Translating the language of the Italian writer and journalist Gianni Rodari (1920-1980) into English is not an easy task. The translator has to consider the author's voice on the one hand and the mixed target readership on the other, as his books are aimed at both adults and children. One of the most salient features of Rodari's narrative voice is the playful language, which delves into the roots of Italian culture, in particular through food traditions. The aim of the present study is to identify the foreignising or domesticating strategies adopted by different translators in dealing with food in selected works by Rodari, where the translator can choose either to retain the “foreign” flavour of the original, and make the reader aware of the Italian background of the text, or to eliminate any foreignising trait and rewrite the text so that it is perceived as part of the receptive culture. Within the framework of a prospective descriptive comparison of the original Italian with its English translation, the present paper provides examples from four books by Gianni Rodari translated into English for the UK and the US markets along a time span of over 45 years. The findings in *Favole al telefono* (1962, tr. 1965) and *La torta in cielo* (1966, tr. 1971), translated by Patrick Creagh for the British public, show the ability of the translator to convey the playful grammar of food proposed by Gianni Rodari creatively, even without retaining references to Italian food in his prevalently domesticating translation. Creagh's rewrites Rodari's works using puns and alliterations to create a memorable text, and mediates Rodari's voice for the English readership. Further investigations on Rodari's language of food in a story selected from
Novelle fatte a macchina (1973, tr. 1976), and in C’era due volte il Barone Lamberto (1978, tr. 2011) compared with the translations into English by Sue Newson-Smith and Antony Shugaar respectively, points to contrasting strategies. Newson-Smith translates for a British readership, and her translation shows varying degrees of domestication especially in food language with the use of amplifications and reductions. Shugaar translates Rodari’s rich vocabulary of recipes into American English, retaining French and Italian influences in naming gourmet recipes, possibly inviting readers to perceive food as a repository of different traditions. The analyses of these four translations in the UK and the US from 1965 to 2011 show how Rodari’s grammar of food inspired different strategies according to the target audience: domesticating translations for children, foreignising translations for adults. In the three British translations the translators rewrote food language to make the text acceptable mainly to young target culture readers. The rewriting strategy seems less evident in the American translation, where Rodari’s original food language seeps into the target text with the use of foreign names for recipes, suggesting that it was written primarily for adults.

1. Introduction

The title of this paper is a tribute to Gianni Rodari’s creativity in *La grammatica della fantasia* (1973)¹, the book he wrote for all those who wished to learn how to invent stories for children. Rodari (1920-1980) is one of the most famous children’s book writers in Italy. After Carlo Collodi, the author of *Pinocchio*, he is among the Italian top ten most translated writers around the world. Rodari’s works have seen a proliferation of translations worldwide from Vietnam to Brazil, and in the English-speaking world with the American edition of *C’era due volte il barone Lamberto* (1978)². Rodari’s work as journalist and writer for children has been studied in Italy from different points of view in pedagogics, literature, and translation, due to his ability to build communicative connections with his interlocutors through his works.


Translators as receivers have a privileged position: they may be the first readers of a text to be translated in a given language, they are specialised readers able to grasp implied meaning and intertextual references, they share a common cultural background with the prospective readers of the book they are about to translate. Translators as producers read texts for a purpose, under specific cultural, political, economic constraints defined by the social environment they live in. Translators can be active mediators that make use of their knowledge background in terms of language and culture, House (1977: 1) calls them “mediating agent[s]”, whereas for Hatim and Mason (2005) translators are communicators that use a wealth of strategies to make a foreign language text available and intelligible to the target readership. In the field of children’s literature these strategies take into account the dual public of children, and adults (such as parents and teachers) acting as mediators for young readers. Emer O’Sullivan (2005: 14) emphasises the aspect of mediation suggesting that in children’s literature “at every stage of literary communication we find adults acting for children”. Adults are also the translators and publishers in the system: the former are creators of translated works of literature that may influence the canonized system, the latter make use of their knowledge of the tastes of target readers and the financial possibilities to produce and sell translated books. Therefore, the analysis of translators’ strategies may be particularly interesting to identify the level of mediation present in the target text. The present paper compares Italian and English language and culture in the translations of selected works by Gianni Rodari published in the UK and the US from the 1960s to 2011. In order to show the delicate ground on which Rodari’s translators had to tread, the analysis focuses on food traditions, which are among the most difficult culture-bound items to be conveyed. The aim is to illustrate whether translators adopted a predominantly domesticating or foreignising strategy (Venuti, 2004) in order to communicate the voice of the original author and at the same time make the text more accessible to the expected target readership.
1.1. The language of food in translated children’s literature

In translated children’s literature, the language of food has been studied from different perspectives. For example, Dollerup (2003) approached the issue of food translation and the difficulties encountered by translators when texts are meant to be read aloud to children. Hagfors (2003) focused on time and culture constraints that surround food translation from English to Finnish. According to her, inconsistent strategies as found in Finnish translations between the 1940s and 1950s may “make it difficult for target text readers to understand [...] layers of meaning and to identify with the characters” (2003: 115), eventually indicating that retranslations are necessary to keep up the pace with changing societies and cultures. Mussche and Willems analysed English-Arabic translations of *Harry Potter*, which seem to avoid domestication in the form of “culture-specific analogues” (2010: 491) in favour of simplification strategies in the target text. Paruolo (2010) analysed the translation of food items from French, English and Italian tales into either English or Italian in order to identify the strategies that translators adopted according to the target audience that was supposed to read them. The present paper further investigates food translation in relation to the target audience, and develops aspects of the author’s voice as mediated by the translator in the target text.

1.2. Methodology

One of the most salient features of Rodari’s narrative voice is the playful language, which delves into the roots of Italian culture also through food traditions. Rodari used all possible expressive devices: nursery rhymes, limericks, nonsense verses or dialectal words to introduce children to a “lingua per giocare, per ridere”3 (Rodari quoted in Catarsi 2002: 40). Translators are called upon to understand the rules of the game in the source text and then to set in motion different translation strategies to convey a similar playful attitude in the target text, especially where Rodari plays with the language of food.

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3 Language to play and laugh with (all translations are mine unless otherwise stated).
The present paper focuses on four of Rodari’s works translated into English in 1965, 1971, 1976 and 2011, selected within the corpus of Rodari’s literary production because they present a wide variety of food language, and specific references to Italian food. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to see whether the British (Creagh in 1965, 1971, Newson-Smith in 1976) and the American (Shugaar, 2011) translators adopted similar or different translation strategies in relation to the prospective target readership in two different cultures. The approach adopted is comparative, where the Italian original is presented first, followed by the English version.

The examples presented in the following sections are aimed at showing both the rich variety of food items used by Rodari and the creative approach adopted by his translators over time. The analysis is descriptive (Toury, 2012), not evaluative, and wishes to highlight the mechanisms at work in the original text and the way translators played with the target language to mediate the voice of the author in translated narrative.

2. Favole al telefono or Telephone Tales

_Favole al telefono_ (1962) was the second book by Rodari to be published by Einaudi. The book collects 70 short stories characterised by a mixture of surreal situations and the everyday reality of Italian children. The English translation, _Telephone Tales_ (1965), translated by Patrick Creagh, included 44 stories and was distributed by G. Harrap and Co. (Great Britain).

The book jacket provides indications of the intended readership for these tales:

"[...] Here is something for every mood. If you have enjoyed these tales, it’s too far to telephone Italy and tell him so, but you can write (c/o Harrap). Mr Rodari loves to have letters from his young readers."

The publisher’s direct address to children reflects Rodari’s desire to seek a constant feedback from his readers and especially from children.

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4 The Italian extracts come from the most recent editions by Einaudi.

5 The first was _Filastrocche in cielo e in terra_ (1960) illustrated by Bruno Munari.

6 The book _Favole al telefono_ collected some stories previously published in “Il Corriere dei Piccolissimi”. Rodari’s tagline suggests children read this book: “[…] seduti su un panchettino,
This feature of Rodari’s narrative communication raises the question of how far the voice of the author can be distinguished from that of the translator. Figure 1 presents Chatman’s six-part-model of narrative communication as revised by O’Sullivan (2005: 15), who highlights the narrative mediation of translators in the dichotomy Implied author (of the source text) and Implied translator (of the target text).

![Figure 1: O’Sullivan’s revised six-part-model of narrative communication.](image)

Implied author and Implied translator are mirrored in O’Sullivan’s model by the Implied reader, which in children’s literature is a role that can be played by young readers and adults alike. This is true especially when adults mediate the text for children. O’Sullivan argues that:

> The fact that a certain book for children also appeals to adult readers is not on its own sufficient for us to assume double or multiple address. Textual analysis must establish whether different possible ways of reading are involved, or whether there are traces of address to an audience of adults as well as children. (O’Sullivan 2005: 18-19)

The analysis of the original Italian and the English translation of Favole al telefono carried out in this paper shows how the voice of the translator overlaps with that of the original Implied author/Narrator resulting in an address to a mixed Implied reader(ship)/Narratee, particularly in the passages related to food.

Rodari’s food narrative covers existing regional dishes as well as invented food, showing the evolution of creative language from what is known (in La storia del lontano dai fratelli maggiori.” ([…] sitting on a small bench, away from elder brothers and sisters). Cited in Boero (2010: 47).
regno di Mangionia) toward the unexpected (Cucina spaziale). Creagh adopted various strategies in his translation to convey the references to food in Telephone Tales.

In the short story La storia del regno di Mangionia (The History of the Kingdom of Gobbleguts), for instance, a proper name has been coined for the kingdom with the addition of the suffix –onia\(^7\) to the verb “mangiare” (to eat), catapulting the readers into a fantastic world. Creagh follows this word formation technique and blends “guts" with “to gobble”, a connoted verb suggesting someone who swallows food quickly. In the original title there is no connotative meaning as “mangiare” remains neutral. As readers follow the description of the kings that reigned over Gobbleguts, specific linguistic aspects come into play (the text underlined is mine, for clarity in the description below):

Mangione Terzo, detto l’Antipasto;  
Mangione Quarto, detto Cotoletta alla Parmigiana;  
Mangione Quinto, il Famelico;  
Mangione Sesto, lo Sbranatacchini;  
Mangione Settimo, detto “Ce n’è ancora?”, che divorò perfino la corona, e si che era di ferro battuto;  
Mangione Ottavo, detto Crosta di Formaggio, che sulla tavola non trovò più nulla da mangiare e inghiottì la tovaglia;  
Mangione Nono, detto Ganascia d’Acciaio, che si mangiò il trono con tutti i cuscini. (Rodari [1962] 2010: 53)

Gobbleguts the Third, otherwise known as Hors d’Oeuvre, because he swallowed half France before he was put to flight at the sight of pig’s trotters.  
Gobbleguts the Fourth, or Prime Sirloin.  
Gobbleguts the Fifth, or Gobbleguts the Hungry.  
Gobbleguts the Sixth, or Gobbleguts Rip-Chicken.  
Gobbleguts the Seventh, or More-More-More, who even ate the crown, which was made of cast iron.  
Gobbleguts the Eighth, or Welsh Rabbit, who found nothing left on the table, and so ate the table.  
Gobbleguts the Ninth, or The Iron-Jaws, who ate the throne and all the cushions. (Creagh 1965: 64-65)

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\(^7\) This suffix is used extensively in Italian toponomastics, to denote here a place where food is a priority.
Rodari follows a syntactically concise pattern of juxtaposed sentences which expands into subordinate sentences with Mangione Settimo. The translated version diverges in syntax in the first line only, where Creagh rewrites the text probably to create alliteration between “Third” and “Hors d’Oeuvre”. Creagh diverges in the choice of food: when Rodari mentions an elaborate variation of the typical “cotoletta” which becomes “alla parmigiana”, Creagh eliminates the reference to Italian local food to focus on quality rather than on the complex recipe. Creagh compensates for this divergence where Gobbleguts the Eighth is called “Welsh Rabbit”, a familiar recipe to the British readers, with cheese as the main ingredient. Creagh keeps Rodari’s reference to “formaggio” in a recipe that reflects shared knowledge with the Narratee.

Creagh’s rewriting abilities are put to the test with the menu from outer space described in Cucina spaziale (Space Cooking). From a conventional text such as a restaurant menu, with courses presented in sections, Rodari reinvents the language of food mixing real ingredients or cooking procedures with words that belong to a different semantic category. Each dish served on Planet X213 is reminiscent of typical Italian dishes but the ingredients are anything but food:

Antipasti:
- Ghiaia di fiume in salsa di tappi.
- Crostini di carta asciugante.
- Affettato di carbone.

Minestre:
- Rose in brodo.
- Garofani asciutti al sugo d’inchiostro.
- Gambe di tavolini al forno.
- Tagliatelle di marmo rosa al burro di lampadine tritate.
- Gnocchi di piombo.

Piatti pronti:
- Bistecca di cemento armato.
- Tristecca ai ferri.
- Tristezze alla griglia.
- Arrosto di mattoni con insalata di tegole.
- Do di petto di tacchino.
- Copertoni d’automobile bolliti con pistoni.
- Rubinetti fritti (caldi e freddi).

8 Breaded cutlet.

9 Cheese.
- Tasti di macchina da scrivere (in versi e in prosa). […]  
(Rodari [1962] 2010: 155)

**HORS D’OEUVRES**  
Gravel salad.  
Boiled blotting-paper with cork sauce.  
Chopped coke flambé.

**FIRST DISHES**  
Rosewater broth.  
Dried carnation with ink sauce.  
Roast table legs (done on the spit).  
Marble macaroni with candlelight sauce.  
Lead dumplings.

**MAIN DISHES**  
Concrete steak (mixed on the premises).  
Red herrings on toast (5 minutes delay).  
Sorrows on toast (soft or hard).  
Baked bricks with tile salad.

Car bonnets boiled with pistons.  
Fried bath taps (hot or cold).  
Half-baked books (in verse or prose). […]  
(Creagh 1965: 85-86)

The texts have been reproduced above in the same form they appear in the original text and the translated version respectively: Rodari plays with the language to invent associations among words through synonyms, repetitions, puns. For example, to suggest a dish flavoured with liquid ingredients he uses three different words (“salsa”, “sugo”, “burro”)

10 and almost each dish blends a real cooking method (“al forno”, “fritto”, “bollito”

11, etc.) with a word that does not share the same semantic category (“Gambe di tavolini”, “Copertoni d’automobile”, “Rubinetti”)

12. Creagh visually organises the English text to the centre of the page, like a real restaurant menu, thus providing the reader with a familiar text type format that is turned upside down as the reading of dishes begins. His consistent use of “hors d’oeuvre” recalls the Kingdom of Gobbleguts

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10 Sauce, tomato sauce, butter.

11 Roast, fried, boiled.

12 Table legs, tyres, taps.
in *Telephone Tales*. Creagh, like Rodari in the original Italian, makes use of a word related to cooking accompanied by unexpected ingredients, but the variety of the vocabulary present in the source text is replaced by the repetition of “sauce” (3 times), “salad” (2), or “on toast” (2) in translation. There is only one omission for the original “Do di petto di tacchino”, a word chain mixing the expression *do di petto* – high-pitched C sang with the chest voice – and *petto di tacchino*, that is turkey breast, which Creagh did not translate.

Rodari’s Italian menu is more effective if read aloud, with repeated sounds which guide the reader through the dishes: /k/ “crostini di carta”, /t/ “asciugante” “affettato” “rubinetti fritti”, /r/ “rose in brodo” “garofani”, /l/ in “arrosto” “mattoni” “petto” “copertoni”. Creagh, a poet himself, indulges in the repetition of /d/ in “salad” “boiled”, /k/ in “cork” “coke”, /m/ in “marble macaroni”, /b/ in “baked bricks” “car bonnets boiled” and “half-baked books”. A comparison of the two extracts shows a progression of the Italian text with the formation of new words by means of blending and associations, “bistecca”, “tristecca”, “tristezze”. Creagh partially reproduces this chain from a semantic point of view using polysemous words: “concrete” as something “existing in a material or physical form” but also a building material, “Red herrings” as “a clue or piece of information which is intended to be misleading or distracting” (Wilkinson 2002: 419) but also a dried smoked herring as food, to conclude with the English equation of “tristezze” that is “sorrows”, which does not reproduce the sound chain of the Italian “Tristecca” to “Tristezze”. Nevertheless, the translator satisfies the taste for multiple layers of reading typical of the educated reader, namely adults.

The examples presented from *Telephone Tales* show a prevalence of domesticating techniques. In line with the original text, which Rodari wrote for young readers, the translation considers the Implied reader as made up of children. Both Rodari and Creagh took into account the adults who mediate the text by reading the stories aloud, and this is evident in the choice of rhyming

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13 He published *A Row of Pharaohs* with Heinemann in 1962, a collection of poems.

14 Steak.

15 Tri-steak.
pattern of words present in the source and target texts. Creagh’s domesticating strategy produced a text in which all references to food become meaningful to English children and adults thanks to recipes that convey a feeling of curiosity for the former, and familiarity for the latter.

3. La torta in cielo or A Pie in the Sky

La torta in cielo (1966) was published by Einaudi in the series “Libri per ragazzi” \(^{16}\) dedicated to a young public. This text originated from a process of collaborative writing between Rodari and a group of children \(^{17}\). A Pie in the Sky (1971), translated by Patrick Creagh, was published by J.M. Dent and Sons. The language of food in this novel is rich: desserts and sweets play a pivotal role by separating the world of children from the adults involved in the story. The original title includes “torta” \(^{18}\), which is a saucer that hovers over Trullo suburb to disseminate panic among people. Only two children, Paolo and Rita, are brave enough to be the first to approach the alien object to discover that it is a sweet cake, a mistake by an atomic scientist they nickname “Geppetto” \(^{19}\). On the contrary, adults (scientists, military people and parents) distrust the object and seek a way to destroy it.

The variety of sweets in La torta in cielo culminates in the rich food description dedicated to the first close encounter with the pie by Paolo and Rita:

I due fratelli attraversarono senza difficoltà diversi filoni di crema, di panna, di pasta mandorlata. Scalvarono ruscelli di zabaione, affondarono fino al ginocchio in pozzanghere di sciroppo al ribes, illuminarono con la loro pila piccole grotte scavate nelle viscere della torta da correnti sotterranee di liquore, allo stesso modo che i fiumi del Carso, sprofondando sotto le

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\(^{17}\) The class of Maria Luisa Bigiaretti at Collodi primary school in the Trullo suburb near Rome. See Rossitto (2011: 68)

\(^{18}\) Pie.

\(^{19}\) Father to Pinocchio in Collodi’s tale.
montagne, ci scavano caverne e acquedotti naturali. (Rodari [1966] 2011: 45)

The two children had no difficulty in making their way through various layers of cream and jam and almond paste. They leapt over streams of blackcurrant juice, walked with care over fragile layers of meringue, and shone their torch into tiny caves cut deep in the belly of the cake by subterranean rivers of liqueur. (Creagh 1971: 31)

Food in the Italian version recreates a natural environment, so much so that in the last sentence the Narrator mentions a shared geographical background (the Karst caves) with the Narratee. The translated passage is domesticated, and Creagh opts for a more concise text without redundancies. Jam is used instead of the whipped cream in the Italian version, the two children literally sink to their knees in rivulets of “zabaione” in Italian, they leap “over streams of blackcurrant juice” in English translation. “[S]ciroppo al ribes” (blackcurrant juice) comes in “streams”, and “zabaione” is substituted by “fragile layers of meringue”. The most evident shift from the original text resurfaces in the omission of the whole sentence about Karst caves, so that the shared knowledge that existed between Narrator and Narratee in the source text is eliminated in English. Creagh emphasises the cinematic style in the original, focusing on the thrill of discovery and the quick pace of the children. At some point Paolo is trying to reach the centre of the cake, but Rita lags behind, eating and drinking as she walks:


’[...] I think they put a bit too much liqueur in just here. Is it rum or brandy? Well anyway, I hope we don’t get drunk. Gosh, it’s raining...! No, let me taste it. ... There you are, what did I say? It’s not water, it’s Marsala wine. Help! I’m sinking! No, it’s all right, the pastry’s firm enough. All the same, I’d prefer a layer of good hard toffee or something, just to be sure.’ (Creagh 1971: 31-33)

This passage is a long direct speech composed of rhetorical questions (“Senti, non ci ubriacheremo mica?”20, talking to Paolo), vocalisations (“Ah!”) and

20 Listen, we aren’t going to get drunk, are we?
exclamations (“Aiuto, si sprofonda!”\textsuperscript{21}, to describe Rita’s difficulty about walking over firm ground). In the English version Rita refers to the presence of another person as Narratee only in the use of “we” (it is Paolo), and she is describing the environment bit by bit acting as a guide for the Implied reader just as in the original text. She is the Narrator in this passage, using rhetorical questions (“What did I say?”) and unfilled pauses indicated by suspension points. Creagh recreates this speech flow by respecting punctuation as far as possible, and strengthens the bond of the Narrator with the Implied reader by introducing the rhetorical question “Is it rum or brandy?” changing the function of the vocative “Senti” addressed to Paolo in the Italian version. The translator also expands the varieties of liqueur by specifying “rum” and “brandy” to compensate for the substitution of “savoiardi”\textsuperscript{22} with a less connoted term “pastry”.

The instances so far presented support the hypothesis that the translator domesticated the text and standardised the culinary Italian references in the target version. The consistent elimination of typical Italian desserts goes unnoticed in the eyes of the target reader, who is nevertheless carried away by the very detailed descriptions of the pie as a sort of labyrinth, thus enjoying the variety of sweets and desserts selected by Creagh.

The original novel, with the real-life collaborative writing work behind the creation of\textit{La torta in cielo}, makes the text particularly suitable for readers from 10 years of age\textsuperscript{23}. Creagh probably had in mind the same age group in English. He preserved the fast-paced narrative style of Rodari’s original voice using domestication to focus on Paolo and Rita’s journey by substituting source-language food references with sweets that were more familiar in the target culture, in order to facilitate reading by a young public.

\textsuperscript{21} Help, I’m sinking!

\textsuperscript{22} Ladyfingers.

\textsuperscript{23} The class with whom Rodari created the story was a fifth year in primary school, where the age of children is between 10 and 11 in Italy.
4. Novelle fatte a macchina or Tales Told by a Machine

Novelle fatte a macchina (1973) was published by Einaudi and has repeatedly been reprinted in different book series\(^{24}\), including in 1977 *Lettura per la scuola media*, where Rodari himself described how he had conceived the book to address prospective readers aged 11 to 14 (the Implied reader). From the investigation by Rossitto (2011) however, Rodari in the same period had his mind set on a public of adults while he was writing these tales, a fact that coincided with the completion of his book on the art of creating stories *La grammatica della fantasia* (1973). The strong link between the latter and Novelle fatte a macchina is the shift of readership, evident in the use of “giochi di parole, trucchi verbali, citazioni nascoste, sequenze meccaniche, proverbi rovesciati, caricature o deformazioni di luoghi comuni e frasi fatte, vocaboli nuovi […]”\(^{25}\) (Rodari 1977: VII-VIII), an indication of the rich creative vein of the Italian author in these years. The source book contained 26 stories, of which 7 were translated by Sue Newson-Smith for Abelard-Schuman in 1976. The paratextual material offered in the English edition of *Tales told by a Machine* mentions the public of children to whom the collection is addressed, and Rodari’s typical narrative style:

> The following seven tales were selected from a series of stories inspired by the answers of hundreds of Italian school children to the question: “What would happen if…?” […]

> These amazing and extremely funny stories, by their illogical juxtaposition of ideas, turn upside down accepted concepts of life. […]

This is useful to outline the characteristics of Rodari’s writing process, which starts from the simple question “What would happen if…?”", together with an explicit reference to the country of origin of his text (“Italian”). Among these stories, *Il mondo in scatola*\(^{26}\) as source text presents elements related to food,

\(^{24}\) For a detailed description of the origins of this book and its stories see Rossitto (2011: 121-128, 247-249), and for the complete bibliography see Boero (2010).

\(^{25}\) Puns, verb games, hidden citations, mechanical sequences, palindrome proverbs, caricatures or deformations of clichés and fixed expressions, new words […].

\(^{26}\) Translated into English as *A Tinned World*. 
which accompany the narration of a world where thousands of empty tins and bottles grow so big that in the end the earth is about to be enclosed in an enormous box.

The story begins with the Zerbini family who is going home after a picnic near Rome. They leave some empty bottles behind on purpose; as they are driving back, the young Zerbini brothers sitting in the rear seats realise that the empties are chasing them, and from this point on from inanimate objects they become alive:

At that moment, an eight-cylindered American cadillac, with a defiant snort, began to overtake the Zerbini's modest but practical family car. All the empty bottles joined in the race, leaping, romping, rolling, bouncing and spinning like hoops. Among them was a bottle of Ciro, the local wine, three soda bottles, two sardine tins, a jar of caviar and a dozen paper plates. They sounded like a muffled percussion band. (Newson-Smith 1976: 57-58)

Rodari’s narrative structure is complex, with subordinate sentences, lists, and cataphoric references to concentrate the attention of the Narratees on the real protagonists: the empty bottles, tins, jars and paper plates. The Narrator’s stance is present in the last lines with “una discreta fanfara” and “più che apprezzabile”, all positively connoted adjectives in Italian related to the sounds that the empties produce. Newson-Smith shifts from the original Narrator’s voice including an “eight-cylindered American cadillac” that was a more general multi-cylindered car in Italian, the positive remark being on “Zerbini’s modest but practical family car” that was not hinted at in the source text. Two sentences in Italian versus four sentences in translation: Newson-Smith opts for juxtaposed sentences that single out the list of food items and make the narration appear

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27 A moderate fanfare.

28 Quite remarkable.
fragmented if compared to the Narrator’s voice flow in Italian. Domestication is present in the addition clarifying the nature of “Ciro”, an example of shared knowledge between the Narrator and the Narratee in Italian that needs to be expanded in English in order to fill this knowledge gap for the target readership. The positive remarks from the Italian Narrator toward the “strumenti a percussione”\(^{29}\) are eliminated in English, together with “concertino”\(^{30}\). The only adjective used is “muffled”, which communicates a soft sound, unlike the Italian semantics of “fanfara” that is quite the opposite. The result is a different perception of the empty food tins from the Italian Narrator’s voice into English. The narration follows the daily life of the Zerbinis living with their empties becoming even emptier until the furniture in the house must be put inside them like miniature vessels. At this point, everyday life situations become surreal:


Rosella and her fiancé now met in a tin of mushrooms in brine, where there was a green bench. (Most places were good for romance and the mushrooms didn't smell too bad.) (Newson-Smith 1976: 64)

As the end of the story approaches, the original Italian Narrator extends the description of this tinned revolution to the whole world. The Narrator in Italian speaks directly to the Narratee with the rhetorical question “Ma chi ce lo fa fare, ormai, di occuparci […]?”\(^{31}\). A comparison of the two extracts highlights the domestication strategy adopted by Newson-Smith where mushrooms are “in brine” and not “in olive oil”, possibly a more familiar seasoning for the English.

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\(^{29}\) Percussion instruments.

\(^{30}\) A diminutive of band.

\(^{31}\) Why should we care now […]?
readership. The Narrator’s voice in all examples so far show that the verb tense in Italian is the simple present\textsuperscript{32}, but in English the simple past is preferred, thus relegating the imminent realisation of a tinned world to the frame of reported narrative, a \textit{fait accompli}. In Italian, the feeling is that of an ongoing revolution that envelops famous monuments in Rome inside a box of “spaghetti” and a large tin with “Confettura”\textsuperscript{33} written on it; the voice of the Narrator is an integral part of narration, not an aside in parentheses as it is in the English translation. The rewriting strategy adopted by Newson-Smith culminates in the story ending. The Italian original version concludes with the scientists Schachtelmacher and Box, discussing the gifts they exchanged with each another:


A cigar box becomes a bed, and a tin of shrimps is the room that envelops a bookcase and the stereo. Two common gifts are used here in a very uncommon way, in line with a reality that by the end of the story is accepted as it is: the empties take over the world.

In English the Narrator concludes:

“You’re right – it’s a superbox! Large enough to box in both the earth and the moon, by the look of things…”

Three hours later, the whole of the western hemisphere was contained in a tin of anchovies in oil, and smelt faintly of fish. (Newson-Smith 1976: 66)

The two scientists are looking into space to see a box that is coming closer to the earth, a box large enough to contain it. In Italian only the first direct speech is present, the English version substitutes the original repartee with the image of the earth in a tin (not a box) of anchovies and its smell, a close-up on food not

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{32} According to Rodari’s intentions in a letter to Daniele Ponchiroli at Einaudi in 1972 (quoted in Rossitto 2011: 122), all stories had to be written in the present tense to amplify the absurdity of situations.

\textsuperscript{33} Marmelade.
\end{footnotesize}
mentioned in the Italian ending. This shift from the original Narrator’s voice shows how the translator domesticated the text to create an absurd ending, which ties in with the English title *A Tinned World.*

In conclusion, the domesticating strategy adopted by Newson-Smith is characterised by a standardised language in translation achieved through reformulation, omissions and simplifications to rewrite the text and the voice of the Narrator. However, by doing this, the translator eliminates the shared knowledge with the readership that was present in the original, the numerous references to food, and modifies the perception of the empties by the reader.

5. *C’era due volte il barone Lamberto* or *Lamberto Lamberto Lamberto Lamberto*

The *fil rouge* that links *Novelle fatte a macchina* with the last novel Gianni Rodari published before his death, *C’era due volte il barone Lamberto* (1978), is the variety of references to real places and situations sometimes shared with the readers and sometimes known only to Rodari. The novel was published by Einaudi, and was among the finalists of the Monza literary prize in Italy. The book did not win and Rodari himself was particularly disappointed by the lack of interest that the jury, composed of young readers, dedicated to this work. Probably, his “barone Lamberto” had already leapt over the edge of children’s literature to speak directly to a more adult public.

*Lamberto Lamberto Lamberto* (2011) was published by Melville House in the US, translated by Antony Shugaar. The book cover offers excerpts from Italo Calvino praising Rodari’s “precise and meticulous love for detail, for rich and exact language”. On the inside flap of the front jacket, the story presentation reads: “A modern fable for children and adults: a story of life, death, and terrorism [...]”, positioning the book in a fiction series to be read by children and adults alike. On the inside flap of the back jacket, a biography of Rodari is presented first, then Shugaar described as writer and translator. As a professional translator, in an interview about his job, Shugaar talked about the

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34 Rossitto (2011) mentions a letter from Rodari to Einaudi, his publisher, about a story that he was working on: a mixture of memories from his own childhood and the geography of Lake Maggiore in Italy.
way the “voice” of the author can only be found in the original text. He believes that a proficient translator needs to have a “complete understanding of the original”\(^\text{35}\) in order to communicate it in another language to another readership. A summary of the story is necessary to contextualise the examples provided below. The key to the story is: “The man whose name is spoken remains alive”\(^\text{36}\) so baron Lamberto, a rich old man who owns banks all over the world, together with his butler Anselmo hire six workers to live in the attic of his villa who have to repeat his name day and night. Unfortunately, the baron’s nephew Ottavio comes to visit with the objective of killing his uncle in order to inherit his riches. But he is unaware of the secret of the six workers: their role is to keep the baron alive and as the story goes on, Lamberto grows younger until from ninety-three years old he turns thirteen.

The selection of foods in *C’era due volte il barone Lamberto* is part of the vocabulary used by Rodari, from gourmet food to simple recipes like “polenta”. In this extract Ottavio, the baron’s nephew, finally learns the trick of the six workers in the attic and plans to put them to sleep with a sedative mixed to their food. As Ottavio sets his plan into action, the employees taste the food and have the most curious reactions:

- Strano, - dice Delfina, dopo la prima cucchiata, - sa di cavolo, ma anche un po’ di granatina.
- Per me, - dice la signora Zanzi, - sa di ribes. Però è buona. […]
- Per secondo, come vedono, filetto di bue ai pistacchi, con contorno di cavolfiori al velluto e melanzane in tortino. Per finire, budino di pesche e cassata alla siciliana.
- Sempre cassata, sempre cassata, - borbotta il signor Bergamini, - e mai polenta. (Rodari [1978] 2011: 77-78)

“That’s odd,” says Delfina, after tasting the first spoonful, “it tastes of cabbage, but also slightly of grenadine.”

“To me,” says Signora Zanzi, “it tastes like gooseberry. But it’s very good.” […]


\(^{36}\) In *Lamberto Lamberto Lamberto* (Shugaar 2011: 34).
“For the main course, as you can see, we have filet mignon with pistachios, with a side dish of creamed cauliflower, and an eggplant patty. To finish, peach pudding and Sicilian cassata.”
“Cassata, they always serve us cassata,” grumbles Signor Bergamini, “and never polenta.” (Shugaar 2011: 115-116)

The variety of food spans from vegetables to drinks, from meat to desserts. All the courses of a menu are mentioned in this dialogue, which concludes with “polenta” both in Italian and English. It is interesting to note that Shugaar borrowed terms freely from different cooking traditions spanning from French to Italian: grenadine, filet mignon, pistachios, and cassata. The last dessert is retained in Italian, suggesting this is shared knowledge between the Narrator (Ottavio in this case) and Narratee (the employees). Shugaar moves away from the original Italian only once, by translating “ribs” with the hyponym “gooseberry”.

At the climax of narration, when Baron Lamberto appears to be dead and during his funeral parade unexpectedly resurrects, Anselmo is so shocked that all he can think of is how to treat his master with one of his recipes:

Anselmo ripesca l’ombrello che per la sorpresa aveva lasciato cadere in acqua, lo apre, lo richiude, non sa più quel che fa.
- Signor barone, - egli grida, - che cosa desidera per pranzo? Le andrebbero dei piccioni alla Cavour o preferisce un’anitra alla mantovana?

In his astonishment, Anselmo has dropped his umbrella. He fishes it out of the lake, opens it, refurls it, he no longer knows what he’s doing. “Lord Lamberto,” he cries, “what would you like for lunch today? Would you prefer pigeons à la Cavour or a duck alla mantovana?” The baron pays no attention to him. (Shugaar 2011: 154)

The Narrator in Italian gives precedence to Anselmo in thematic position, and emphasizes the butler’s shock as he fumbles with the umbrella. He feels at ease only when he can spoil his master with delicious food, as though this was the first thing the baron wanted after his resurrection. The translated passage opens with the astonishment of Anselmo in marked thematic position, reinforced by the following sentence closing on “He no longer knows what he’s doing”. The food is typically Italian and retained in translation, where in Anselmo’s direct
speech Shugaar foreignises the recipes using the italics for “à la” and “alla mantovana”, which refer to the cooking procedure. Thanks to Shugaar’s strategy which moves from domestication towards foreignisation, the language used for food is varied and each dish never appears twice in the story. The effect is the engagement of modern English readers into an extra-textual research activity for the recipes mentioned. As TV cooking shows and cookery books proliferate, food websites and blogs on international cooking and traditional regional recipes are widespread on the web, it is easier for contemporary readers to satisfy their curiosity about foreign tastes. In line with the playful language of Rodari, and his willingness to make readers an active part of reading, all the recipes that appear in *C’era due volte il barone Lamberto* really exist, thus making the fairy tale a part of readers’ everyday life.

This analysis on the choice of food and recipes throughout the tale also sheds light on how the translator’s strategy affected the Narrator’s voice, as Shugaar attempts to convey the rich vocabulary and attention to detail present in Rodari’s writing in his most “mature” novel. Possibly because of this fidelity toward Rodari’s text in English translation, the book was deemed suitable for a mixed audience made up of adults as well as older children with a solid reading background when it was distributed on the American market.

6. Conclusions

The examples selected for this paper presented the language of food in Gianni Rodari’s writing from four of his books in English translation, showing how the original voice of the Implied author/Narrator was rewritten by different translators in the target texts. These books appeared in 1965, 1971, 1976 in the UK, and in 2011 in the US, revealing different degrees of domestication of the source texts. Creagh’s translations of Rodari in 1965 and 1971 adopted a domesticating strategy that preserved the Narrator’s rhymes and sound patterns, but eliminated almost all references to Italian food that formed a large

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37 A website collecting recipes from all sources available on the Internet is EatYourBooks: Visited on 10 March 2016, http://www.eatyourbooks.com/
part of the shared knowledge between Narrator and Narratee of the original text. The declared Implied reader in *Telephone Tales* includes adults playing the role of oral narrators for children, whereas in *A Pie in the Sky* the language is aimed at an older public of children matching the original idea of Rodari. Here Creagh delved into the communicative purpose of the Implied author to rewrite a text where the voice of the Narrator in the target text focused on Paolo and Rita’s discovery of the pie rather than a rich food vocabulary.

In *A Tinied World* translated by Newson-Smith within *Tales Told by a Machine* (1976), evidence shows that the domesticating strategy adopted changed the voice of the original Narrator to the point of modifying the perception of the main silent characters of the story (the empties) and above all the story ending.

In *Lamberto Lamberto Lamberto*, Shugaar’s translation of Rodari for the American readership opted for a limited domestication of the source text, which allowed him to preserve varieties of food from French and Italian traditions in the voice of the Narrator. Shugaar gauged his strategy on the basis of the inner characteristics of the original text, the “voice” that he mentioned in his interview, a text presenting a far more complex plot than any other of Rodari’s works.

In conclusion, the comparison of these stories by Rodari showed the difficulties that translators face when mediating between cultures and audiences in the case of a renowned author for children. Rodari’s case is exemplary. His use of food language is extremely creative and challenged his translators in approaching the author’s narrative style, either by adapting the original recipes to the receiving culture or introducing a foreign touch in translated texts. The analysis has shown how the British translations by Creagh and Newson-Smith adopted two different domesticating approaches. Creagh substituted typical Italian food in the target text, but at the same time retained the playful attitude to language so characteristic of Rodari. Newson-Smith omitted all references to Italian food and rewrote the target text to the point that the voice of the original Implied author changed in the target text. On the contrary, the most recent American translation published 33 years after the original, allowed Shugaar as Implied translator to address an adult readership with a solid literary (and culinary) background.
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