Translation
Rapi il frigorifero e lo trovò vacante fatta cizzione di passuluna , angiovi condite con aceto, oglio e origano, e una bella fetta di caciocavallo <i>(L'odore della notte, 172).</i>	He opened the fridge and found it empty, except for some black olives , fresh anchovies dressed in olive oil, vinegar and oregano, and a generous slice of caciocavallo cheese <i>(The Scent of the Night, 178).</i>

4. Conclusion

The overall aim of this paper was to understand to what extent a non-standard variety in a literary work can be transported in translation and to investigate the strategies that a translator may adopt to render it. I have tried to do this by analysing extracts from three detective novels written by Andrea Camilleri and translated into English by the American translator Stephen Sartarelli. In his novels, Camilleri draws on a non-standard variety, which is represented by the Sicilian dialect. The writer also makes use of standard Italian and the regional Italian of Sicily; this linguistic mishmash brought him incredible success. In fact, Camilleri is well known not only in Italy, but also in many other countries, and his novels have been translated into many languages. This success abroad has encouraged a rich debate around the various ways of translating Camilleri's *vigatese* and the culture behind it.

Before analysing the extracts, I tried to outline the role of dialect in Camilleri's production; in many interviews, he stated that in writing he felt the need to draw on dialectal expressions and words, and that dialect was the right variety to convey the stories he wanted to write. For Camilleri, using only the standard language would have meant writing in a flat and anonymous language; he needed a compromise which could give expressiveness to the text. However, the language he uses pervades the entire structure of the novels: we can find non-standard speech in the narrative voice, in free indirect speech and in the dialogues. The use of non-standard language has the function both of conveying irony and of representing reality through the different characters' voices.

The issues mentioned above cannot be overlooked by a translator. This is why Sartarelli tries to maintain faithfully the function of Camilleri's language. However, many linguistic features are lost in translation. In fact, Sartarelli neutralises the narrative voice and the free indirect speech of Montalbano's thought and renders them in standard English. The reason is explained by him in many interviews: he preferred to maintain the rhythm and fluency of Camilleri's discourse in the source text. He also neutralises dialogues between many characters who draw on dialectal forms. Yet, despite using a standard language, Sartarelli attempts to recreate the same irony as the source text. He achieves it by using borrowings, literal translations, glosses within and outside the text, and colloquialisms. The text appears exoticised; for instance, the readers can easily come across Sicilian words referring to food, which are then explained by the translator; they can also find entire Sicilian idioms, which are sometimes left untranslated or translated literally and then explained. These strategies and others used by Sartarelli render many nuances typical of Sicilian, and also Italian, culture.

Sartarelli's ability to play with what the English language could offer him can be seen in the translation of Catarella's idiolect and of Adelina's language. Catarella's linguistic mixture is the result of dialect interfering with a poor knowledge of the Italian language and of a "melting pot" of pronunciation and grammatical mistakes, which generates malapropisms, pleonasm, and ironic misunderstandings. Sartarelli reproduces this linguistic stew in the target text by creating an English version of Catarella's language; he draws on forms belonging to the Brooklynese variety spoken by those policemen working in New York who have Sicilian origins. Moreover, he tries to manipulate the English language in order to shape the same puns and ironic misunderstandings that we can find in the source text. As for Adelina's dialect, he manages to create an "eye-dialect" in the target text using a "speech defect" strategy (Berezowski 1997). This means that he creates lexical items and syntactic patterns by playing with TL spelling conventions and phonology. In the target text, Adelina thus gives the impression of speaking a non-standard variety of English.

By adopting these solutions, the translator manages to remain faithful to the role of Camilleri's language in the source text. Despite the neutralisation of the ST dialectal features, in many cases, Sartarelli compensates by adopting strategies that foreignise the target text. It is relevant to underline though that readers of detective novels may not be willing to make an effort to understand a linguistic experiment; this is why Sartarelli considers fluency and readability more important than a possible linguistic attempt at recreating Camilleri's non-standard language. In this way, the American translator manages to balance readability and faithfulness to the source text.

References

- Accorsi, Maria Grazia. 1978. "Dialecto e dialettalità: una poetica del quotidiano." *Lettere Italiane*, 30 (4): 525–539. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26258519> (10.01.2022).
- Aixela, Javier Franco. 1996. "Culture-specific items in translation." In *Translation, Power, Subversion*, edited by Roman Alvarez and Maria Carmen Africa Vidal. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Berezowski, Leszek. 1997. *Dialect in translation*. Wrocław: Wrocław University Press.
- Bonaffini, Luigi. 1997. "Translating dialect literature." *World Literature Today* 71 (2): 279–www.jstor.org/stable/40153045 (10.01.2022).
- Buonocore, Annalisa. 2003. *Dialettali e neodialettali in inglese*. Rome: Cofine.
- Cadeddu, Paola. 2017. "Plurilinguismo e traduzione. Serge Quadruppani traduttore francese de "Il ladro di merendine" di Andrea Camilleri." In *Quaderni camilleriani 3. Il cimento della traduzione*, edited by Giuseppe Marci and Maria Elena Ruggerini, 56–66. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.
- Caprara, Giovanni and Pedro J. Plaza González. 2016. "Il plurilinguismo nell'opera di Andrea Camilleri: analisi della traduzione spagnola de Il patto." In *Quaderni camilleriani 1. Il patto*, edited by Duilio Caocci, Federico Diana, Maria Elena Ruggerini and Veronka Szoke, 37–52. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.
- Casero, Lucia. 2011. "Formazione e diffusione dell'Italiano." In *Manuale di Linguistica Italiana: storia, attualità e grammatica*, edited by Luca Serianni and Giuseppe Antonelli, 32–61. Milan/Turin: Mondadori.
- Cerrato, Mariantonia. 2018. "Oggetto di indagine: la lingua di uno scrittore sospetto." In *Quaderni camilleriani 5. Indagini poliziesche e lessicografiche*, edited by Veronka Szöke, 85–96. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.
- D'Achille, Paolo. 2010. *L'italiano contemporaneo*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Gavurová Miroslava. 2020. "Periphery within One Language: Challenges of Dialect Fairy Tales Translation into Standard Slovak." *Przekłady Literatur Słowiańskich* 10 (1): 113–129. <https://doi.org/10.31261/PLS.2020.10.01.09> (10.01.2022).
- Gutkowski, Emanuela. 2009. *Does the Night Smell the Same in Italy and in English Speaking Countries? An Essay on Translation: Camilleri in English*. Enna: Ilionbooks.
- Hodson, Jane. 2014. *Dialect in Film and Literature*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Marci, Giuseppe. 2018. "Indicizzare l'opera di Andrea Camilleri: un esercizio filologico, linguistico e letterario." In *Quaderni camilleriani 5. Indagini poliziesche e lessicografiche*, edited by Veronka Szöke, 97–102. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.
- Marci, Giuseppe. 2019. "Il telero di Vigàta." In *Quaderni camilleriani 9. Il telero di Vigàta*, edited by Simona Demontis, 8–20. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.

- Matt, Luigi. 2020. "Lingua e stile della narrativa camilleriana." In *Quaderni camilleriani 12. Parole, musica (e immagini)*, dited by Duilio Caocci, Giuseppe Marci and Maria Elena Ruggerini, 39-93. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.
- Miszalska, Jadwiga. 2014. "La traduzione del dialetto nei testi teatrali." *Kwartalnik Neofilologiczny* LXI (2): 407-413.
- Newmark, Peter. 1988. *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Pym, Anthony. 2000. "Translating Linguistic Variation: Parody and the Creation of Authenticity." In *Traducción, metrópoli y diáspora*, edited by Miguel A. Vega & Rafael Martín-Gaitero, 69-75. Madrid: Universidad Complutense de Madrid.
- Ramos Pinto, Sara. 2009. "How Important Is the Way You Say It? A Discussion on the Translation of Linguistic Varieties." *Target* 21: 289-307.
- Rozovsky, Peter. 2014. Casanova to Catarella: Detectives Beyond Borders interviews. Andrea Camilleri's translator Stephen Sartarelli, Pt. II. Detectives Beyond Borders 22 April, 2014 <http://detectivesbeyondborders.blogspot.com/2014/04/casanova-to-catarella-detectives-beyond.html> (10.01.2022).
- Sanna, Elena. 2019. "Il metodo traduttivo di Stephen Sartarelli: una prospettiva diacronica sulla resa in inglese delle opere di Andrea Camilleri." In *Quaderni camilleriani 9. Il telero di Vigàta*, edited by Simona Demontis, 104-116. Cagliari: Grafiche Ghiani.
- Sartarelli, Stephen. 2004. L'alterità linguistica di Camilleri in inglese. Paper presented at the Conference on Letteratura e storia. Il caso Camilleri, Palermo, 8-9 March 2004.
- Szymańska, Izabela. 2017. "The Treatment of Geographical Dialect in Literary Translation from the Perspective of Relevance Theory." *Research in Language* 15. <https://doi.org/10.1515/rela-2017-0004> (21.09.2020).
- Tomaiuolo, Saverio. 2009. "I am Montalbano/Montalbano sono: Fluency and Cultural Difference in Translating Andrea Camilleri's Fiction." *Journal of Anglo-Italian Studies* 10: 201-219.
- Viztmuller-Zocco, Jana. 2001. "Il test della (im)popolarità: il fenomeno Camilleri." *Quaderni d'Italianistica* 22 (1): 35-46.
- Viztmuller-Zocco, Jana. 2010. "I gialli di Andrea Camilleri come occasione metalinguistica." *Italica* 87 (1): 115-130.

Sources

- Camilleri, Andrea. 1994. *La forma dell'acqua*. Palermo: Sellerio editore.
- Camilleri, Andrea. 1998. *Il corso delle cose*. Palermo: Sellerio editore.
- Camilleri, Andrea. 2001. *L'odore della notte*. Palermo: Sellerio editore.
- Camilleri, Andrea. 2002. *The Shape of Water*. Translated by Stephen Sartarelli. New York: Viking Penguin.
- Camilleri Andrea. *La luna di carta*, Palermo: Sellerio editore, 2005.
- Camilleri, Andrea. 2007 *The Scent of the Night*. Translated by Stephen Sartarelli. London: Picador.
- Camilleri, Andrea. 2008. *The Paper Moon*. Translated by Stephen Sartarelli. New York: Viking Penguin.