INSIGHTS INTO TRANSLATION OF RUSSIAN *REALIA*

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Abstract: This article aims to give a brief overview of the findings of our research on translation strategies, focusing on the issue of transferring the implications and uses of the so-called *realia* from a source language into a target one, which, for the sake of brevity, we will call SL (Russian) and TL (Italian) respectively. After introducing the concept of *realia* and possible strategies to convey their meaning, it will reveal through the analysis of some prototypical examples (i) a number of solutions the translator-lexicographer should consider each time, according to a series of different parameters, (ii) to what extent these choices can vary with respect to different narrative texts or lexicography and (iii) the absence of homogeneity in translation strategies not only in terms of comparing different monolingual or bilingual dictionaries, but also identifying within the same dictionary. Although the issue of *realia* translation has been a matter of interest and study in narrative, as well as in monolingual lexicography, it still needs more research to test and compare certain approaches proposed in bilingual lexicography.

Key words: Russian realia, translation strategies, lexicography, narrative text, loans, analogues, calques

1. Introduction

Through this article we aim to provide an overview of various critical issues the translator-lexicographer usually faces attempting to translate culture-specific words, the so-called *realia* (cf. Orioles 1984 & Nicolai 2003). The relevance of this phenomenon lies in particular in the fact that it is always quite difficult to render in a target-translation language (TL) expressions that reveal the customs and traditions of a source language culture (SL), not observable in other cultures. When dealing with *realia*, the translator-lexicographer accepts several challenges, not only cultural-semantic but also lexical, graphic and phonetic. In the process of translation from a SL into a TL various parameters should be considered, which concern not only the translator-lexicographer himself and his knowledge of both languages involved, but also the translation addressee, be it a bilingual dictionary user or narrative text reader. The different strategies each time used reveal different purposes and intentions, which are difficult to systematize (Cf. Gusmani 1993; Rybin 2007 & Osimo 2011). The

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results insofar obtained pay particular attention to the lack of uniformity, striving to evaluate whether (i) on the one hand it is possible to draw a clear demarcation between the criteria adopted in both lexicography and narrative field, and (ii) on the other hand to what extent these criteria reveal special trends, especially from a bilingual lexicographical point of view, a field which nowadays seems still quite unexplored with respect to this question.

2.   The Case of *Realia*: a Problem of (un)Translatability?

The process of translating from an SL into a TL involves linguistic and cultural factors in both languages. Any language, indeed, reflects and creates a national culture [Wierzbicka 1986][1]; this implies not only a bilingual, but, crucially, a bicultural approach. *Realia* represent, in this complex bicultural context, a striking challenge for the translator-lexicographer; they are lexical items denoting objects or concepts specific to one culture, for which the TL typically lacks an equivalent. The Italian philosopher, writer and translator Umberto Eco states:

> […] è idea ormai accettata che una traduzione non riguarda solo un passaggio tra due lingue, ma tra due culture, o due enciclopedie. Un traduttore non deve solo tenere conto di regole strettamente linguistiche, ma anche di elementi culturali, nel senso più ampio del termine. [translated by the author: it is a nowadays accepted idea that translation does not simply refer to a transition between two languages, but between two cultures, or two encyclopaedias. A translator should take into account not only linguistic rules, but also cultural elements, in the broadest sense of the term.] (Eco 2003: 162).

The Bulgarian linguists S. Vlahov and S. Florin, authors of a volume dedicated to translation units normally considered or defined as 'untranslatable', give the following definition of realia:

> «[…] слова (и словосочетания), называющие объекты, характерные для жизни (быта, культуры, социального и исторического развития) одного народа и чуждые другому; будучи носителями национального и/или исторического колорита, они, как правило, не имеют точных соответствий (эквивалентов) в других языках, а, следовательно, не поддаются переводу «на общих основаниях», требуя особого подхода» [Vlachov-Florin 1980: 47] [translated by the author: «[...] words (and phrases) referring to objects typical of life (everyday life, culture, social and historical development) of a

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[1] Cf. Triberio 2016.

nation, and unfamiliar to another one; carrying national and/or historical flavour, they, normally, do not have any exact correspondences (equivalents) in other languages, and, therefore, they cannot be translated 'on a general basis'and require a special approach]».

Realia identify not only objects, but signs, words characteristic of each particular culture, typical or exclusive of the material, spiritual and historical heritage of a nation, lexical items which lack of the so-to-say 'heteronym' in the linguistic theory:

> Negli studi sulla traduzione, l'eteronimia è una particolare relazione di sinonimia tra sistemi linguistici diversi (Beccaria 2004: 702); in altri termini, essa corrisponde alla sinonimia nella relazione infralinguistica; per es., il francese *arbre* è considerato eteronimo dell'italiano *albero* [translated by the author: In translation studies, heteronymy is a particular synonymic relationship between different linguistic systems (Beccaria 2004: 702); in other words, it corresponds to synonymy in the intralinguistic relationship; for example, the French *arbre* is considered heteronym for the Italian *albero*][https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/eteronimo].

Realia have been an area of great interest to translation scholars, either exploring the nature of the relationship between language and culture in the SL (Djachy – Pareshishvili 2014), or focusing on the range of strategies used by translators to convey their meaning in the TL (Fernández Guerra 2012). Indeed, it is already difficult to speak about full overlapping in the meanings of words in different languages in general having to deal, in most cases, with a sort of approximation, and it is even more difficult, if not impossible, to translate the so-called 'culture-specific' words; they go from the socio-political field to the geographical or ethnographic one, referring to work, cooking, art, fashion and many other socio-cultural fields traceable in many languages [Vlachov-Florin 1970]. How to translate Italian *spaghetti*, *mozzarella*, *lasagna, mafia, apricena*, or Russian *пирог*, *интеллигенция*, *погром*, *стахановец*, *матрёшка*, *квас*, *царь*, *дума*, *тройка* (in its double meaning of 'three-horse carriage' and 'triumvirate'), or even French *crêpes* and *pois*, Argentinian *pampas*, Spanish *murales* in a TL? One would say they are 'untranslatable'! The Russian linguist and translation theorist Barhudárov (1975: 74) coined, indeed, for these words, the expression *bezekvivalentnaja leksika* (*безэквивалентная лексика*), literally 'non-equivalent lexicon.' Which translation strategies to choose then?

3. Strategies of Translating Realia

As analysed in (1), a key feature of *realia* is that no equivalent word or expression is available in the TL. Even though modern linguistics denies it (Wierzbicka 2003), on

the contrary a pseudo-translation seems to be always applicable. The first fundamental watershed to outline is, therefore, the distinction between its transcription/transliteration[2] or its translation (Vlachov-Florin 1986). In the absence of direct equivalents, when faced with a *realia,* the translator-lexicographer is left with two main options: (i) either to preserve the lexical item in the SL (sometimes explaining it with additional information) or (ii) to find a word or expression in the TL that approximates the meaning of the archetype in the SL. The former choice (i) refers to what is traditionally defined in linguistics as 'borrowing', that is, the process of transliteration from the source language alphabet (SL) into the target language alphabet (TL). The Czech–American historical *linguist and lexicographer* L. Zgusta states that:

> The form of such a borrowed word […] can attain different degrees of adaptation to the phonemic and morphological structure of the language into which it has been accepted, but it can also remain unadapted [...] (Zgusta 1971: 179).

The latter choice (ii) may give rise to a variety of different processes, not mutually exclusive, such as calques, semi-calques, various degrees of translation or pseudo-translation, up to certain attempts at the description-explanation of the *realia.* Different taxonomies have been proposed by scholars working in the field of translation studies (cf. for example Graedler 2012; Harvey 2012). Linguists Vlachov and Florin state that:

> Некоторые «реалии» передаются в тексте перевода в неизменном виде (через транслитерацию), другие могут лишь частично сохранять свою морфологическую или фонетическую структуру при переводе, третьи все же необходимо заменять лексическими единицами совершенно разными по внешнему виду [translated by the author: Some «realia» are transmitted into the TL text unchanged (through transliteration), others can only partially preserve their morphological or phonetic structure during translation, and still others must be replaced with lexical units that are completely different as far as their formal aspect is concerned] (Vlachov–Florin 1986: 438).

If, on the one hand, the borrowing keeps the so-called 'exotic flavour' of the word (foreignization) giving the reader an impression of a greater immersion in the SL culture, *the translation, on the other hand (or a sort of pseudo-translation) should reduce the distance between the two languages (domestication) to the detriment, however, of the semantic value that pertains to realia.* In this regard, Venuti (1995: 20) puts forward two different approaches: "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to

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[2] By scientific transliteration we refer to the standards developed by ISO 9: 1995 (International Organization for Standardization).

target-language cultural values [...] and an ethnodeviant emphasis of those (cultural) values that register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text [...].

Rybin (2007: 7) states that: "*перевод* представляет собой перевыражение исходного текста средствами другого языка" (translated by the author: "translation represents a reproduction of the original text by means of another language"), specifying then the main strategies used in translation practice for the transmission of *realia* (for a systematic inventory of the various types of linguistic interference, see Gusmani 1993):

> В принципе, все способы, используемые в переводческой практике для передачи реалий, можно свести к четырем: транскрипция и транслитерация; калькирование; аналог или приблизительное соответствие; толкование или описательный перевод [translated by the author: Virtually, all the methods used in translation practice to convey realia can be reduced to four ones: transcription and transliteration; calque; analogue or approximate equivalent; explanation or descriptive translation] (Rybin 2007: 137).

Our analysis on Russian *realia* has been conducted on the basis of the broad distinction between loans and calques made by Gusmani (1993) and Rybin (2007). Among the different *realia* that have penetrated the Italian language through specific translation strategies, some prototypical ones will be hereafter discussed as follows: (i) more or less adapted loans, (матрёшка, мужик); (ii) (pseudo) translation (мужик, тройка), (iii) additional information (самовар); (iv) functional analogues (взятка); (v) calques (like коллективное хозяйство, which enters the Italian language also in the form of a loan: колхоз).

All the following examples are presented just for demonstration purposes, without any evaluating aim on translation choices, and without taking into account the broader context they are in. Options may vary with respect to the given narrative texts or lexicography. The question becomes indeed particularly crucial for bilingual dictionaries, as they should provide as many equivalents as possible, ready to be used in various contexts, alongside one or more possible translation solutions (Marello 1989; Massariello Merzagora 1982). It is indeed surprising that far less systematic attention has been given to *realia* in the bilingual lexicographic tradition, where most attention has been focused on how they are encoded in monolingual dictionaries (Fernández Guerra 2012).

Before starting analysing some *realia*, it could be useful to remember the rich inventory of Russian *realia* that entered Italian language made by Orioles (1984), who distinguishes between historical russisms, i.e. expressions concerning customs, geographical environment, material and social life prior to the Russian October Revolution (1917) and sovietisms, that is, words referring to the political and socio-economic institutions of the Soviet State, until its disintegration (1917-1991). The

research has been conducted on some proto-typical examples taken from these two typologies[3].

4.   Phonological Adaptation of Loan Words

We have already pointed out that even when a realia is opaque and difficult to understand in TL, it will still be possible to choose its original form, in order to maintain the local flavour of the text. Osimo (2011) states:

> Tradurre i realia significa tradurre un elemento culturale, non linguistico […]. Essendo oggetti culturospecifici, nella tradizione interlinguistica non sono modificati per preservare l'ambientazione culturale del prototesto, se non in caso di differenze di alfabeto tra le due culture (scrivo balalajka e non балалайка) [translated by the author: Translating realia means translating a cultural, not a linguistic element […]. Being cultural-specific objects, in the interlinguistic tradition they are not modified to preserve the cultural setting of the prototext, except in case of differences in the alphabet of the two cultures (I write balalajka and not балалайка)].

Analysing one of the most typical and popular Russism (from the archetype матрёшка) we can note different degrees of phonographical adaptations in the way the borrowing ***matrioska/**matriosca* is given among the entries of some Italian monolingual dictionaries and in wikipedia.it as shown in (a):

(a)
(i)   **matrioska** ‹*matriòska*› s. f. [adattam. fonetico e grafico del russo *matrëška ‹matri̯òška›*[4]] […] [https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/];
(ii)   **matrioska** ma|tri|o|ska pronuncia[5]: /matriˈɔska/ […] [https://www.dizionario-italiano.it/];
(iii)   **matrioska** or **matriosca** [...] [https://it.wikipedia.org].

Comparing the above-given three entries with those in the IT-RU section of some bilingual dictionaries, we find that while Dobrovol'skaja encodes the adapted borrowing (a-iv), Kovalev does not record the borrowing, although the archetype матрёшка appears regularly in the RU-IT section (a-v):

(iv)   **matrjoška** *f.* матрёшка [...] [Dobrovol'skaja 2001: 1761];
(v)   **матрёшка** f. […] matrioska (Kovalev 1995: 407, RU-IT section)[6].

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[3] Cf. also Nicolai 2003. For the purposes of this essay this study will in particular focus on various translation strategies, skipping grammatical information, explanation or examples of use in context, for which please cf. bibliography).
[4] phonetic and graphic adapt. of the Russian *matrëška ‹matri̯òška›* (translated by the author).
[5] pronunciation (translated by the author).

Same different degrees of phonographical adaptations can be observed in the encoding criteria of some bilingual dictionaries used for a series of other Russian *realia* that entered Italian as borrowings: *car'* (or *zar*[7], an Italian word in all respects)[8], *duma*[9], *samovar*[10], *trojka (*or the more adapted *troika*[11], *troica*[12])[13], *balalajka (*or the more adapted *balalaika, balalaica*[14]*)*, *pirog*[15], all of them reproducing, more or less faithfully, their archetypes *царь, дума, самовар, тройка, матрёшка, балалайка, пирог*, going from a more *source-oriented approach (e.g., car', matrёška, balalajka) to a more target-oriented* one (*e.g., zar, matriosca,* **matrioska,** *matrjoška, troica, troika, balalaika, balalaica*). In similar cases, the lexicographer adds sometimes examples or explanations useful to clarify the meaning and the use of the *realia*, as in 'trojka':

> **trojka** f. (**troica**) **1** (*slitta*)[16] тройка **2** (*triumvirato*)[17] тройка; троица, трое; durante le purghe staliniane una ~ fungeva da tribunale[18] во время сталинских репрессий роль суда часто выполняла "тройка" (Dobrovol'skaja 2001: 2331).

> **An example of** 'naturalized' borrowing is 'mugicco', from the archetype мужик:

> the word acquires some structural features of the TL, as in the Italian *mugicco*12, from the Russian *мужик*13, where the grapheme *g* signals a change of phoneme from the fricative [ʐ] (not used in Italian) to the affricate [dʒ], and the addition of the –*co* ending reproduces the prosodic structure of Italian words (ending in a vowel) [Magnani-Triberio 2018: 81]

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[6] Neither 'matrioska', nor any other more or less adapted borrowing is encoded in the IT-RU section.

[7] Kovalev 1995: 2167 (IT-RU section).

[8] "*Zar* è una parola italiana, registrata da decenni nei vocabolari italiani, e in italiano è questa la parola corretta" [translated by the author: "*Zar* is an Italian word, recorded for decades in Italian dictionaries, and in Italian this is the correct word" (Pescatori, 1997: 95)].

[9] Not encoded in the IT-RU section of Kovalev (1995), although the russism is listed in the RU-IT one (Kovalev 1995: 188).

[10] Kovalev 1995: 1951 (IT-RU section).

[11] Treccani http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/troika/.

[12] (Hoepli https://www.grandidizionari.it/Dizionario_Italiano/parola/t/troica/); Kovalev (1995: 2119 IT-RU).

[13] For further details on *trojka* cf. Triberio 2017-b & Triberio 2021-a.

[14] Kovalev 1995: 1227 encodes both balalaica & balalaika.

[15] For further details on the entrance of *pirog* into Italian cf. Triberio 2020; the borrowing is neither encoded in Kovalev nor in Dobrovol'skaja, although the russism is to be found in the RU-IT section of both dictionaries, translated through the pseudo-equivalents *torta* or *pasticcio* (Kovalev 1995: 652).

[16] sled (translated by the author).

[17] triumvirate (translated by the author).

[18] during the Stalinist purges a ~ served as a court (translated by the author).

Three different Italian monolingual on-line dictionaries encode the borrowing (followed by a brief description**) in different more or less adapted alternatives, as shown in b):**

b)
   (i) mugicco (o **mugìc**, **mugico**, **mugìk**, **mugiko**) […] (Treccani https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/);
   (ii) **mugic** o mugico, mugicco, mugik […] [Hoepli https://www.grandidizionari.it/];
   (iii) **mugìc** mu|gìc [...] [Dizionario Italiano https://www.dizionario-italiano.it/].

Similar criteria are shown in c), with reference to bilingual lexicography, whose IT-RU sections register in (c-i) the fully naturalized borrowing **mugicco**, while in (c-ii) the more adapted **mugic**, offering, in addition, the (pseudo)equivalent **крестьянин**[19]:

c)
   (i) **mugicco** *m*. мужик [Dobrovol'skaja 2001: 1819];
   (ii) **mugic** *м. неизм* мужик *m.*, **крестьянин** *m.* [Kovalev 1995: 1721].

Quite surprisingly, in the relevant RU-IT sections, while Dobrovol'skaja (2001: 390) doesn't include the borrowing 'mugicco' along with the supplied (pseudo)equivalents **1** contadino[20] and **2** (*colloq.*) uomo[21], Kovalev (1995: 434) provides the less adapted borrowing **mugik** (!) instead of the more adapted one 'mugic' encoded in the IT-RU section, along with a series of possible equivalents, such as uomo*,* persona, marito (*pop*.) burino, cafone[22].

5.   (Pseudo)-Translation in Narrative Texts

But what happens when facing a narrative text? Which strategy should be used for translating the *realia* мужик? Examples taken from https://ruscorpora.ru/new/ show a variety of choices (d), including borrowing (d-i muzìk) giving a pseudo-equivalent (d-ii contadino), neutralizing the same *realia* (possibly in cases where the context allows for this choice) (d-iii), or using the more connoted Italian word 'omaccio'[23] (if compared with 'contadino'), that gives the idea of a terrible and loutish man (d-iv):

(d)[24]
   (i)   «Il "**muzìk**" è nudo e si gonfia per la fame». […]
   (original text: **Мужик** раздет и пухнет от голода […]);

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[19] farm (translated by the author).
[20] *ibidem*
[21] man (translated by the author).
[22] man, person, husband (pop.), boor, peasant (translated by the author).
[23] trivial man (translation by the author).
[24] Борис Пастернак. Доктор Живаго (1945-1955) | Boris Pasternak. Il dottor Zivago (Pietro Zveteremich)] (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).

(ii) oh, naturale, il **contadino** è nemico di ogni ordine […];
(original text: ага, **мужик** враг всякого порядка […])

(iii) Era un mezzo buriato, cordiale e analfabeta […]
(original text: Это был **мужик** полубурят, душевный и неграмотный […]);

(iv) c'è un **omaccio** sconosciuto, nero e terribile […]
(original text: а чужой **мужик** черный и страшный […]).

(Triberio 2021-b)

Different renderings of the *realia* тройка, in the meaning of 'three-horse carriage' (e) in the narrative text show various criteria with respect to different needs, going from the not-naturalized borrowing (the so called *strictu-sensu* one) trojka (i)[25], to a sort of translation-explanation (ii), to the pseudo-equivalent in (iii), without further explanation or additional expressions. Translation (iii) exemplifies what Rybin defines as a process of 'desemantization' [Rybin 2007]; Italian 'carrozza' indeed neutralizes the full meaning of the archetype, bringing to it a much more generic meaning (Triberio 2017-b & Triberio 2021-a):

(e)
(i) E come un fantasma una **trojka** scomparve fra il fracasso e la polvere. […]
(original text: И, как призрак, исчезнула с громом и пылью *тройка*. […][26];

(ii) Ho qui una carrozza, ma pel tarantass c'è **tre cavalli** […] [27]
(original text: Я здесь с коляской, но и для твоего тарантаса есть тройка);

(iii) La **carrozza** volava rumoreggiando […][28].
(original text: Тройка дружно мчалась).

In certain cases, the translator decides to add some useful information. Let's consider the case of 'samovar' (f):

(f)
dove prendevano il tè, intorno a un samovàr, suo padre, una signora e due bambine[29]
(original text: где за самоваром сидел отец и с ним дама и две девочки).

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[25]In similar cases footnotes could help explaining possible obscure meanings.
[26] Nikolaj Gogol.' Anime morte (Paolo Nori) (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).
[27] Ivan Turgenev. Padri e figli (Federigo Verdinois) (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).
[28] *ibidem*
[29] Anton Cechov. Racconti (Fausto Malcovati) (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).

Samovar is one of those so-called 'pure' loans, which do not require any particular graphic-phonetic adaptation; it is mostly found as a loan, hopefully it could be accompanied by useful information. In the above example the translator, trying to convey as clear as possible the meaning of the word 'samovar' (which has no equivalent in Italian), and at the same time wishing to preserve its exotic appearance, adds the useful information 'dove prendevano il tè'[30], which the original lacks (Triberio 2021-a).

6.   Functional Analogue: Replacing TL Realia by SL Realia

A functional analogue is a word or phrase used to denote a concept, similar to the original one; in other words, a *realia* in the TL, a kind of transposition, suitable to replace the *realia* of the SL. It could be the case of 'bustarella'[31] or 'ungere'[32] for the Russian взятка (g):

(g)
   (i) è naturalmente del tutto esclusa la possibilità che lei abbia ricevuto una bustarella da quella stupida di Frida […] [33]
   (original text: что возможность получения вами взятки от этой дуры Фриды совершенно, конечно, исключена),

   (ii) Non avrei brigato per farmi delle conoscenze utili, non mi sarei messo a «ungere»[34]
   (original text: Я не буду искать полезных знакомств, давать взятки).

Italian 'bustarella' in (g-i) and 'ungere' in (g-ii) convey, in these contexts, a meaning similar to the original взятка and seem to be suitable analogues. It is interesting to note how the translator's choices shift from the use of the realia 'object' (bustarella) to the realia 'verb' (ungere), the action for the noun, in what Rybin (2007) defines 'трансформация'[35] (Rybin 2007).
   And why not use other possible Italian analogues for 'взятка', such as *mazzetta*, *pizzo*, *tangent*e[36]? Choices linked to a series of variables that the translator occasionally evaluates to find the most suitable one. Similar cases make the retrieval of the archetype much more complex and laborious, making it necessary to go through various entries of the dictionary to look for a potentially suitable entry that could act as a functional analogue; this is precisely what happens with the calque described below.

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[30] where they were drinking some tea (translation by the author).
[31] bribe (translation by the author).
[32] to flatter (translation by the author).
[33] Mikhail Bulgakov. Il Maestro e Margherita (p 2) (Vera Dridso, 1967)] (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).
[34]Varlam Shalamov. I racconti di Kolyma/I racconti della Kolyma (Sergio Rapetti/Marco Binni)] (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).
[35] transformation (translated by the author).
[36] All possible Italian synonyms for 'bustarella.'

7. Calquing in Realia Translation

Another strategy often used for the conveyance of realia is the calque. Gusmani analyses a variety of calques, among which the two prototypical ones are *semantic* and *structural*. With reference to the latter, he writes:

> si tratta, rispetto al prestito, di una copia meno fedele, di un processo mimetico in un certo senso più raffinato […]. Affinché il calco sia possibile, è necessario riprodurre la struttura del modello alloglotto e per far ciò bisogna che quest'ultimo abbia una «signification» ben individuabile, di essere una parola 'trasparente', dunque motivata ed articolata nella sua struttura (1993: 219-222)
>
> (Translation by the author: compared to the loan, it is a less faithful copy, in a certain way a more refined mimetic process […]. In order for the calque to be possible, it is necessary to reproduce the structure of the alloglot model and to this purpose it needs to have a clearly identifiable «signification», to be a 'transparent' word, therefore motivated and articulated in its structure (1993: 219 - 222)

Russian sovietism *колхоз* [kolchoz] entered the Italian language through different ways, both in the form of a loan (as in h-i/-ii/-iii), through various types of adaptations, especially from the point of view of the external formal aspect, and in the form of a structural calque or semi-calque:

(h)
   (i)
   kolchoz ‹*kalkhòs*› s. m., russo [abbrev. di *kol*(*lektivnoe*) *choz*(*jajstvo*) «azienda collettiva»] (anche italianizzato in *còlcos*) […][37] [https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/];
   (ii)
   kolchoz *m. invar.* (*stor.*) **колхоз (**коллективное хозяйство) […] (Dobrovol'kaja 2001, It.-Ru section);
   (iii)
   còlcos *м. неизм. см.* **kòlchoz**
   kòlchoz *м. неизм.* **колхоз** *т.*
   (Kovalev 1995, It.-Ru. section).

Treccani, as well as Dobrovol'skaja, gives in addition the Italian calque «azienda collettiva» [*kol*(*lektivnoe*) *choz*(*jajstvo*)], disclosing the Russian abbreviation and supplying the reader with a further useful information on the semantic level. Kovalev,

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[37] abbreviation for *kol*(*lektivnoe*) *choz*(*jajstvo*) « collective farm» (also Italianized in *còlcos*) (translated by the author).

quite curiously, asks the reader to look for *còlcos* under *kolkhoz*, with neither further examples, nor explanatory glosses.

In lexicography the Russian word is then recorded as a more or less adapted loan, which appears with interchangeable solutions between *k* and c, between *c* and *ch* and between *z* and *s* [Triberio 2017-a]; in the dedicated literature, loans entering the Italian language can alternate *ch* with *kh*, (as in *kolchoz* or *kolkhoz*), can foresee the rarest form *kolhoz*, up to the more normalized *colchoz*, to the fully normalized form *colcos* (Oriolies 1984).

Sometimes loans undergo the process of adaptation to the morphological-grammatical system of the target language, as in the example below, where the borrowed words (kolkhoz*es* and sovkhoz*es*) take on the *–es* ending of plural nouns in English:

> workers and pensioners of farm enterprises created by reorganization of **kolkhozes** and **sovkhozes**[38]
> (original text: работники и пенсионеры сельскохозяйственных предприятий, созданных в ходе реорганизации **колхозов** и **совхозов**).

Even as a calque, more or less faithfully reproducing the archetype 'коллективное хозяйство' (*kollektivnoe chozjajstvo*), there are, indeed, many renderings: 'economia collettiva'[39] (exactly reproducing the model), 'azienda/proprietà (agricola) collettiva'[40], that sounds more as a sort of informative translation, 'fattoria collettiva', this one, among the three calques, is the only one recorded in GDLI; the choice for the former member of the construction *fattoria* betrays a probable English mediation through *collective farm*. We are most probably dealing here with forms of semi-calques, for which indeed the reproduction of the model proceeds by imitating the formal (and semantic) structure of the archetype, although articulating the new expression more freely, with a certain autonomy (Triberio 2017-a).

The only possibility of calque recovery is to look for it under the entries referring to each of the two words composing it. There is no evidence of it in both Kovalev and Dobrovol'skaja, neither under the nouns 'economia'[41] or 'fattoria'[42], nor under the adjective 'collettivo'[43]; both dictionaries register the expression 'azienda agricola'[44] under the entry 'azienda', giving for it the calque 'сельскохозяйственное предприятие', which has no relation to *kol*(*lektivnoe*) *choz*(*jajstvo*). Kovalev, under

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[38] N. Shagaida, Zwi Lerman. *The Land Market Living with Constraints* (2004) (https://ruscorpora.ru/new/).
[39] collective economy (translated by the author).
[40] collective agricultural company (translated by the author).
[41] economy (translated by the author).
[42] Cf. note 21.
[43] collective (translated by the author).
[44] agricultural enterprise (translated by the author).

the noun 'proprietà'[45] gives 'proprietà collettiva', translating it via the expression 'коллективная собственность', does not clearly reproduce the calque.

8.   Conclusion

In sum, even investigating just a few examples, it can be concluded that there are no translation strategies considered to be better or worse than others. It is up to the (i) lexicographer or (ii) translator, on the basis of his experience and knowledge of both languages and cultures involved in the translation process, to make the proper choice for the purposes of his work and with respect to the reader it is addressed to. While the former (i) attempts to find, as much as possible, ready-to-use equivalents, and, where an equivalent is not found in the TL (as in the case of *realia*), the simpler solution probably remains the loan, the latter (ii) takes advantage of his own store of knowledge, to interpret and translate into his native language the content of the foreign word. The analysis reveals that, when Russian *realia* enter the Italian language, a variety of adaptation processes occur at different levels (lexical, semantic, graphic and phonetic). Furthermore, this type of interferences between the two languages suggests important trends in the way Russian *realia* are organised in both narrative texts and lexicography, either monolingual or bilingual, revealing for the latter, in most cases, a lack of uniformity that would probably need further study and systematization.

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[45] *property* (translated by the author)

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