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CODE-SWITCHING IN CATERINA EDWARDS' *THE LION'S MOUTH*: A PRACTICE-LED ECOLOGICAL TRANSLATION APPROACH

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Abstract: In this article, I will analyse my translation of Canadian author Caterina Edwards' novel *The Lion's Mouth* (1982/1993), published under the title *La bocca di leone* (2023), through the lens of Clive Scott's notion of "ecomorphosis" according to which translation "extends" the source text, thus allowing target-text readers to "re-enter" it and "inhabit" its changing "environment" (2018: 84). This will allow me to discuss how an ecological reading can inform the strategies used to translate a literary work characterised by constant spatial and linguistic movement. *The Lion's Mouth* is set in the Venice of the 1970s, suffering the consequences of unsustainable urban planning; in the unwelcoming Alberta of the 1960s that Venetian migrant character Bianca Mazzin struggles to make her home; as well as in a romanticised Venice of the 1950s inhabiting her memories and imagination. Significantly, the movement between Canada and Italy is reflected in the shift from English to Italian, thus resulting in code-switching. Whilst this literary device is widely used in Italian-Canadian literary texts (Pivato 1987; Verdicchio 1997; Canton 2004; Casagranda 2010), it is partly erased in their Italian translations, as pointed out by Michela Baldo (2018), who interprets this translation approach as the publishers' and translators' attempt to "return" Italian-Canadian authors to their Italian origins. By contrast, in this article, I will show how in my translation, I drew on Scott's notion of translation as an "act of diasporic dispersal" (2018: 9), sending the source text on transcultural journeys by renewing the environment presented in the source text.

Keywords: Code-switching; eco-translation; Italian-Canadian literature.

1. Introduction

Drawing on the analysis of my translation of Canadian author Caterina Edwards' novel *The Lion's Mouth* (1982/1993), published in Italian under the title *La bocca di leone* (2023), this practice-led study aims to show how the translation of literary texts characterised by the interweaving of different languages can benefit from an ecological approach to translation. More specifically, it engages with Clive Scott's notion of *eco-translation* (2018: 66), which is related to ecoreading rather than ecocriticism, and is conceived as an ecosystem that accommodates the environment presented by the source text, its very textuality and the real world of reading. The environments presented by *The Lion's Mouth* shift between the decaying Venice of the 1970s – architect Marco Bolcato's city affected by the consequences of unsustainable urban planning; the unwelcoming Alberta of the 1960s that Venetian-born migrant Bianca Mazzin struggles to make her new home; and the romanticised Venice of the 1950s that inhabits her memories and reveries. This shift in environment is mirrored in the shift from the English to the Italian language. The latter is often used for words specific to the Venetian and Italian environments presented by the text that not only give readers an immediate and vivid sense of place but also enable them to engage with the text. As I will show, my treatment of these Italian words – and the resulting interweaving of English and Italian – was informed by Scott's aim of deepening the readers' "environmental engagement" (*ibid.*: 10) and guiding their attention.

The Lion's Mouth is only one of several Anglophone Canadian literary texts – often depicting the migrant experience – that are partly set in Italy and are interspersed with Italian words. Due to their recurring representation of Italian culture that reflects the authors' Italian cultural origins, these works are often conventionally seen as part of "Italian-Canadian literature". In studies of such texts, the shift from English to Italian is often referred to as "code-switching", which highlights the switch from one language to another (see Camarca 2005; Casagranda 2010; Baldo 2019). It is interpreted as a literary device that signals the authors' act of "translation" of the Italian reality and culture to Anglophone readers (see Pivato 1987, 2014; Verdicchio 1996; Canton 2004, 2009; Casagranda 2010; Baldo 2019), expresses the authors' negotiation of their Italian and Canadian cultural identities and difference (see Canton 2004), gives voice to Canada's linguistic diversity (see Casagranda 2010), deconstructs stereotypes by juxtaposing contrasting cultural perceptions (see Baldo 2019), and mimics the characters' real speech as well as the narrator's voice (see Camarca 2005). With reference to other Anglophone literatures, code-switching is seen as revealing the migrant or postcolonial subjects' sense of cultural belonging, cultural loss, fragmentary – and yet multiple – cultural identities, as well as hybrid linguistic identities (see Pas 2012; Weston and Gardner-Chloros 2015; Hamamra and Qararia 2018; Qabaha and Hamamra 2022). Moreover, code-switching is viewed as a means of actively engaging readers in intercultural interaction (Lakhtikova 2017), foregrounding speech acts (see García Vizcaíno 2008), intensifying meaning (see Martin 2005), raising or lowering the register of the text (see

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Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015), and creating humorous effects (see García Vizcaíno 2008; Gardner-Chloros and Weston 2015).[1]

Italian code-switched words pose a thorny challenge in translating Italian-Canadian literary texts into Italian, as this is not only the language embedded in the Anglophone source texts but also the *target* language. In analysing the translation of literary works revolving around the theme of the "return home", Michela Baldo (2019) observes a tendency among Italian literary translators towards some neutralisation, for instance by correcting or de-italicising the original code-switched items. Whilst acknowledging that this strategy might have been influenced by the publishers' preferences and readers' expectations, Baldo points out that it somehow tones down – to different degrees across the different translations analysed – the Italian-Canadian characters' migrant identity, and that it contributes to portraying Italian-Canadian authors as if they had never left Italy, thus resulting into a re-narration of the "return home".

The challenges arising when the originally code-switched language is also the *target* language have been widely discussed beyond the Italian-Canadian literary context (see, in particular, Martín Ruano 2003; García Vizcaíno 2005, 2008; Franco Arcia 2012; Maher 2012; Pas 2012; Attig 2019; Jones 2022). Particularly noteworthy are the studies by Ulises Franco Arcia (2012) and Ellen Jones (2022: 64-76), which not only reviewed the main strategies recommended in Translation Studies and analysed the – often standardising – ones employed by literary translators, but also commented on the authors' own translations of short stories by transnational writers, showing that their approaches to treating code-switching are guided by their interpretation of this literary device. Franco Arcia mainly drew on Madeleine Strong Cincotta's suggestion, later endorsed by María José García Vizcaíno (see 2005: 11), to "keep the transfer in the original source language, i.e. the original second language" (Cincotta 1996: 2-3). He thus replaced the Spanish code-switched words originally embedded in the predominantly Anglophone source text with English ones in his Hispanophone translation. Franco Arcia terms his strategy "mirror-effect translation" (2012: 78), as it provides "an aesthetic parallelism with the ST" (81); in fact, as he explains, "Spanish code-switching in the ST became English code-switching in the TT" (81). In a different vein, Jones (2022: 64-76) used a greater variety of experimental translation strategies in order to replicate the different cultural contexts presented by her mainly Hispanophone source text and reproduce the tensions at work in it. These include not only retaining some Spanish code-switched words, but also choosing English words with specific regional connotations, as well as foreignising English orthography and syntax through, for example, the use of acute accents, the definite article before first names and Hispanophone punctuation conventions.

Moving beyond cases in which the code-switched language in the source text is also the *target* language, and focusing on practice-led studies on literary translation between English and Italian, Franca Cavagnoli (2008a, 2008b, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2023) demonstrates how translation theory meets practice by

[1] For recent extensive studies on code-switching in literary texts, see, in particular, Baldo and Deganutti (2024); Domokos and Deganutti (2024).

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illustrating her Italian translations of Anglophone texts and their interspersion with pidgin and creole languages. While Cavagnoli does not focus only on code-switching, she explains that Antoine Berman's theoretical reflections on translating the "foreign" led her to adopt translation strategies intended to reproduce the foreignness of postcolonial novels.[2]

Collectively, these practice-led studies illuminate how the translators' interpretation of code-switching – and, more broadly, of the linguistic and cultural diversity characterising the source texts – inform their translation strategies. In doing so, they contribute to bridging the gap between theory and practice, a goal long advocated by Translation Studies scholars such as Susan Bassnett, who called for more translators to explain their practice and more Translation Studies scholars to engage in translation (2008/2011: 163), thereby encouraging reflection on how practice and theory can inform one another.

While the practice-led studies reviewed reveal attention to reproducing code-switching as a way of signalling the narrator's transnational identity and the source text's foreignness, in translating *The Lion's Mouth* – where narrator Bianca Mazzin's migrant experience is only one of the themes represented – I treated the originally code-switched Italian words as points of orientation, namely relational features that guide readers within the text-as-environment. This approach underpins the originality of the present study, which is the first to examine from a practice-led perspective how the strategies used to render code-switching in a literary text can be informed by Scott's notion of *eco-translation*. This notion is based on his own translation of Mallarmé's and Rimbaud's poetry, with a focus on sound, rhythm and page design. Moreover, the present article is original in being the first practice-led Translation Studies contribution on an Anglophone Italian-Canadian literary work, and the first analysis of *La bocca di leone*. Through this case study, my aim is to advance practice-led Translation Studies research from an ecological perspective, particularly in the underexplored area of translating Anglophone texts in which Italian is both the code-switched language and the *target* language.

2. Clive Scott's eco-translation*: a theoretical lens*

Scott begins from the premise that translation is not about preservation, but rather transformation, an "act of diasporic dispersal, of sending the ST on transcultural/transnational journeys" (2018: 8-9), thus supporting the concept of translation as introducing the source text to a different cultural context without erasing the source culture. More specifically, from an ecological perspective, Scott defines literary translation as an "ecological enterprise" in three senses: translation is the way in which the translator "accommodate[s]" the environment presented by the source text; the source text itself, in its textuality, is an environment in which reading is the act of "inhabitation"; the

[2] For further practice-led studies analysing literary translations between English and Italian – albeit not focused on code-switching – see, in particular, Venuti (1995: 273-306), and Parks (2014); see also Maher (2014), Caterini (2016), Federici and Marino (2018), and Zanoletti (2022).

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text is also "a material object in the environment, in the real world, of reading" (*ibid.*: 66). This means that the translator re-presents the source-text environment by re-activating or reconfiguring its "perceptual coordinates" (*ibid.*: 73), that is, the points of orientation that guide the readers' attention, using – among other means – typographical devices including italics and orthography. In this way, the translator deepens the readers' "environmental engagement" (*ibid.*: 10): target-text readers can "inhabit" the text and orient themselves, thus realising, for instance, where they are and whose voice is speaking. In Scott's view, reading is not an interpretive act, but a form of inhabitation: a bodily and perceptual engagement with the text-as-environment. The reader, like the translator, enters and reconfigures the text's ecological space. From this perspective, the reader's response is not an external interpretation, but rather a continuation of the text's life as it is re-inhabited and re-situated in new perceptual and material conditions. *Eco-translation* thus deepens "environmental engagement" by enabling target-text readers to inhabit the reconfigured environment of the translation, maintaining the dynamic relation between perception, language, and material form.[3]

Linking accommodation and inhabitation with text materiality, Scott suggests that typographical devices shape how readers move through, and perceive, textual space. These material features allow the translator to alter the texture and atmosphere of the text, so as to prompt new perceptual responses and reshape the linguistic environment in ways that sustain the reader's engagement. Following on from this, Scott highlights that paginal resources, such as the typographical ones, are practical tools for shaping the readers' perception as they lay out the "coordinates" (*ibid.:* 73) that let readers enter, follow, and reconfigure the text as environment. Translating is thus about inhabiting the source text as an environment and "setting [it] in motion" (*ibid.:* 8), so that it is re-situated in further environments. The source text is thus not a fixed object but "a changing environment" (*ibid.:* 139), while the target text is "an environment which weaves itself into other environments" (*ibid.:* 140). It does not replace the source text but rather "extends" it, that is, it makes the source text "other itself" in a process of "ecological metamorphosis, or ecomorphosis" (*ibid.:* 84), namely the "development and expansion of the ST as it is ecologically reassimilated" (*ibid.:* 64). From this perspective, Scott highlights that the translator reads and works with the source text as a lived field of relations and keeps this activity going, thereby introducing it to a new context and forming new relations. In being carried into new relations, the source text changes as a result of new relational conditions – determined by new languages, readers, and material presentation – in the target-text context.

As my analysis will show, in order to re-interweave English and Italian, I drew selectively on typographical devices – especially italics – to mark the shift between the different environments presented by the source text. Within this

[3] On the reader response from an ecological perspective, see Scott (2012).

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framework, I will go on to show how Scott's idea of *eco-translation* can inform the treatment of code-switching in literary translation.[4]

3. Shifts in environments and languages in "The Lion's Mouth"

Edwards' first novel, *The Lion's Mouth*, originally published in 1982 by NeWest Publishers (Edmonton), and republished in 1993 by formerly Montreal-based Guernica, is only one of the author's several works set between Italy and Canada (see also, in particular, Edwards 1990, 1992, 2000, 2008, 2015). Within literary criticism, only one study examines Edwards' representation of Italian places, mainly Sicily (see Cesari 2020), with the others exploring the representation of displacement and memory (see Calvi 2004a, 2004b; Francesconi 2009; Seccia 2015), the interrelation between personal story and collective history (see Francesconi 2005), the mother-daughter relationship (see Seccia 2016), and the narrator's transcultural identity (see Tognan 2013). This last aspect has been the main focus so far with regard to the analysis of *The Lion's Mouth* specifically (see De Luca 1988, 2008; Tuzi 1997; Fachinger 2000; Francesconi 2002; Canton 2009).

However, the narrator Bianca Mazzin's account of her own migration from Venice to Calgary, which unfolds in four chapters, together with the prologue and the epilogue, constitutes only one narrative strand of the novel, the other being Venetian architect Marco Bolcato's story, which develops over the remaining fourteen chapters. The Venice of the 1970s in which Marco's story is set is affected by environmental disasters, the decline of the industrial and shipbuilding sectors, a turn towards large-scale tourism at the expense of environmental sustainability, and terrorist attacks in the name of the class struggle. These conditions interweave with the life of Marco, an architect with strong principles and deep ideals, who is nonetheless led to betray them. In fact, he is inadvertently involved in a terrorist attack by one of his beloved childhood friends, Elena. As soon as he realises this – upset by her betrayal – Marco rushes to one of the so-called "Mouths of the Lion", which were used in the Venetian Republic as a means of collecting anonymous denunciations against citizens or authorities, to confess his own guilt. Marco's story is told by a heterodiegetic narrator who, only in the other, interwoven narrative strand of the novel – Bianca's account of her own migration – is disclosed as in fact being Bianca herself, adding that Marco is her Venetian cousin with whom she was secretly in love as an adolescent. As Bianca declares in the prologue, upon learning of Marco's admission to a psychiatric hospital, she was prompted to write his story to help him to get over his mental health issues and shed light on their origins: "I want to be the one who not only knows but illuminates the truth. I want to tell your story" (Edwards 1982/1993: 11-12). However, as the autodiegetic

[4] For other studies that engage with Scott's *eco-translation* in a context different from the one envisaged by Scott, see, in particular, Cronin (2017) whose understanding is primarily drawn from political ecology.

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narrator admits in the epilogue, her writing, in reality, is meant to have a therapeutic purpose:

> Why have I spent my winter telling your story? I needed to exorcise my dream of Venice. I needed to rid myself of the ache of longing that I have carried for so long. And you – you are the grain of sand that began the pearl that is my dream. (Edwards 1982/1993: 269-270)

This sheds light on how, in Bianca's mind, Marco is the emblem of Venice, her beloved homeland that she cannot forget despite knowing that she no longer truly belongs there: "Venice, stone and water, Venice, bride of the sea, bride of my dreams; she is the recurring motif that I cannot escape and I cannot capture" (*ibid.*: 263-264). Bianca's ambivalent relationship with Venice is at the core of her autodiegetic narration, where – in the form of a monologue addressed to her cousin Marco – she traces her own process of integration in the Alberta of the 1960s. This was hindered by – among other factors – the displacement caused by the unfamiliar landscape and climate, and her nostalgia for Venice. Bianca's narration is interrupted by digressions in which she traces her imagined Venice, and flashbacks of her summer visits there. Significantly, only by narrating the final failure of Marco – the emblem of Venice – is Bianca finally able to free herself from her obsession with her homeland: what marks a point of no return for the male protagonist becomes a new beginning for her, thus finally making Edmonton her home.

The shift between environments in *The Lion's Mouth* is thus particularly significant as they are linked to distinct narrative strands and voices as well as to characters' roles. Crucially, the continuous shift between the decaying Venice of the 1970s, the unwelcoming Alberta of the 1960s, and the remembered or imagined Venice of the 1950s, is mirrored in the presence of Italian words in both narrative strands. This results in what Johanna Domokos and Marianna Deganutti define as the "1st degree or intrasential code-switching", which is characterised by the "sporadic use of foreign words and tags in the sentences of the matrix language" (2021: 48).

As for Marco Bolcato's story, narrated by a heterodiegetic voice, this is interspersed not only with toponyms, movie and song titles, trade names, honorific titles, quotations from literary texts and song lyrics, proverbs, culture-specific elements, as well as formulaic expressions included in dialogue, but – most importantly – by code-switched Italian words that are closely related to the Venetian and Italian urban topography. More specifically, some indicate urban and architectural features as well as indoor settings, as in the case of "piazza" (Edwards 1982/1993: 16-17, 36, 152-153, 238, 240, 258), "piazzetta" (*ibid.*: 153, 259), "*piazzale*" (*ibid.*: 51, 56), "*viale*" (*ibid.*: 182), "*loggia"* (*ibid.*: 260), "*campanile"* (*ibid.*: 16, 259), "*palazzo*" (*ibid.*: 39, 91-92), "*terrazza*" (*ibid.*: 87, 92, 189, 192-193), "*piano nobile"* (*ibid.*: 136), *"cantina*" (*ibid.*: 136), and *"salotto"* (*ibid.*: 153). Others are specific to the Venetian cityscape, such as "*calle*" (*ibid.*: 23, 28, 35, 45, 129, 187, 189, 192, 250, 258), "*campo*" (*ibid.*: 129, 182, 191, 201, 207), "*fondamento*" (sic) (*ibid.*: 35, 183, 207), "*riva*" (*ibid.*: 255), "*passarelle"* (sic) (*ibid.*: 182), "*La bocca di leone*" (*ibid.*: 16, 260), and "*capanna*" (*ibid.*: 190, 193),

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or, more broadly, to the Venetian environment, as in the case of "*vaporetto*" (*ibid.*: 23, 189, 245– 6, 248, 258), "gondola" (*ibid.*: 129, 246), "*carnevale*" (*ibid.*: 130, 175, 255), "*acqua alta*" (*ibid.*: 135-136), "*doge*" (*ibid.*: 21, 201), and "*Chioggiote*" (sic) (*ibid.*: 185). With the exception of "piazza", "piazzetta", and "gondola", which appear to be treated as international words, they all appear in italics. This typographical device, which makes cultural specificity visible, guides the readers' attention and helps them to orient themselves in the text offering precise spatial references. Although most of these code-switched Italian words have an English equivalent, their use would have led to a loss of their Venetian semantic specificity. While some of them are not easily recognisable to Anglophone readers, they are nonetheless embedded in the detailed descriptions of the Venice of the 1970s in such a way that they can be understood from the context.

Italicised code-switched Italian words related to the Venetian cityscape, such as "*calle*" (*ibid.:* 69)*,* "*vaporetto*" (*ibid.:* 228, 229) and *"bricoli"* (sic) (*ibid.:* 263) also appear in the other, interwoven narrative strand, in Bianca's recollections of her summers spent with Marco in her Venetian homeland that she had left years earlier, narrated by an autodiegetic voice. In this case, these italicised code-switched Italian words, along with others indicating food and drink items, guide the readers' attention towards places inhabiting the narrator's memories. Further code-switched Italian words, phrases and short clauses are included in the dialogue between Bianca and Marco – alongside short intratextual translations into English that form "translation couplets" (García Vizcaíno 2005: 118) – and draw the readers' attention to the exchanges still imprinted in the narrator's memory.

Significantly, the italicised code-switched Italian words thus guide the Anglophone readers' attention in different ways, depending on the environment presented by the source text.

4. Code-switching in translation: "La bocca di leone"

As a result of the different ways in which the italicised originally code-switched words orient the Anglophone readers' attention, I used different strategies to treat them when translating *The Lion's Mouth* into Italian, in an attempt to (re)orient my Italophone target-text readers' attention, taking into account their familiarity with the environments presented by the novel as well as the specificity of the narrative voice. Since the shift in environments is linked to the different narrative strands, the analysis below is organised accordingly, with the analysed source- and target-text passage pairs sub-grouped according to the strategies employed. The items under analysis are marked in bold type.

4.1. Translating Marco Bolcato's Venice: A heterodiegetic narrative voice

4.1.1. De-italicising code-switched Italian words

The first passage below (Excerpt 1) portrays Marco Bolcato on his way to a jewellery shop to buy a present for his wife, Paola, who is in Padua for their son

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Francesco's routine cardiology tests. Marco's taking a wrong direction in his own city mirrors his emotional disorientation arising – as revealed elsewhere in the novel – from frustration as an architect forced to support an environmentally unsustainable building project, helplessness as a husband unable to share family duties, concern as a father of a child affected by heart disease, and anxiety as a survivor of the 1940s bombing of the city of Zara. Similarly, the images of the "dark, convoluted *calle*" and Marco's "search[ing] for the centre of the labyrinth" surfacing from his nightmare later that night (in Excerpt 2), reflect his increasing confusion and search for the truth after betraying Paola with his childhood friend and former fiancée, Elena, and allowing her and a mysterious friend of hers, Piero, to stay overnight at his house the night before.

Excerpt 1

Source text
Seeing the floating station for the ***vaporetto*** before him, Marco realized he had been going in the wrong direction, towards home instead of towards Calore's jewellery shop. It was Paola's birthday in three days and, with her away in Padova, today was the logical day for present-buying. As he pushed his way back through the commuter crowd, he understood that he had been wrong about the direction of his emotions too. (Edwards 1982/1993: 23)

Target text
Quando vide davanti a sé la stazione dei **vaporetti**, Marco si rese conto che stava andando nella direzione sbagliata, verso casa e non verso la gioielleria di Calore. Sarebbe stato il compleanno di Paola tre giorni dopo e, dato che lei era a Padova, conveniva comprarle il regalo quel giorno stesso. Mentre tornava indietro facendosi largo tra la folla di pendolari, si accorse che si era sbagliato anche sulla direzione delle sue emozioni. (Edwards 2023: 40)

Excerpt 2

Source text
Again, the dark, convoluted ***calle*** of Venice. Searching for the centre of the labyrinth. He was not alone. Stepping silently from gondola to land, moving steadily along the edge of the stone palaces were cloaked and masked figures. (Edwards 1982/1993: 129)

Target text
Di nuovo le **calli** buie e tortuose di Venezia. In cerca del cuore del labirinto. Non era da solo. Sagome con mantelli e maschere scendevano in silenzio dalla gondola sulla terraferma e si muovevano con passo fermo lungo i palazzi in pietra. (Edwards 2023: 131)

In these two source-text passages, Anglophone readers, in following Marco's route and dream, are oriented by the italicised code-switched Italian words "*vaporetto*" (in Excerpt 1) denoting the typical Venetian water bus, and the widely recognisable "*calle*" (sic) (in Excerpt 2) indicating the narrow Venetian streets, both providing local specificity. When translating these passages into Italian, I de-italicised these two words to draw the readers' attention away from foreignness, thus re-presenting the environment as familiar to Italophone

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readers. On the same principle, elsewhere in this narrative strand, I de-italicised all the other originally code-switched Italian words related to Italian urban and architectural features, indoor settings, as well as the Venetian cityscape and environment (alongside culture-specific elements and formulaic expressions inserted in dialogue). Furthermore, returning to "*calle*", I turned it into the plural form "calli" to clarify that more than one calle appears in Marco's nightmare and to reinforce the "labyrinth" motif by evoking a network rather than a single narrow street. This misspelling – likely due to interference from the English pronunciation of the vowel "e" that resembles the sound of Italian vowel "i" used as the plural suffix – is not the only one that I corrected in this narrative strand. I made similar adjustments to other italicised code-switched words indicating elements of the Venetian cityscape, such as "*fondamento*" (Edwards 1982/1993: 35, 183) and its supposed plural "*fondamenti*" (*ibid.*: 207) (the pathway along a canal), "*passarelle*" (*ibid.*:182) (footbridges over canals), and "*Chioggiote*" (*ibid.*: 185) (women from the town of Chioggia, in Veneto), which I changed to "fondamenta" (Edwards 2023: 51, 177), "fondamente" (*ibid.*: 197) "passerelle" (1 *ibid.*: 76) and "chioggiotte" (*ibid.*: 178) respectively. I corrected these typographical errors, which may have gone unnoticed by Anglophone source-text readers, to avoid drawing Italophone target-text readers' attention to inconsistencies that would undermine the reliability of a heterodiegetic narrator, thereby maintaining a coherent voice. Significantly, this adjustment reflects an eco-translation approach as I ensured that the narrator's voice and the Venetian environment remained aligned in a way that Italophone readers could inhabit the text-as-environment without disruption. Moreover, I corrected a number of toponyms including "Grande Canale" (Edwards 1982/1993: 21, 26, 87, 91, 245), "San Toma" (*ibid.*: 22), "San Pantaleon" (*ibid.*: 34), "Campo Bartolomeo" (*ibid.*: 45), "Academia" (*ibid.*: 157), "Pesaro" (*ibid.*: 189), "Via Frecceria" (*ibid.*: 238), and "*Calle delle Razze*" (*ibid.*: 255), the last one being the only toponym appearing in italics. I made these corrections in light of the essential role that toponyms play in locating recognisably Venetian places along Marco's route during the two days narrated by the heterodiegetic narrator.

4.1.2. Removing "translation couplets"

The following two excerpts portray two emblems of Venice: high water, which provides a recurring backdrop to Marco's story, as in Excerpt 3, and the mouth of the lion, which surfaces occasionally, but always at crucial moments, as in Excerpt 4. This portrays Marco rushing towards the statue to denounce himself as soon as he realises his inadvertent complicity in the murder of the chief prosecutor of Veneto, having been coerced by Piero into delivering a cryptic message to a stranger – the killer, as Marco eventually realises.

Excerpt 3

Source text
***Acqua alta*. High water.** All over the city shopkeepers, families would be frenziedly hauling possessions to higher ground before the water extended

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> its sway. And though he thought only idly of his *cantina* on the main floor with the skis, picnic basket, boxes of old clothes and books, the bells and sirens touched off a common sense of danger with his fellow citizens. (Edwards 1982/1993: 135-136)
>
> Target text
> **Acqua alta.** In tutta la città negozianti e famiglie sollevavano freneticamente le loro cose da terra prima che l'acqua estendesse il proprio dominio. E, mentre Marco si limitava a pensare agli sci, al cestino da picnic, agli scatoloni di vestiti e libri vecchi nel ripostiglio al piano terra, le campane e le sirene scatenarono una sensazione generale di pericolo tra i suoi concittadini. (Edwards 2023: 137-138)

Excerpt 4

> Source text
> Odd how empty, how silent the palace was. It waited for him and the truth he had to tell. ***La bocca di leone*, the mouth of the lion** was difficult to find in the dim light, made as it was out of the same stone as the rest of the wall. ***Bocca di leone***, terror of the city, receptacle of denunciation, tool of the hooded inquisitors, purveyor of savage, unquestionable justice. The mouth of the lion, finally, in front of him. (Edwards 1982/1993: 260)
>
> Target text
> Il palazzo era insolitamente deserto, silenzioso. Era lì ad aspettare lui e la verità da rivelare. **La bocca di leone**: della stessa pietra del muro della loggia, difficile da trovare con quella luce fioca. **La bocca di leone**: il terrore della città, il ricettacolo delle denunce, lo strumento degli inquisitori incappucciati, la procacciatrice della crudele e incontrovertibile giustizia. La bocca di leone: finalmente lì, davanti a lui. (Edwards 2023: 241)

In the source text, both "high water" and "the mouth of the lion" are indicated in Italian first, as "*acqua alta*" (in source-text passage 3) and "*bocca di leone*" (in source-text passage 4) and then accompanied by their English equivalents, thus creating a "translation couplet" (Vizcaíno 2005: 118). As well as de-italicising "*acqua alta*" and "*la bocca di leone*", as I did with "*vaporetto*" and "*calle*" (along with the other code-switched Italian words in this narrative strand), I did not retain their English translation. This choice was made to keep the target-text readers' attention focussed on the Venetian environment presented and to maintain the consistency of the heterodiegetic narrator's voice. In fact, I did not mark it as Anglophone considering that the narrator's identity is undisclosed in this strand and that the passage is narrated from within the Venetian context. In line with Scott's notion of *eco-translation*, these choices aimed to reconfigure the "perceptual coordinates" (2018: 73) of the text, so that Italophone readers can engage directly with the Venetian environment without the mediation of an Anglophone voice.

Finally, source-text passage 3 is interspersed with a further code-switched Italian word, "*cantina*" that, in this case, I replaced with "ripostiglio" (a storage room) as 'cantina' indicates a below-ground cellar, which is rare in Venice and clashes with the "main floor" where the small room in Marco's building is, as specified in the excerpt. This adjustment aligns the word with the physical

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environment being described, thus maintaining the narrator's level of specificity in describing the environment presented. For the same reason, elsewhere in this narrative strand, I made similar adjustments, such as changing "*viale*" (Edwards 1982/1993: 182) to "calli" (Edwards 2023: 176), as there are no avenues in central Venice, and the generic "stone" (Edwards 1982/1993: 181) became "masegni" (Edwards 2023: 175), that is, the stone paving slabs traditionally used in Venetian streets and squares.

4.2. Translating Bianca's Venice and Alberta: A migrant autodiegetic voice

4.2.1. Retaining italics and "translation couplets"

The following two excerpts, taken from Bianca's account of her migrant experience, present Venice as she remembers and re-imagines after migrating to different cities in Alberta. In Excerpt 5, she recalls when Marco walked her to the water bus station at the end of her last summer visit in Venice, as an adolescent. In Excerpt 6, now an adult on the verge of making Edmonton her home, Bianca continues to evoke Venice, mentally retracing familiar routes and envisaging Marco, the emblem of her home city.

Excerpt 5

Source text
It was the last time I saw you. When you kissed me goodbye at the ***vaporetto***, you stared into my eyes. You wanted something. **'*Sempre semplice*.' Always simple**. 'Little cousin'. (Edwards 1982/1993: 229)

Target text
Quella fu l'ultima volta che ti vidi. Quando al ***vaporetto*** mi desti un bacio per salutarmi, mi guardasti fisso negli occhi. Volevi qualcosa. **«*Sempre semplice*». *Always simple*.** «Cuginetta». (Edwards 2023: 215)

Excerpt 6

Source text
Yet, even as I stare out the window, the labyrinthine ***calle*** of Venice are close, so very close, inevitably drawing me. I hear the noisy cheerful sound of the Venetian crowd on the main paths, the silent darkness of the back ways. (Edwards 1982/1993: 69)

Target text
Eppure, anche quando mi incanto a guardare fuori dalla finestra, le ***calli*** labirintiche di Venezia sono vicine, così vicine, che inevitabilmente mi risucchiano. Sento il fragoroso suono rasserenante della folla veneziana lungo le stradine principali, il silenzioso buio delle vie secondarie. (Edwards 2023: 80)

Source-text readers are oriented across Bianca's remembered and re-imagined Venice by the italicised code-switched Italian words "*vaporetto*" (in Excerpt 5) and "*calle*" (in Excerpt 6) that act as "perceptual coordinates" (Scott 2018: 73).

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In this case, unlike in target-text passages 1 and 2 from Marco's story, I kept them in italics in order to present Venice as the place of Bianca's memories, as in the source text, and mark the shift in environment, thus directing my target-text readers' attention to Venice as a proximate-yet-elsewhere place inhabiting nostalgic Bianca's imagination within her Canadian present. On the same principle, I applied the same strategy to "*bricoli*" (sic) (Edwards 1862/1993: 263), as discussed in the analysis of the next passage, along with code-switched Italian words indicating food and drink as well as phrases and short clauses included in the dialogue between Bianca and her cousin Marco. In these exchanges, they are accompanied by short intratextual English translations, thus forming "translation couplets" (García Vizcaíno 2005: 118), as in the case of "'*Sempre semplice*.' Always simple" in source-text passage 5. Unlike in Marco's story, I retained this "translation couplet" and all the others included in this narrative strand. While I de-italicised the originally code-switched Italian words, I added the italics to the English translation, thus creating a mirror-image of the source text, where the italics are reversed. In this way, I attempted to allow target-text readers to be guided by the autodiegetic narrator's mediating voice, and orient them across Bianca's recollection of Marco's words and her reflections on his paternalistic tone.

4.2.2. Adding italics

Similarly to Excerpt 6, the following passage presents the Venice inhabiting the dreams of Bianca, who still longs to return there.

Excerpt 7

Source text
Venice, stone and water, Venice, bride of the sea, bride of my dreams; she is the recurring motif that I cannot escape and I cannot capture. I have dreamt each method of approach. By plane, the flat land gives way to delta, the low plain etched by a myriad of rivers and tributaries into an abstract print. The **lagoon** is marked by shoals, by mud islands. And as we dip, as we drop lower and lower, the city lies below me: a red-roofed tight maze cut by a snakelike **canal**. By train the effect is muted. Mestre, the long bridgeway, the concrete and glass ***Stazione Termine***. The best is by sea: a measured approach, ***adagio***, the still **lagoon**, a wooden pile and a lone hut, ***adagio***, the city a violet apparition hovering in the horizon, ***adagio, adagietto***, a long curving line of ***bricoli***. I am almost there. The spires are ever closer. I am almost inside. (Edwards 1982/1993: 263)

Target text
Venezia: pietra e acqua. Venezia: sposa del mare, sposa dei miei sogni, il leitmotiv che mi sfugge ma a cui non riesco a sfuggire. Nei miei sogni ho contemplato ogni singolo modo per raggiungerla. Dall'aereo la terra pianeggiante fa spazio al delta, la bassa pianura è incisa da una miriade di fiumi e affluenti assumendo le sembianze di un disegno astratto. La ***laguna*** è contrassegnata da bassifondi, da isole melmose. E quando l'aereo sta per toccare terra, man mano che si avvicina sempre di più, la città si estende sotto i miei occhi: un labirinto stretto fatto di tetti rossi e attraversato da un

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> ***canale*** sinuoso. Dal treno l'effetto è attenuato: Mestre, il lungo ponte, il cemento e il vetro della ***Stazione Termine… Terminus…*** **la stazione terminale… l'ultima fermata, ecco**. Il modo migliore è via mare: pacato, ***adagio***. La ***laguna*** immobile, un palo e una capanna solitaria, ***adagio***. La città: un'apparizione violacea che si libra all'orizzonte, ***adagio, adagietto***. Una lunga fila sinuosa di ***bricoli***. Ci sono quasi. Le guglie sono sempre più vicine. Sto quasi per raggiungerla. (Edwards 2023: 243)

As well as the musical tempo terms "*adagio*" and "*adagietto*", the readers' attention is guided by the italicised misspelled Italian code-switched word "*bricoli*" ('briccole'), that is, wooden piles marking lagoon channels and serving as mooring posts, and the incorrect toponym "Stazione Termine". Unlike in my translation of Marco's story, this time I did not correct them, in order to present Venice as remembered by the migrant autodiegetic narrator, and to guide the readers' attention through what elsewhere I called the narrator's traces of the "lingua della memoria migrante" (Seccia 2023: 12), "language of the migrant memory". The italicised toponym "*Stazione Termine*" is particularly significant in guiding the readers' attention towards the Venice as recalled by the migrant narrator. To support orientation and help readers to associate it with what the narrator actually meant – the final stop – I accompanied it with the short intratextual gloss "Terminus… la stazione terminale… l'ultima fermata, ecco", which gradually clarifies the narrator's likely confusion between "Stazione di Roma Termini" and the idea of a terminus, the end-of-line station. The final "ecco" (literally, 'here you go') reveals the narrator's effort – albeit unsuccessful – to recall the correct station name, "Stazione di Venezia Santa Lucia". In this way, I re-presented Venice as Bianca's environment of recollection as in the source text.

In addition to retaining the original italics for "*Stazione Termine*", "*adagio*", "*adagietto*" and "*bricoli*", I italicised "*laguna*" and "*canale*", which I used to translate the source-language items "lagoon" and "canal". This choice was meant to orient readers across Venice as the main frame of reference within Bianca's autodiegetic narration, and to mark the shift between her life in Alberta and the Venice that she imagines. By the same logic, elsewhere in this narrative strand, I extended italics to further Italian words originally in English, including the feature typical of the Venetian landscape, "*palude*" (Edwards 1982/1993: 248), and Italian and urban elements "*piazza*" (*ibid.*: 81) and "*palazzi*" (in target-text passage 9), in order to guide target-text readers through the migrant narrator's intensified recollection.

4.2.3. Adding "translation couplets" and code-switched English words

In Excerpts 8 and 9, by addressing her beloved cousin Marco, narrator Bianca evokes the prairies and the cold land characterising the Alberta to which she emigrated, and which, in Excerpt 9, she measures against Venice. Excerpt 10 contrasts this with the perspective of her adult self, who is beginning to make Edmonton her home.

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Excerpt 8

Source text
In that first attempt at a novel, though, your role was preeminently symbolic. My main concern was in telling the story of 'a sensitive Italian girl' who emigrated, with her parents, to the **prairies**, who emigrated to loneliness and isolation, more, to an eventual mental and physical decay. For she was destroyed by the hostile, cold land. (Edwards 1982/1993: 107)

Target text
In quel primo tentativo di romanzo, tuttavia, il tuo ruolo era preminentemente simbolico. La mia premura maggiore era raccontare la storia di una "sensibile ragazza italiana" che era emigrata con i genitori nelle ***prairies*, nelle praterie**. Emigrata nella solitudine e nell'isolamento, per poi precipitare in una decadenza fisica e mentale, annientata da quella terra fredda e ostile. (Edwards 2023: 111-112)

Excerpt 9

Source text
Rock and tree, tree and rock. No houses, no people for hundreds upon hundreds of miles. The villages and towns where the train did stop seemed ill-proportioned, perched upon the land rather than rising from it. The only change came in the giving way to **prairie** – a land to my untrained eye still more monotone, still more desolate. Leaving Venice, though I was with Mamma and Papa, I felt stripped of family, of friends, of familiar walls and **buildings**, of proper landscape. (Edwards 1982/1993: 109)

Target text
Rocce e alberi, alberi e rocce. Neanche una casa, neanche una persona per centinaia e centinaia di miglia. I paesi e i paesini in cui si fermava il treno sembravano disarmonici, sembravano appoggiati sulla terra piuttosto che ergersi da essa. L'unica variazione ci fu nel passare alla ***prairie***: un territorio – ai miei occhi non ancora abituati – persino più monotono, più desolato. Quando lasciai Venezia, sebbene fossi con i miei genitori, mi sentii sradicata dalla famiglia, dagli amici, dalle mura di casa, dai ***palazzi*** a me familiari, dal mio paesaggio. (Edwards 2023: 113)

Excerpt 10

Source text
I live alone now, alone except for my two cats Paolo and Sarpi, in a small house in one of the relatively older treed areas of this still-infant city. One or two lifetimes ago all this, besides a tiny garrison, was **wilderness**; the ever-spreading grid of streets and buildings must have been unimaginable. And still, that sense of the **wild**, the oceans of untouched plains, forests, and tundra is there, above and beneath the skyscrapers and traffic jams. (Edwards 1982/1993: 60)

Target text
Ora vivo da sola, sola con i miei due gatti Paolo e Sarpi, in una casetta in una delle zone alberate più vecchie di questa città ancora neonata. Secoli fa qui c'era solo Fort Edmonton, solo ***wilderness*, natura allo stato selvaggio**: questo continuo sviluppo di reti stradali ed edifici allora era probabilmente

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> impensabile. Eppure, quel senso di ***wild***, quell'oceano di pianure, foreste e tundra incontaminate sono tuttora qui, al di là dei grattacieli e degli ingorghi del traffico. (2023: 72)

In my translation of source-text passage 8, I retained "*prairies*" in English, by italicising it, and I accompanied it with its Italian equivalent "praterie", thus creating a "translation couplet" (García Vizcaíno 2005: 118). In this way, I aimed to help target-text readers to situate themselves in the Albertan environment, while the Italian equivalent makes it accessible within the target-text context. In target-text passage 9, later in the chapter, I left "*prairie*" in English (by italicising it) to help Italophone readers to orient themselves through the narrator's perception of Alberta as an alienating environment. I also added a "translation couplet" in target-text passage 10, in the case of "*wilderness*" that I accompanied with a short in-text translation, "natura allo stato selvaggio". Similarly to what I did with "*prairies*", later in the same passage I left the corresponding adjective of "*wilderness*", "*wild*" – which shares the same root and is likely to be intelligible to Italophone readers – untranslated. Following the same principle, I also retained in English words indicating elements typical of the Albertan landscape, such as "*Virginia creeper*" (Edwards 2023: 27), "*Indian paintbrush*" (*ibid.*: 73), and "*Queen Anne's Lace*" (*ibid.*: 73) by accompanying them with their Italian equivalents to support the readers' orientation. In doing so, I introduced code-switched items from the source language as we saw Franco Arcia (2012) do earlier in this article; however, unlike him, I did not place them exactly where the source text is interspersed with code-switched Italian words. For example, I did not translate into English "*vaporetto*" and "*calle*", which appear in Italian in source-text passages 5 and 6. By contrast, I inserted code-switched English words elsewhere to signal words related to the Canadian environment, as well as expressions related to the Canadian reality, culture-specific elements, typically Anglophone pet phrases, brand names, song-lyric quotations, and honorific titles. When English items were not glossed in earlier "translation couplets", I introduced them with "cushioning" (Langeland 1996: 18), thus embedding the English words in a way as to make their meaning clear from the context. Unlike Franco Arcia's "mirror-effect translation" (2012: 78), my aim, therefore, was not to replicate the source-text switching pattern, but rather to re-present a Canadian environment to target readers and help them to engage with the text.

5. Conclusion

As shown by this analysis, an ecological approach to my Italian translation of *The Lion's Mouth* led me to treat code-switched Italian words through different strategies depending on the narrative strand in which they acted as points of orientation, and on the environment presented by the novel. When translating the decaying Venice of the 1970s, home to architect Marco Bolcato and narrated by a heterodiegetic voice, I de-italicised code-switched Italian words (see target-text passages 1-4), by correcting some misspelled ones (see target-text passage 2) and removing "translation couplets" (see target-text passages 3-4). De-

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italicisation re-directed attention away from foreignness, while the removal of "translation couplets" avoided suggesting an Anglophone narrative voice whose identity remains undisclosed. These choices reconfigured the "coordinates" of the text, thus "accommodating" the environment as familiar, and enabled Italophone readers to "inhabit" the text-as-environment coherently. While these strategies did not allow me to re-weave English and Italian within this narrative strand, I compensated by using different strategies when translating the romanticised Venice of the 1950s and the Alberta of the 1960s, narrated by autodiegetic migrant narrator Bianca. In this case, I kept the originally code-switched Italian words in italics (see target-text passages 5-7), without correcting any misspelled ones (see target-text passage 7), and I added italics to further items serving as points of orientation in Bianca's recollection (see target-text passages 7 and 8). Indeed, I used italics as a means of allowing the readers' "navigation of textual space" (Scott 2018: 72), and I treated the text itself as an environment by maintaining (in target-text passage 7) or re-activating (in target-text passages 6 and 7) its "perceptual coordinates" (Scott 2018: 73), so that readers could inhabit the text as a site of recollection, and orient themselves in the shift between the autodiegetic narrator's remembered Venice of the past, and the lived Alberta of the present. Finally, when translating the Alberta of the 1960s, I added code-switched English words (see target-text passage 9) and "translation couplets" (see target-text passages 8 and 10). In doing so, I accommodated the environment as unfamiliar to Italophone readers by maintaining the Albertan "spatial coordinates" (Scott 2018: 152) visible on the page, in an attempt to allow readers to inhabit the text as an environment that stages Bianca's shift between estrangement and adaptation, drawing them into her lived perception of place, and orienting them while being mediated by the Anglophone autodiegetic narrative voice.

As can be seen, an ecological approach to translation allowed me to guide readers across shifts in environment and narrative voice, thus inviting them to immerse themselves in textual movement and deepening their "environmental engagement" (*ibid.*: 10). By "accommodating" the source text's environments in ways that respect how meaning emerges relationally – through voice, time, and orientation – I reconfigured the Venetian and Albertan coordinates and, with them, the interplay between English and Italian. In doing so, I re-situated the source text within the Italian cultural context, by "extending" (*ibid.*: 84) it and transforming it as it is "ecologically reassimilated" (*ibid.*: 64) in a process of "ecological metamorphosis, or ecomorphosis" (*ibid.*: 84). In this way, my translation practice put into action Scott's triad of accommodation, orientation and inhabitation, showing how *eco-translation* can be applied not only beyond poetry, but also beyond a focus on rhythm and sound: to the translation of prose and, specifically, to the treatment of code-switching. This practice-led study therefore offers an alternative to the approach that, as Baldo observes, has often characterised the Italian translations of Italian-Canadian works, as "returning the author back home" (2019). In fact, rather than assimilating the text into Italian language and culture, my translation extends its diasporic condition and re-situates it ecologically in the Italian target context. This also advances the discussion opened by other practice-led studies which have mostly treated code-

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switching as a marker of identity. In fact, this article proposes that code-switched words can also be understood as "environmental coordinates", namely relational features that orient readers within the text-as-environment, thus shifting the focus from linguistic identity alone to the lived experience of place. While the focus on a single case study restricts the generalisability of the findings, extending the analysis to additional Italian translations of Anglophone literary texts in which Italian also functions as the originally code-switched language could further refine and test the applicability of this ecological translation model.

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