Translating Emotion from Italian to English: A Lexical-Semantic Analysis

ALLIRA HANCZAKOWSKI
La Trobe University

Abstract

Literary translators are often faced with the challenge of transferring emotions across cultural and linguistic boundaries. While translation-specific research has been carried out within the scope of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic expressions of emotion (Doi; Gerber; Goddard; Hiatt; Leff; Levy; Marsella; Pavlenko; Rosaldo; Russell; Scherer) as well as culture-specific emotions (Chan; Ekman and Friesen; Niiya et al.; Tanaka-Matsumi and Marsella), limited research has been carried out on translating emotion words. This article focuses on transferring emotion words from Italian to English, employing the Italian novel *La festa dei limoni* (2015) by Marco Braico as the case study. Using examples from the text, I demonstrate that there are often multiple possible English translatants for a given Italian emotion word, depending on the context. I analyse the textual context, the linguistic context and the sociolinguistic identity (age, gender, geographical location, social class etc.) of the speaker to illustrate how these features influence the choice of translatant. Incorporating a language-independent method such as the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM; Wierzbicka) is useful to highlight the semantic nuances between possible translatants, thus determining how to select the most accurate term. This article offers insights applicable to other lexical domains, language pairs and literary texts.

Introduction

In translation theory and practice, finding the closest possible equivalent term (Nida) across languages is one of the major challenges presented to translators. Translation is a complex act of understanding and interpreting which goes beyond the surface of words; it also carries significance across linguistic, cultural and geographical boundaries. It requires going beyond merely replacing the lexicon of one language with that of another, for language is never an isolated element, but rather an intricate system that coexists with its surroundings. Since translation studies is interdisciplinary, insights and findings can be gained from various research areas. Little research has been carried out focusing on the issue of translating emotions (see below). Furthermore, few studies analyse the translation of emotion within the language pair of Italian and English, thus creating the gap in the literature that my research fills.

While emotion has been widely researched in the field of linguistics and emotion studies (Chan; Doi; Ekman and Friesen; Gerber; Goddard; Hiatt; Leff; Levy; Marsella; Niiya et al.; Ortony, Clore et al.; Pavlenko; Rosaldo; Russell; Scherer; Tanaka-Matsumi and Marsella; Wierzbicka), it has not been integrated within translation studies, a field that can provide valuable insights into cross-cultural and cross-linguistic analysis. This article thus draws together the fields of translation, linguistics and emotion, in order to explore the issues that arise in translating expressions of emotion from Italian to English in literary translation. I propose that multiple translatants are possible for a single emotion term, yet the context must determine which word is the most accurate. I aim to discover how the specific context influences this choice and whether feasible criteria can be designed to demonstrate which English emotion word is best suited for the particular context of the Italian term. I use the Italian novel *La festa dei limoni* by Marco Braico as a case study to analyse how the textual

context, the linguistic context, and the sociolinguistic identity of the character governs the choice of one particular lexical term over other possible translatants. I aim to achieve dynamic equivalence, which has the goal of "seeking the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" (Nida 166), as opposed to formal equivalence, which "focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content" (Nida 159).

This text has not been published in an English translation and is based on the real-life journey of the author, narrated by his alter ego Gabriele. The thirty-five-year-old shares his challenging physical, mental and emotional experiences as he is diagnosed with leukaemia and then undergoes (successful) treatment. Braico's ability to convey a range of emotions using concise, direct and relatively simple language makes it an interesting case study for my research. For the analysis, it must be highlighted that this novel is a work of autofiction (a combination of autobiography and fiction); therefore, although the language use is based on authentic events, conversations, and people, it has simultaneously been edited and developed by the author. For the purposes of the present study (and for reasons of space), I have selected three emotion terms to discuss – *gioia*, *ansia* and *rabbia* (roughly corresponding to 'joy', 'anxiety' and 'anger' respectively). I have chosen these three words firstly because they represent both positive and negative emotions; secondly, as they are employed in a wide variety of contexts; and lastly, since they include both unproblematic and problematic words in terms of their translation in *La festa dei limoni*.

The Connection of Language, Emotion and Culture

Language, emotion and culture do not exist independently of one another, they interweave on various levels. When researching emotion words, exploring findings from linguistics and cross-cultural studies is inevitable. Although emotions are not linguistic entities, the most convenient way to express them is through language (Ortony, Clore et al. 342).

> Thoughts have a structure which can be rendered in words, but feelings, like sensations, do not. All we can do, therefore, is to describe in words the external situations or thoughts which are associated in our memory or in our imagination with the feeling in question and to trust that our reader or listener will grasp what particular feelings are meant.
>
> (Wierzbicka, *Semantic Primitives* 59)

However, linguistic manifestations of emotion are not readily translatable, as they reflect the culture in which they are employed. Issues arise when we consider that "emotion terms of one language do not neatly map onto the emotion lexicon of another" (Pavlenko, *Emotions* 77). When translating emotion words, it is thus necessary to analyse the connection of language, emotion and culture to understand the depth of such a task, and to produce a faithful translation.

Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic differences

Research analysing cross-cultural elements, whether from a linguistic, anthropological or psychological perspective, inevitably involves facing the complexities involved in translation, and the notion that so-called equivalents do not always result in something that is culturally equivalent (Goddard, *Explicating Emotions;* Pavlenko, *Bilingual Minds*). For instance, Klaus Scherer's large intercultural study of emotion focused on assessing the frequency and quality of emotion experience represented in multiple languages. The emotion words were selected in English, then translated and back-translated in order to create a list of affect states across five languages: English, German, French, Italian and Spanish. This list does not aim to express dynamic equivalence, it simply intends to find the closest available label in each language (Pavlenko, *Bilingual Minds*). Scherer does not deny the impossibility of expressing exact

(formal) equivalence in meanings across all languages, as many emotion terms have strong connotations which are normally disambiguated by the context; he emphasizes that the list is not definitive, but rather a starting point. Linguistic knowledge, in particular semantics, can test the feasibility of such research, by analysing and stating meanings in a clear, intelligible, and testable way (Goddard, *Explicating Emotions*). Findings from ethnographic studies on the emotion lexicon of various languages have also provided insight into this issue.

Ethnographers' analyses of emotion words and concepts across languages prove that many emotion terms are semantically non-equivalent. The standard view is that emotion as a concept is universal, with the differences being in the context in which they occur, such as the frequency, causes, expression, importance, attitudes, beliefs and regulation (Russell). While the word "emotion" is widespread, this does not guarantee that all languages have the same boundaries and meanings for the term. Moreover, there are languages with no word for 'emotion'such as Tahitian. Although Tahitian lacks a linguistic element for 'emotion', it is still an implicit class in Tahitian thinking (Levy, *Tahitians*). Even if we put this issue aside and focus on emotion words, we find English emotion terms with no equivalent expression in other languages. For example, Gidjingali, an Australian Aboriginal language, does not have the English emotion words 'terror', 'horror', 'dread', 'apprehension', and 'timidity' to specify different types of fear. Instead, they employ the single word *gurakadj* to cover them all. This term also expresses the (Australian) Aboriginal English notion of 'shame' (which is closer to 'shy' than the Standard English notion of 'shame'), as there is no distinction between the concepts of 'fear' and 'shame' in Gidjingali (Hiatt). Many languages do not make the distinction between 'shame' and 'embarrassment', employing just one term to express both Standard English meanings; other languages simply do not have an adequate translation for the standard English concept of 'shame'. Further to lacking an equivalent, there are some English emotion words missing entirely from the lexicon of other languages, most frequently those used for psychiatric classification. There is no term for 'depression' among many non-western cultural groups, nor a word for 'anxiety' among the Eskimos and the Yorubas (Leff; Marsella). In many Asian and Pacific languages, there is an absence of an equivalent term to 'guilt' (Gerber). Contrarily, various words in other languages lack equivalent terms in English, including the German word *Schadenfreude* (taking pleasure in someone else's pain) to differentiate from other types of pleasure, the Japanese word *amae* (depending on another person's love) and the Ilongot word *liget* (a feeling of anger and pride) (Doi; M. Rosaldo, *Ilongot Notions*; Russell, 431). These examples of cross-linguistic differences highlight the challenges of translating emotions specific to a particular culture.

Translating culture-specific emotions
Little analysis has been carried out on the equivalents of emotion, yet it is embedded in various studies. Junko Tanaka-Matsumi and Anthony Marsella undertook their research on cross-cultural variations in the feeling of depression among Japanese and Americans, where they had the challenge of finding a Japanese word which most resembled the English concept of 'depression'. They initially consulted dictionaries, and carried out a translation and back translation, resulting in the word *yuutsu* (one possible translation for 'depression'). However, the free associations of this word given by Japanese speakers were rather different from those of 'depression' given by English speakers. A similar issue occurred in David Chan's research on Chinese translations for 'depression'. After finding the closest translation, *you-yu* (related to the Japanese translation *yuutsu*), he obtained free associations of this translatant from Chinese participants and concluded that the English word 'depression' and the Chinese word *you-yu* appeared to be quite different. There are, however, two flaws with this translation method. Firstly, it implies that for any given word there is one ideal or universally accepted translatant, and secondly, while back translation can find the most suitable translation, it will

not necessarily be formally equivalent (Russell, 433). Paul Ekman and his colleagues (1971) made a breakthrough in the study of emotion by suggesting that people from different cultures were able to experience the same emotions, and a more recent study by Yu Niiya, Phoebe Ellsworth and Susumu Yamaguchi (2006) supports this claim. They have researched the culturally unique Japanese term *amae*, which lacks a formal equivalent English term but can be associated with a desire to be cared for in any relationship. Their aim was to evaluate the cultural specificity of this term and to discover the degree to which English speakers can feel this emotion despite its lack of equivalent. To maximize cross-cultural equivalence of the emotion-eliciting stimuli and to substitute the absence in the lexicon, a series of images displaying scenarios that reflected the Japanese word *amae* were presented to the participants. The Americans responded in the same way as the Japanese, demonstrating that they can still feel *amae* despite the lack of lexical element to express it. Therefore, it is not necessary for a culture to have a label for an emotion to be able to feel or describe it. The emotion words of these studies were analysed in isolation, using the entire language as the framework. I propose that in translating emotion words within a selected framework of language, such as a novel, there are various equivalents available for a given emotion word. I suggest that the choice of translatant is determined by the context of the lexical term, as I explore below, using the most recent version[1] of Italian novel *La festa dei limoni* (Braico) as the context of my research.

Emotion words in *La festa dei limoni*

La festa dei limoni is based on the real life experiences of the author Marco Braico. Born in Turin in 1968, Braico currently lives in a nearby town, Volvera, where he is a maths and science teacher in a *liceo scientifico* (a type of secondary school in Italy dedicated to scientific studies). *La festa dei limoni* is the first of his four novels and was originally published in 2011 by Effatà Editrice. More than twelve thousand copies were sold that same year, and the text received various literary awards (Braico, "racchiude l'essenza"). Following this success, the novel was edited, chapters were added, and it was subsequently re-published in 2015 by Piemme in both paperback and e-book editions. The novel currently exists only in Italian, but my research on the most recent edition forms the foundation for an English translation I am working on in an upcoming project.

Understanding the novel's broader context provides the foundation for an accurate analysis of its linguistic features. The novel derived from Braico's experience of being diagnosed with a severe form of leukaemia in 2003 and undergoing treatment over a period of some months, which led to him making a full recovery. He then wanted to find a way to spread the joy of living and help people affected by illness; hence, he started collecting money in order to buy equipment to donate to hospitals in Italy. He still felt that there was more he could do, which is how the idea of publishing his personal journey evolved. The book does not stand in isolation: *La festa dei limoni* is at the heart of a project with an identical name. This project consists of an online community in which people can donate to the cause and follow what the money is being used for (Braico, "Onlus"). While it is not an autobiography but rather an autobiographical novel narrated from the perspective of his alter ego, he clearly states that the facts, events and people included in the story are not "*puramente casuali*" (Braico, *Festa dei Limoni* 218), meaning that they are not there by chance. The novel is not written for an audience in search of a text with high literary status or containing complex language. It is written from the heart and is intended to be read in the same manner, using language as a means to share what he learned from his experience, and to help those who are now affected by illness (217). Braico's unique writing style provides a fascinating case study for my research, as he writes

---

[1] The most recent version, published by Edizioni Piemme in 2015, is an edited version of the original text which was published by Effatà Editrice in 2011.

concisely and directly, conveying a range of emotions using a relatively simple vocabulary, yet at times he uses unlikely metaphors and very colloquial language. The author's voice is informal and reflective, as if he were writing a diary. The tone is generally witty and sarcastic, which contrasts with the heavy themes that are addressed.

Methodology
The first stage consisted of a source text analysis in which I identified all Italian emotion words in the text. I considered it necessary to draw from a list of emotion words in Italian, in order to avoid contradicting the intention of my study by basing the selection on translated English terms. The corpus of emotion words created by Vanda Lucia Zammuner (267-272) in her research on exploring the 'emotionness' and the dimensional ratings of Italian emotion words offered a valuable starting and reference point. She based her selection on other English and Italian empirical and theoretical studies, including the work of Beverley Fehr and James Russell, Andrew Ortony, Gerald Clore and Mark Foss, and P.N Johnson-Laird and Keith Oatley, along with research on the variety and structure of the Italian emotion lexicon by Dario Galati, and E. Gius et al. I believe Zammuner's list of 153 emotion words is the most valid and comprehensive corpus for Italian to date; therefore, it is applied in my study. Although Zammuner provides an English equivalent for each Italian emotion term, she notes the difficulty involved in finding a one-to-one correspondence between the words of two languages. Therefore, after identifying the occurrences of the 73 emotion words present in the novel, I examined whether the translatants proposed by Zammuner were suitable for each context in which the words appeared in *La festa dei limoni*. My judgement as a native English speaker was investigated and verified by a native Italian translator. I analysed all instances of each emotion term and divided them into words that can be adequately translated using Zammuner's proposed terms, and those that require another translatant in at least one of the instances. In this article, the context of the inadequately translated group of words is further investigated, and I demonstrate how to select the most accurate English word. In order to maintain a language-independent perspective in the description of the context, I employ the Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) created by prolific linguist Anna Wierzbicka and colleagues.

Below are two examples; the first case (*gioia*) is an example of Zammuner's suggestion being an adequate translatant in all contexts of Braico's novel, while the second case (*ansia*) is a term that requires more than one translant.

gioia (joy)
  i.   "[…] a cui non ho avuto il tempo di chiedere se le avevo fatto passare dieci minuti di **gioia**." (56)
  ii. "Andiamo a dormire con la **gioia** nel cuore e non mi sembra vero, visto il pomeriggio passato tra lacrime e bancari." (134)
  iii. "[…] noto sua sorella, che non si è mai mossa dal suo capezzale, piangere di **gioia** vedendolo mangiare." (143)
  iv. "[…] qualunque persona sana di mente avrebbe reagito con un saltino di **gioia** […]" (188)
  v.   "[…] sorridendo e mostrando i suoi occhi brillanti di **gioia**." (146)

Zammuner's proposed translatant 'joy' for the Italian word *gioia* is suitable for all contexts in the novel. 'Joy' can be employed to describe an emotional state across a specific time frame, as in (i) ('ten minutes of joy'; my translation), or to describe an action, whether it be crying, such as in (iii) ('crying with joy'), or jumping, as expressed in (iv) ('leap of joy'). It is adequate for contexts that make reference to a part of the body, the heart in (ii) ('joy in our hearts') and

eyes in (v) ('eyes shining with joy'). 'Joy' is appropriate for the emotion as expressed inwardly, as in (i) and (ii), yet also as expressed outwardly, such as in (iii), (iv) and (v).

ansia (anxiety)
  i.   "Mi guarda curioso ma **ansioso** di dire la sua." (15)
  ii.   "Sono un po' in **ansia** per la visita e proprio non riesco a starmene lì da solo con intorno questo spettacolo." (55)
  iii. "Questa è un'**ansia** tipicamente femminile, noi uomini teniamo meno all'acconciatura." (113)
  iv.   "Minchia che **ansia** che mi fai venire socio, stai rego, mo' pensi a Capodanno?" (171)

In the first instance (vi) ('eager to say his [piece]'; my translation), the English term 'eager' achieves dynamic equivalence, and is used in the positive sense of feeling excited or enthusiastic. By contrast, in (vii) ('I'm a little worried about the check-up'), *ansia* is used to express nervousness about an upcoming medical consultation. Due to the informality of the conversation, I propose that the English translatant 'worried' achieves dynamic equivalence. Given that the subject causing the emotion of *ansia* in (viii) ('typically a female concern') is a hairstyle, and the significance of *ansia* relates to the interest that women generally display towards their hairstyle, I suggest 'concern' as a more appropriate translatant. In the final example (ix) ('you're stressing me out'), the language is very informal and colloquial; *ansia,* in this context, is part of the collocation *che ansia*. 'Anxious' is not suitable here (two school boys smoking outside during class time) as it is of a more formal register and is not part of a collocation. I propose 'stress' as a more adequate translatant in this context.

The above examples illustrate that, while certain emotion words can be translated uniformly across the variety of contexts in which they appear in the novel (e.g. *gioia*), others require additional consideration (e.g. *ansia*). After further analysing the contexts of the inadequately translated group of words, it is clear that a guideline is needed to determine how to select the most accurate English word. This is where the NSM is valuable. It will be discussed in more detail below and the process of using the NSM to determine the most suitable translatant will be illustrated using a third emotion word from the novel – *rabbia* – as an example.

A tool for translating emotion words: natural semantic metalanguage
When carrying out cross-linguistic and cross-cultural research, the issue of language dependency and ethnocentrism arises. This refers to how the description of other languages and cultures is inevitably carried out within the limited parameters of one's own language (Wierzbicka, *Primes and Universals* 22). In cross-cultural research centred on English language concepts (such as the studies mentioned earlier analysing 'depression' amongst Japanese and Chinese speakers), researchers must be aware of how their own cultural and linguistic identity may influence the study. Anglocentrism can be avoided by viewing and explaining the differences in language and culture through a language-independent perspective, such as NSM.

> To compare meanings expressed in different languages and different cultures, one needs a semantic metalanguage independent, in essence, of any particular language or culture – and yet accessible and open to interpretation through any language.
> (Wierzbicka, *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics* 6)

NSM is based on the principle that all languages have an irreducible semantic core, a finite list of basic words which can be used to describe complex meanings (Goddard and Wierzbicka, "Semantic Fieldwork"). The semantic core has a language-like structure, including a lexicon of indefinable expressions, terms that cannot be described in a non-circular fashion, and are essential for explaining numerous other words. The semantic core also has a grammar, or set of principles determining how the lexical elements may be combined (Goddard, "NSM"). Through decades of research, Wierzbicka, along with Cliff Goddard, has developed a set of 65 semantic primes proposed to be the smallest set of lexical universals; these have been confirmed by NSM researchers for more than 30 languages of greatly diverse linguistic types and cultural settings (Goddard, "Semantic primes"). Semantic primes are the lexical and semantic foundation of language; they are indefinable concepts, essential for describing the meaning of other, more complex words. For instance, the words SOMEONE, THINK, NOW and GOOD are semantic primes in English as they cannot be directly explicated, indicating that their meanings are conceptually simple and they are necessary for the definition of other words. One of the fundamental aspects of these findings is that semantic primes can be expressed in all languages, and thus are directly cross-translatable (Farese, "Cross-linguistic Pragmatics" 3). In translation research, NSM allows an analysis of source items and potential translatants that is, theoretically, free of cultural bias or language dependency. Furthermore, it ensures a high level of accuracy is achieved in the target text. In the sphere of emotion research, Farese adopts NSM to conduct a cross-cultural semantic analysis of specific Japanese emotion terms *haji* and *hazukashii*, often translated into English as 'shame' and 'embarrassment' respectively ("Cultural Semantics"). For example, his explications of *haji* and the English equivalent, 'shame' (below), demonstrate crucial semantic differences between these terms.

Someone X feels *haji*

- someone X feels something bad,
  - because this someone X thinks like this:
    - "people can know something very bad about me
  - they can't not think something very bad about me because of this
  - some people can feel something bad like I feel because of this
    - this is bad"

("Cultural Semantics" 42)

X feels 'shame'

- X feels something bad because X thinks like this:
  - "people can know something bad about me
  - they can't not think something bad about me because of this
  - when I think about it, I can't not think the same"

("Cultural Semantics" 47)

Despite the fact that the widespread and interdisciplinary use of NSM in recent literature demonstrates its validity and broad applicability in cross-linguistic research, cross-cultural research and translation studies, it is not without criticism. The aim of the NSM approach is to maintain an objective perspective when analysing specific lexical elements, and semantic explications are based around the premise that the interpretation does not change for each individual. However, this assumption ignores the inevitable interpersonal variation that underlies the fact that speakers of a language do not necessarily have the same understanding of any given word; thus, subjectivity is still present (Riemer 357; Blumczyński 265-268).

Another common criticism is that the over-simplicity and vagueness of the semantic primes creates more effort for the reader, along with being counterproductive, and potentially misleading and ambiguous in the explications. Instead, familiar meanings should be employed (Riemer 357-367; Blumczyński 271-272). In translation studies, dichotomies are often discussed in terms of a continuum with "fuzzy boundaries" and overlaps (such as Venuti's foreignization vs domestication and Nida's formal vs dynamic equivalence). Translation theory and practice also provide substantial evidence for a graded model of meaning, understanding and communication, thus suggesting that the translatability of a word is explained in terms of "degree or more-or-less" (Blumczyński 264-265). NSM, on the other hand, postulates conceptual untranslatability between languages, yet categorizes words based on an "either-or" approach, and this binary distinction contradicts the claim of untranslatability (Blumczyński 264-265). Despite these criticisms, I believe NSM provides the most valid methodology for this research project on emotion words in a specific literary context. Explicating the nuances of English translatants for Italian emotion terms in *La festa dei limoni* using NSM ensures I maintain a non-ethnocentric and a language-independent perspective on the analysis while also pinpointing small but significant differences in meaning. In the following example, I create semantic explications to illustrate the subtle differences between the contexts of two possible translatants for *rabbia* (anger/upset), which is another word belonging to the 'inadequately' translated list.

Rabbia (anger)

The term *rabbia* is used in a variety of different contexts in the novel, including a written letter, a reflective thought, and a dialogue. Some instances are forms that are derived from the noun; these include the adjective *arrabbiata* and the verb *arrabbiarsi*. Nevertheless, a coherent method using NSM to determine the suitable translatant is possible. The first explication demonstrates that Zammuner's suggested equivalent 'anger' is suitable for a context such as the following:

a) *rabbia* is the same as 'anger' if:
- this is something bad
- someone can feel like this because of someone/something else
- someone can think like this at the time:
  - "I feel something bad
  - I don't want to feel like this
  - something bad happened
  - I don't want things like this to happen
  - I want to do something because of this"

> (x) "Grazie al cazzo" mi viene da risponderle "e adesso che me l'hai detto ti senti meglio, fighetta dal camice bianco?" La mia, in realtà, è solo **rabbia**, perché lei con me è molto carina. Sto cambiando in peggio, devo ritrovare il sorriso e l'umorismo, altrimenti non guarirò mai.
>
> (129)

> (xi) In quest'ultimo periodo mi sono un po' **arrabbiata** con lei, le spiegherò tutto quando tornerà, quindi si sbrighi, anche perché io non posso studiare la matematica senza di lei. Inoltre mi aveva promesso di portarmi alla facoltà di matematica, il tempo stringe e senza di lei sarebbe diverso. Maura.

In both instances, the term 'anger' or 'angry', depending on syntactic form, is an adequate translation. The first example is Gabriele's reflection regarding what he feels like saying to the nurse as she delivers bad news to him. Gabriele's negative emotions reflect his illness and the effect it is having on his attitude. He wants to take his feelings out on the nurse yet is aware that she is not what is causing this emotion, and he makes a conscious effort to lift his spirits.

Suggested translation for (x):

"Thanks a fucking lot" I feel like saying to her "and now that you've told me do you feel better, little princess in a white coat?" In reality, it's just my **anger** coming out, because actually she's really sweet to me. I've changed for the worse, I have to find my smile and sense of humour, otherwise I'll never recover.

The second example is from a letter written to Gabriele by one of his students, Maura. Gabriele's illness is affecting her, and she expresses this by stating how annoyed she is with him because she is not coping without him as a teacher.

Suggested translation for (xi):

I've been a bit **angry** with you lately, I'll explain when you come back, so hurry up, also because I can't study maths without you. Besides, you had promised to take me to see the maths faculty, the clock is ticking and without you it would be different. Maura.

b) *rabbia* is the same as 'upset' if:
- someone feels something bad because of someone else
- someone thinks of this someone else
- someone wants this someone else to feel good

(xii) Carmine ha un'altra complicazione: soffre di ragadi al sedere e non può dormire o stare sdraiato supino. Lo trovo sempre col sedere all'aria e un cuscino sotto la pancia, con braccia e gambe allargate come il quattro di bastoni e quello che più mi fa **arrabbiare** è che non mangia niente e fuma come un turco.

(142)

(xiii) Quello di sinistra è molto silenzioso, di nuova nomina, quello di destra è impegnato in una telefonata col Sudamerica, è presumibilmente peruviano e il tono di voce mi porta a pensare che sia incazzato. Infatti attacca e commenta. "Hijo de puta madre" che non mi sembra un complimento, poi si gira e mi saluta con garbo. Gli sorrido e ironizzo: "Non volevo farti **arrabbiare**, mi hanno detto loro che devo mettermi in questo letto…"
 "No, scusame, è il mio fratello che mi fa incazzare del Perù. Piacere, Conan."

(193)

Both of these occurrences of *rabbia* are most faithfully translated with the term 'upset', as they correspond with the explication given for this term. The first occurrence is from Gabriele's

thoughts about his fellow patient, Carmine. It is evident that Gabriele cares about Carmine's wellbeing; he is worried because Carmine does not eat and constantly smokes.

Suggested translation for (xii):

> Carmine has another problem: he suffers from fissures on his bottom and can't sleep or lie on his back. I always find him with his bottom in the air and a pillow under his stomach, with his arms and legs stretched out like the four of clubs [in an Italian card set] and what **upsets** me the most is that he doesn't eat anything and he smokes like a chimney.

The second instance is from a dialogue between Gabriele and another patient, Conan. Gabriele has just been assigned into the same room as Conan and hears him speaking on the phone in an irritated tone. Gabriele makes a joke by pretending to think that Conan was talking to him in an annoyed voice, despite being fully aware that he was talking on the phone; therefore, *rabbia* is being used ironically.

Suggested translation for (xiii):

> The one on the left is very quiet, he's newly arrived, the one on the right is busy on the phone with South America, he's presumably Peruvian and his tone of voice makes me think that he's pissed off. Indeed, he hangs up and comments "*Hijo de puta madre*" which doesn't seem like a compliment to me, then he turns around and politely says hi to me. I smile and ironically say: "I didn't mean to **upset** you, they told me that I have to take this bed…" "No, sorry, it's my brother from Peru that's pissing me off. I'm Conan, nice to meet you."

These examples demonstrate how the context of a particular Italian emotion word in *La festa dei limoni* can determine the choice of translatant. The context refers to multiple aspects, namely the textual context, the linguistic context, as well as the sociolinguistic identity of the character using the term.

The methodology of creating semantic explications for each translatant is applicable for all emotion words in the text, but it is not possible to list them all here for reasons of space. NSM is an invaluable approach for my research as it successfully pinpoints the cross-linguistic semantic differences between lexical expressions of emotion. It is the translator's task to identify the subtle differences between both the source and the target language, and while Italian and English are typologically related, there are substantial distinctions between them, resulting in many words not being cross-translatable. As demonstrated, emotion terms can be a problematic group of words for translators, and I have shown how NSM is a valuable linguistic resource that creates a plausible portrait of the cognitive scenario associated with certain feelings. While the meanings of emotion words are often related to culture-specific assumptions and conceptualizations, meaning that exact equivalence is unlikely to occur, by adopting a language-independent model such as NSM, and striving for a non-ethnocentric perspective, we can focus on finding the closest equivalent in any language. In the above analysis I have highlighted such slight nuances between emotion words in Italian and English, and have suggested how to maintain these variations and thus achieve closer equivalence.

Conclusion
Variation across languages and cultures means that accuracy is inevitably brought to the foreground in translational activity. Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural differences are

particularly evident within expressions of emotion, creating a challenging task for translators who are required to find the closest possible equivalent term in the target language. The context in which emotion words are used plays a crucial role in determining the most accurate translatant. The analysis undertaken in this article will provide a foundation for *La festa dei limoni* to be translated into English, a task I am currently undertaking. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this study, both the methodology and the results could be applied to a range of future projects within the three areas it encompasses: translation, linguistics and emotion. From the perspective of translation studies, my approach of using NSM to illuminate translatant choice could be further explored using other lexical domains, such as humour or metaphors. While the case study presented here is a specific Italian novel, the findings may be useful for investigations of other literary texts or language pairs. Future research in this direction could widen the context and draw upon Italian and English corpora, as well as other texts, to provide a broader scope and to test the feasibility of this approach on a larger scale.

Bibliography
Blumczyński, Piotr. "Turning the Tide: A Critique of Natural Semantic Metalanguage from a Translation Studies Perspective." *Translation Studies* 6.3 (2013): 261-76.

Marco Braico. *La Festa Dei Limoni*. Milano: Edizioni Piemme, 2015. First published 2011 by Effatà Editrice.

—-. "'La festa dei limoni' di Marco Braico racchiude l'essenza della vita." Ed. Moscaritolo, Enza A. Sul Romanzo Agenzia Letteraria 2015.

—-. "La festa dei limoni- Onlus." http://www.lafestadeilimoni.it

Chan, David W. "The Meaning of Depression: Chinese Word Associations." *Psychologia* 33 (1990): 191-96.

Doi, Takeo. *The Anatomy of Dependence*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1973.

Ekman, Paul, and Wallace V. Friesen. "Constants across Cultures in the Face and Emotion." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 17.2 (1971): 124-29.

Epstein, Arnold L. *The Experience of Shame in Melanesia: An Essay in the Anthropology of Affect*. London: Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1984.

Farese, Gian Marco. "Hi vs. Ciao: NSM as a Tool for Cross-linguistic Pragmatics." *Journal of Pragmatics* 85 (2015): 1-17.

—-. "The Cultural Semantics of the Japanese Emotion Terms 'Haji' and 'Hazukashii'." *New Voices in Japanese Studies* 8 (2016): 32-54.

Fehr, Beverley, and James A. Russell. "Concept of Emotion Viewed from a Prototype Perspective." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General* 113.3 (1984): 464-86.

Galati, Dario, Barbara Sini, Carla Tinti, and Silvia Testa. "The Lexicon of Emotion in the Neo-Latin Languages." *Social Science Information* 47.2 (2008): 205.

Geertz, Clifford. *Person, Time and Conduct in Bali: An Essay in Cultural Analysis*. New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1966.

Geertz, Hildred. "The Vocabulary of Emotion: A Study of Javanese Socialization Processes." *Psychiatry* 22.3 (1959): 225-37.

Gerber, Eleanor. "The Cultural Patterning of Emotions in Samoa." ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 1975.

Gius, E., A. Cozzi, and D Spagnotto. "Il linguaggio delle emozioni. Studio sull'organizzazione delle parole che comunicano stati emotivi." *Giornale italiano di psicologia* 19 (1992): 563–84.

Goddard, Cliff. "Explicating Emotions Across Languages and Cultures: A Semantic Approach." *The Verbal Communication of Emotions: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Ed. Susan R Fussell. New York: Routledge, 2014. 19-54.

—-. "Semantic primes." *Griffith University*, www.griffith.edu.au/humanities-languages/school-humanities-languages-social-science/research/natural-semantic-metalanguage-homepage/what-is-nsm/semantic-primes (accessed 2 May 2017)

—-. "What is NSM?" *Griffith University*. https://www.griffith.edu.au/humanities-languages/school-humanities-languages-social-science/research/natural-semantic-metalanguage-homepage/what-is-nsm(accessed 26 April 2017)

Goddard, Cliff, and Anna Wierzbicka. "Key Words, Culture and Cognition." *Philosophica* 55.1 (1995): 37-67.

—-. "Semantic Fieldwork and Lexical Universals." *Studies in Language* 38.1 (2014): 80-127.

—-. *Semantic Primes and Universal Grammar*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2002.

—-. *Words and Meanings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Hiatt, L. R. "Classification of the Emotions." *Australian Aboriginal Concepts*. Ed. L. R. Hiatt. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1978. 182-87.

Johnson-Laird, P. N., and Keith Oatley. "The Language of Emotions: An Analysis of a Semantic Field." *Cognition & Emotion* 3.2 (1989): 81-123.

Keeler, Ward. "Shame and Stage Fright in Java." *Ethos* 11.3 (1983): 152-65.

Langness, L. L. "Hysterical Psychosis in the New Guinea Highlands: A Bena Bena Example." *Psychiatry* 28 (1965): 258.

Lebra, Takie Sugiyama. "Shame and Guilt: A Psychocultural View of the Japanese Self." *Ethos* 11.3 (1983): 192-209.

Leff, J. P. "Culture and the Differentiation of Emotional States." *The British Journal of Psychiatry: the Journal of Mental Science* 123.574 (1973): 299.

Levy, Robert I. "Introduction: Self and Emotion." *Ethos* 11.3 (1983): 128-34.

—-. *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Lutz, Catherine. *Emotion Words and Emotional Development on Ifaluk Atoll*. 1980. Harvard University, PhD dissertation.

Marsella, Anthony J. "Depressive Experience and Disorder across Cultures." *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Ed. Harry C. Triandis. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1981. 237-89.

Morice, Rodney. "Psychiatric Diagnosis in a Transcultural Perspective: The Importance of Lexical Categories." *British Journal of Psychiatry* 132 (1978): 87-95.

Nida, Eugene Albert. *Toward a science of translating: with a special reference to principles and procedures involved in Bible translating*. Leiden: Brill, 1964.

Niiya, Yu, et al. "Amae in Japan and the United States: An Exploration of a 'Culturally Unique' Emotion." *Emotion* 6.2 (2006): 279-95.

Obeyesekere, Gananath. *Medusa's Hair: An Essay on Personal Symbols and Religious Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Ortony, Andrew, et al. "The Referential Structure of the Affective Lexicon." *Cognitive Science* 11 (1987): 341-64.

Pavlenko, Aneta. *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression, and Representation*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2006.

—-. *Emotions and Multilingualism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Riemer, Nick. "Reductive Paraphrase and Meaning: A Critique of Wierzbickian Semantics." *Linguistics and Philosophy* 29.3 (2006): 347-79.

Riesman, Paul. *Freedom in Fulani Social Life: An Introspective Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

Rosaldo, Michelle Z. *Knowledge and Passion: Ilongot Notions of Self and Social Life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980.

—-. "The Shame of Headhunters and the Autonomy of Self." *Ethos* 11.3 (1983): 135-51.

Rosaldo, Renato I. "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage: On the Cultural Force of Emotions." *Text, Play, and Story: The Construction and Reconstruction of Self and Society*. Eds. E. M. Bruner and S. Plattner. Washington, DC: American Ethnological Society, 1984. 178-95.

Russell, James A. "Culture and the Categorization of Emotions." *Psychological Bulletin* 110.3 (1991): 426-50.

Scherer, Klaus. R. "What Are Emotions? And How Can They Be Measured?" *Social Science Information* 44.4 (2005): 695-729.

Tanaka-Matsumi, Junko, and Anthony J. Marsella. "Cross-Cultural Variations in the Phenomenological Experience of Depression: I. Word Association Studies." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 7.4 (1976): 379-96.

Wierzbicka, Anna. *Cross-Cultural Pragmatics: The Semantics of Human Interaction*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991.

—-. "Emotional Universals." *Language Design: Journal of Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics* 2 (1999): 23-69.

—-. *English: Meaning and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

—-. *Semantics: Primes and Universals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

—-. *Semantic Primitives*. Frankfurt: Athenäum Verlag, 1972.

Zammuner, Vanda Lucia. "Concepts of Emotion: 'Emotionness', and Dimensional Ratings of Italian Emotion Words." *Cognition & Emotion* 12.2 (1998): 243-72.