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# *Cultus*

THE JOURNAL OF INTERCULTURAL  
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TOURISM ACROSS CULTURES  
Accessibility in Tourist Communication  
2016, Issue 9, Volume 1

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# CULTUS

*the Journal of Intercultural Mediation and Communication*

## TOURISM ACROSS CULTURES Accessibility in Tourist Communication

2016, Issue 9, Volume 1

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## Foreword

It is our great pleasure to present the first volume of Cultus 9, an issue entirely dedicated to the language of tourism in a cross-cultural perspective. A high number of articles have been submitted for this issue by international academics and researchers. For this reason, eight articles are being published in volume 1, edited by Elena Manca and Cinzia Spinzi, the remaining ones will follow in volume 2, edited by David Katan and Cinzia Spinzi.

We would like to thank all the authors for contributing to this field of study, and to this issue, with their high-quality, innovative and interesting work and for their dedication and patience.

In addition, we would like to thank those members of the Scientific Committee who have contributed to the making of this volume and whose work has increased the quality of the articles even more.

We are sure that this issue will be very useful for future research in Tourism Discourse studies.

*Elena Manca and Cinzia Spinzi*

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## ***Promoting Venice through digital travel guidebooks: a case study of texts written in English and in Italian***

*Daniela Cesiri*

### *Abstract*

*The city of Venice is currently advertised using the Internet as its main ‘market’ place, the promotional message being conveyed in Italian and in English used as a lingua franca, addressing not only prospective tourists from English-speaking countries as also tourists who use English to communicate outside their country.*

*Considering the role of Italian and English in the promotion of Venice, the present study contrastively analyses digital travel guidebooks, all available online, written in the two languages. The contribution examines, in particular, instances of the ‘linguaging’ technique used to describe the most interesting aspects of the local Venetian culture.*

*According to Dann (1996: p. 184) ‘linguaging’ in tourist texts is “the impressive use of foreign words, but also a manipulation of the vernacular, a special choice of vocabulary, and not just for its own sake”. In this respect, Venice is full of cultural and dialectal characteristics that rarely have a corresponding term in Standard Italian or in a foreign language. The work investigates the strategies used to promote the local Venetian culture to non-Venetians as well as to non-Italians, thus considering whether the linguistic techniques employed vary according to the different levels of presumed previous knowledge that the authors attribute to the visitors according to their nationality.*

### **1. Introduction**

The *Annual Survey* conducted by the City of Venice Tourist Board (Miraglia 2015) calculated that – in 2014 – 9,983,416 tourists visited Venice, of which 1,501,481 were Italians and 8,481,935 were foreigners (*ibidem*: p. 12). Considering that the population of residents is of 56,355 units<sup>1</sup>, these numbers give a fairly accurate idea of the impact that mass tourism has on local life and culture. For this reason, it is of primary importance to promote the city, highlighting the fact that it is a complex

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<sup>1</sup> In the language of population census, the term unit is commonly used to indicate the “the resident person” ([www.ine.esen](http://www.ine.esen)).

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tourist destination, not only an ‘outdoor museum’ but also a living city with real inhabitants, a workplace and a city with a remarkable historical and cultural heritage that must be saved from the commercial exploitation that mass tourism destinations generally experience.

In its *Making Tourism More Sustainable – A Guide for Policy Makers*, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as a “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”. In the case of Venice, the problem of sustainability involves the environmental impact of a massive number of tourists on the city’s infrastructures as well as their behavior during their stay, for example their use of public spaces and facilities, damage to monuments, impediments to the everyday activities of the population, and a general lack of direct interaction – and reciprocal knowledge – between tourists and the local community.

The connection between sustainable tourism and language might not be directly identifiable. However, the importance of mutual understanding between tourists and the host community is one of the goals that the UNWTO indicates for achieving a real sustainable tourism. Mutual understanding is obviously accomplished also through language and the use of linguistic strategies that help reduce the distance between ‘hosts’ and ‘guests’. In this respect, one strategy is certainly the use of English – today’s global *lingua franca par excellence* – to promote the city. In addition, those terms for which a translation in English is too complex, Italian or Venetian are often used. The technique of using foreign words in a tourism text is called ‘linguaging’ (see section 4). The use of this technique becomes, then, fundamental in explaining the local culture to foreign tourists and, if ‘linguaging’ fails, then one of the goals in achieving sustainable tourism fails, too. This paper aims to draw attention to the importance of the correct use of ‘linguaging’ to succeed in the mutual understanding between host community and tourists who might belong to very different cultures.

Miraglia (2015: p. 31) provides a list of nationalities visiting Venice: the first twelve in 2014 were the USA, France, the UK, Germany, Japan, China, Australia, Spain, Brazil, South Korea, Canada, and Russia. As mentioned earlier, English plays a fundamental role as a *lingua franca* through which promotion is expressed not only to tourists with English as a native language but also to tourists who are speakers of other languages and use English to communicate when they are outside their own country.

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Considering the importance of English and Italian as promotional languages, as well as the role of the Internet as the main market place to present the city to prospective tourists, the present study contrasts digital travel guidebooks (henceforth, DTGs), available online, written in English and in Italian. The contribution examines, in particular, instances of the ‘*linguaging*’ technique (i.e., the use of foreign words to engage the reader’s attention) used to describe the most noteworthy aspects of the local Venetian culture.

Venice is full of local cultural and dialectal characteristics that rarely have a translation in Standard Italian or in any other language. The work investigates the strategies used to promote the local culture to non-Venetians as well as to non-Italians, thus considering whether the linguistic techniques employed vary according to the different levels of presumed previous knowledge that the authors attribute to the visitors according to their nationality.

As already stated, correctly conveying the local Venetian culture and describing what characterizes the everyday life of its inhabitants is essential in promoting mutual understanding and, as a consequence, the tourist’s ‘*sustainable behaviour*’ towards the host community. ‘*Sustainable behaviour*’ means that a quality, low-impact tourist informs him/herself on the local culture, on the citizens’ everyday life and socio-cultural rituals and, once at the destination, they will not see the locals as actors in a show but as real members of a community who is hosting them. This is the opposite of the ‘*unsustainable*’ behaviour in disruptive mass tourism that sees the city as some sort of product to be quickly consumed, visited, without any contact with the local culture except to buy mass-produced souvenirs and book hotels and restaurants.

## **2. Corpus and methodology**

A qualitative investigation of culture-specific lexical items in five DTGs written in English and in five DTGs written in Italian will be conducted with particular focus on their use of the ‘*linguaging*’ technique and, thus, on the differences or similarities in transmitting information on the host culture to Italian, non-Venetian tourists as well as to foreigners. The analysis will also enquire whether there are different levels of presumed previous knowledge that the authors attribute to the visitors according to their nationality.

The DTGs analysed were as follows, with numbers from 1 to 5 listing the texts in Italian and numbers from 6 to 10 the texts in English:

1. *Venezia* (by PaesiOnline),
2. *Guida di Venezia* (by WeeAGoo),
3. *Guida di Venezia* (by Venezia.net),
4. *Venezia City Book* (byTravelItalia.it),
5. *Venezia* (by ArrivalGuides).
6. *TripAdvisor's Venice Guide*,
7. *The Rough Guide to Venice and The Veneto*,
8. *The Venice City Guide* (by Travelplan.it),
9. *Venice Guide* (by Venezia.net),
10. *Introducing Venice* (by Alison Bing for Lonely Planet).

Some of the DTGs in English, such as texts number 8 and 9, were written by Italian authors and are available on the same website as the corresponding text in Italian (such as text number 3). After comparing the English and the Italian versions, the English one does not appear to be a translation of the Italian version, or vice versa, because they contain different information, tailored to meet the demands of a foreign and of an Italian tourist, respectively.

It should also be specified that the DTGs are contained in websites, and they are actually related to them, indeed reference is made to the possibility of visiting the hyperlink leading to the corresponding website or to downloading the app. The DTGs are, however, not to be considered a summary of either since an analysis of the apps, the pdfs and the DTGs ascertained that they illustrate different content. For instance, while the website also contains links to hotels, companies for local transportation, airports, and so on, the app focuses more on the users' reviews of the destination. Also, unlike the apps, the DTG provides practical information in specific sections and the rest of the DTG text is used to describe itineraries, providing historical and artistic information on individual sites as well as on the city in general.

### **3. DGTs in Tourism Promotion**

The use of guidebooks during a travel experience can be considered as old as the tourism phenomenon itself, which is commonly believed to have

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started “as far back as the Babylonian and Egyptian Empires” (Maci, 2013: p. 225). When travelling for leisure or business, many visitors consult what they consider authoritative and reliable supports that describe how to enjoy the experience in the best possible way, avoiding unpleasant surprises such as booking the wrong or an unsuitable accommodation, finding the right way to reach a site, opening/closing times, tickets availability, and so forth.

New technologies have facilitated access to this kind of information, and have challenged the role of the traditional, printed travel guidebook. So guidebooks have been ‘forced’ to adapt. Indeed, websites are now available for all, performing the same function as traditional guidebooks with the advantage of real-time, continuous update of information. Applications for tablets and smartphones can be used to learn about specific details about the destination as well as to search for other tourists’ opinions and reviews, also in this case often in real time. Some websites offer a free download, in PDF format, of DTGs that tourists can consult at the destination even if they do not have access to the Internet.

The possibilities offered to tourist operators by these texts and to the tourists themselves are various: the tourist, for example, can consult them before the travel experience, and choose which operator offers the best service. The DTGs follow the tourist during the stay, giving access to online information in the main website.

The research question developed in this study revolves around the way in which DTGs transmit elements from, and information on, the local culture of the destination, helping tourists approach the host community in a sustainable way.

#### **4. Linguaging**

Dann (1996: p. 184) defines linguaging as “the impressive use of foreign words, but also a manipulation of the vernacular, a special choice of vocabulary, and not just for its own sake”. This technique is exploited particularly when the reader is believed to have little knowledge of the concepts, thus transforming the writer into a trustful authority because s/he appears to be an expert on the host culture. This is a technique that Jaworski *et al.* (2003: p. 17) also call “language crossing ... creating a linguascape of the travel destination”. This anticipates what tourists will find and experience upon their arrival.

The technique of languaging is used particularly for terms belonging to the eno-gastronomic field, or to represent very specific elements (natural, architectural or cultural) of the host community, referring especially to some lesser known aspects. For instance, in the official tourism website of the City of Venice (*Venezia Unica*), the dedicated section describes some specific aspects of the ‘Venetian lifestyle’ as in the following quotation, in which the bold and italic types are as in the original:

The **bacaro** or small bar where you go to drink an *ombra* - i.e. a **glass of wine** and eat *cicchetti* - snacks, small servings of seafood, cold meats, and vegetables – has become a social gathering spot and a hangout for meeting friends. You can still do your **grocery shopping in little shops** (i.e. “*botteghe*”) like once upon a time...<sup>2</sup>

Instances of languaging can also be specific lexical devices, such as alliteration and onomatopoeia (e.g. in “Dodging the Doges’ Palace” Epstein 1994, in Dann, 1996: p. 185), which can enhance the use of humour to make the promotional message more effective. An alternative strategy is the use of expressions supposedly familiar to the tourist but employed in unusual contexts, making the message more exotic and, therefore, more inviting. An example is a multi-author travel blog<sup>3</sup> in which users can create guides to their favourite places based on their own experiences. One of the authors, Chris, has created a ‘drinking experience’ section called “an ombre in Venice. The best places to get a glass (ombre) of wine and some snacks (cichetti) in Venice, often from early in the morning”. The author plays with the word ‘*ombre*’ (in Italian, literally, ‘shadows’) which, in Venetian, means ‘glasses of wine’, and the Spanish word for ‘man’ (*hombre*) which has a similar sound, summarising the content of the guide, namely his ‘manly’ experience with drinking traditions in Venice.

Words in the local dialect are at times embedded in the promotional text, following specific typographical patterns which are typical of the ‘languaging’ technique: foreign words are inserted in their original form and a definition, a paraphrase or a literal translation in English is provided in brackets immediately before or after the term itself. Other devices to mark the specific term are the use of typographical symbols such as single

<sup>2</sup> Available at <http://www.veneziaunica.it/en/content/venetian-lifestyle>. Last visited: 01.11.2016.

<sup>3</sup> Available at <https://jaunful.com/antimega/ljgks7z7T>. Last visited: 01.11.2016.



or double quotation marks (e.g., ‘...’ and “...”), angled quotation marks (e.g., «...»), bold type or italics. One example is the quotation provided above from the *Venezia Unica* website.

This technique has become particularly productive in the language of tourism promotion because it reduces the sense of strangeness, which Dann (1996) calls “strangerhood”, that a foreign tourist might feel towards the host culture. In fact, the concept of ‘strangerhood’ conveys the sense of distance that a destination might have from the tourists’ usual area of familiarity (“centre” in Dann’s 1996 terms). The use of languaging is also a way of reducing this distance, at the same time establishing the authors of tourism texts as the ‘experts’ who help the ‘non-expert’ tourist fill the cultural gap, “render[ing] the exotic more familiar” (Jaworski *et al.*, 2003: p. 16). In fact, “performing phrasebook dialogues, offering translations, providing local terminology, and so on, not only make host languages accessible but also help ... familiarise with the destination as a whole” (*ibidem*: p. 20).

#### **4.1. Languaging in the promotion of Italian destinations**

As regards the investigation of languaging to promote, or represent, Italian destinations, the interest in this topic is relatively recent. For instance, Cappelli (2013) studied the use of languaging in guidebooks, expatriate travel blogs and travel articles/travelogues. The qualitative analysis shows that the use of words in the language of the host community has the main function of reducing the linguistic and cultural distance between tourists and the destination. Cappelli (2013), in turn, mentions some background studies, namely: Cortese & Hymes (2001), in which languaging is presented in its function of “positioning” (Cappelli, 2013: p. 353) the individual within a specific social culture; it is also represented as “language rooted in memory” (Cortese & Hymes, 2001: p. 199) linking the individual to the local culture. In this case, the tourist might not have some previous knowledge of the language and the local culture, so languaging can be used to create, before the visit, specific feelings in the prospective visitor’s mind; once at the destination s/he will recall those feelings, thus re-creating the emotions that the text had previously evoked. Incidentally, in their analysis of guidebooks, Fodde & Denti (2005) come to the conclusion that languaging serves to anticipate what tourists will experience upon their arrival.

In the present contribution, the term *linguaging* refers to the technique of using Italian and Venetian words in the English texts, and terms or expressions in the local Venetian dialect in Italian texts, along with the corresponding translation or paraphrase that the authors of the texts might provide.

## 5. Data and results

A preliminary analysis of the DTGs ascertained that there are several functions of the *linguaging* technique in the texts: it is used to help tourists become accustomed to the ‘terminology’ they will find once at the destination; it is also used to underline the strong local identity still felt in Venice – despite some dialect levelling, depopulation, immigration and its role as a mass tourism destination. Finally, the DTGs use *linguaging* for specific ‘items’, i.e., toponyms, streets, landmarks, popular traditions (especially eno-gastronomic), as well as to highlight local curiosities.

Furthermore, it can be noticed that there is no common, homogeneous way to indicate, graphically, items in the local language even from the same category or in the same text and this makes the texts look rather unprofessional, written without a specific editorial line. For example, in *The Venice City Guide* (TravelPlan), topographical elements of the city in Italian and in Venetian are indicated in three different ways in the same paragraph: first, using no typographical differentiation, then using italics, and finally using inverted commas, as the following extract shows (bold type is as used in the original):

**The names of the calli, campi and campielli (lanes, squares and little squares in Venice).** The Venetian *Calli* have unusual names that are usually either taken from the city’s history or from an event that took place right on the very spot, or from the jobs of the people who lived in that lane or square. The names of the streets are written on small white squares that are placed on the outside of the buildings and that are called “**nizioleti**” (tissues).

The following sections will report other examples of the terms and expressions found in the DTGs.

## 5.1. DTGs in English

The examples reported in Table 1 illustrate the main techniques used to report and explain the terms in Venetian for each DTG. No emphases were added and the use of italics or bold type reflects the usage found in the actual guidebooks. The terms or any other element in brackets are as in the originals; explanations on the use of the term in the DTGs or its meaning in the local dialect as well as its cultural significance that help better understand the nature of the term itself are added in footnotes.

DTGs (ENG)	'Toponyms', street names, etc.	Landmarks	Eno- gastronomic Traditions	Local Curiosities
<i>TripAdvisor Venice Guide</i>	Fundamente, Fondamenta, Fondamente <sup>4</sup>	St Mark's Square, Piazza San Marco <sup>5</sup>	enjoy a half- glass, or <i>ombra</i> (shadow), of wine and antipasti	-----
<i>The Rough Guide to Venice and The Veneto</i>	A canal is a <b>rio</b> , and an alleyway that cuts through a building is a <b>sottoportico</b> or <b>sottoportego</b> , to give its dialect version	Piazza San Marco, Arsenale, Palazzo Ducale	A distinctive aspect of the Venetian social scene is the <i>bácaro</i> which in its purest form is a bar that offers a range of snacks called <i>cicheti</i> (sometimes spelled <i>ciccheti</i> ); the array will typically include <i>polpette</i> (small beef and garlic meatballs),	Floods, <b>acque</b> <b>alte</b> ... the <i>acqua alta</i> begins... - walkways of duckboards ( <i>passerelle</i> )

<sup>4</sup> These three names are used alternatively in those parts of the TripAdvisor Guide that do not report the tourists' reviews but are presumably written by the author of the DTG.

<sup>5</sup> Generally, the use of untranslated place names is accepted whenever there is no established translation for that term. However, in the present case, the untranslated place names were considered instances of languaging because – from the context in which they appear in the DTGs – some of the authors seem to treat them as such, not as real place names. This is especially so in those cases in which an 'official', established translation does exist (such as St Mark's Square).

			<i>carciofini</i> (artichoke hearts), ... <i>polipi</i> (baby octopus or squid)...	
<i>The Venice City Guide</i> (travelplan.it)	<b>The names of the calli, campi and campielli (lanes, squares and little squares in Venice). The Venetian <i>Calli</i>...</b>	Piazza San Marco, The Ponte della Libertà bridge, Church of the Pietà, San Marco Tower Bell	We can begin our journey to discover Venetian food with cicchetti (hors d'oeuvres) that can be found in all the <b>bacari</b> (pubs) counters, The Venice Carnival has also invented some official sweetmeats: «fritole» (fried sweets) and «galani».	The rising water, «nizioletti» (tissues), The «mascherer i» were founded to meet...

Table 1. DTGs in English.

As already mentioned, the authors of these DTGs do not follow any particular pre-established strategy when reporting terms in Italian or in the local dialect, alternating the use of italics, bold type and quotation marks. The meaning or the referent of the term is paraphrased either in brackets after the term or in the main text between commas.

In Table 2, the results for the last two DTGs in English are shown.

DTGs (ENG)	'Toponyms', street names, etc.	Landmarks	Eno-gastronomic Traditions	Local Curiosities
<i>Venice Guide</i> (Venezia.net)	Small squares (campielli), numerous canals («rio»)	Doge's Palace (Palazzo Ducale), Piazza San Marco (St Mark's Square)	here you can eat a wide selection of typical hors d'oeuvre than can substitute a meal – called CICHETI	«Volo dell'Angelo» (Angel flight), Volo della Colombina (flight of the little dove)
<i>Introducing Venice</i> (Alison Bing for Lonely Planet)	<i>Calli</i> (alleyways), <i>sestieri</i> (neighbourhoods)	Punta della Dogana, Giardini Pubblici, Ponte dei Scalzi, Crossing the Rialto	<i>Spritz</i> (prosecco-based drink), <i>cicheti</i> (traditional bar snack), <i>un ombra</i> [sic] (half-glass), <i>crostini</i> (sandwich)	<i>Barene</i> (mud banks), <i>acqua alta</i> (high tide), The Venetian <i>bea vita</i> (beautiful life), <i>befane</i> (witches), <i>sagra</i> (feast)

Table 2. DTGs in English.

In Table 2, in the *Venice Guide* text, foreign words are never highlighted though they are either preceded or followed by a translation in English. In the case of the *Lonely Planet* DTG, the writer uses italics followed by a translation in round brackets. However, in this case, she often adapts the meaning to fit into an English word, actually eliminating some important characteristics and socio-cultural connotations of the traditions indicated by the terms, especially as regards the category of eno-gastronomic traditions. For example, '*cicheti*' is glossed as 'bar snacks'. This gives the incorrect idea that they are be found only in bars or pubs, whereas they are actually also served in any restaurant of the city.

Some inaccuracies are also present, such as the use of "*un ombra*" instead of the grammatically correct "*un'ombra*", or the translation of "*befane*" with the reductive 'witches', whereas it indicates a traditional figure of the good-natured witch, or a very old woman dressed in rags, who brings presents and sweets to children every 6th January.

## 5.2. DTGs in Italian

Table 3 reports examples of the languaging technique used in the Italian DTGs. The strategies used are not substantially different from those in the DTGs in English. The use of italics is less frequent probably because the guidebooks are written in Italian and the local terms are just treated as regionalisms, not as terms in another language, as in the case of the DTGs in English. Back translations are in square brackets.

DTG (ITA)	'Toponyms', street names, etc.	Landmarks	Eno-gastronomic Traditions	Local Curiosities
<i>Venezia</i> (PaesiOnline)	quartieri storici ( <b>sestieri</b> ) [historical neighbourhoods], calli (vie) [alleys]	Ca' vs Cà	I Cicchetti rappresentano l'aperitivo veneziano [Cicchetti are the Venetian aperitif], Per gustare, infine, gli ottimi cicchetti veneziani, cioè gli stuzzichini che anticipano il pranzo e che sono tipici della zona, una tappa obbligata sono i bàcari, l'equivalente veneziano del pub [Finally to taste the exquisite Venetian cicchetti, the appetizers that anticipate lunch, typical of the area, are the must-visit bàcari, the Venetian equivalent to the pub]	vennero governati da un duce o duca, detto "doge" in dialetto veneto [they were governed by a leader or duke, called "doge" in the Veneto dialect]

Table 3. DTGs in Italian.

Table 3 also shows that, for the DTG *Venezia*, specific terms do not stand out from the rest of the text. Explanation of the terms is provided through a paraphrase rather than through the use of single words. Some terms are not even explained, as in the case of ‘ca’ (clipped form of the word ‘casa’/house, indiscriminately alternated in the text to the incorrect spelling ‘cà’), or in the case of ‘nizioleti’ (signs for alleys and squares) or ‘sottoporteghi’ (pedestrian passageways through buildings), which are both left without a paraphrase or a translation in Standard Italian. This lack of full explanations for local terms might be interpreted as a levelling to a general Italian culture, as if the author presumes that the Italian-speaking visitors would not mind missing the explanation or that they already know the meaning of that dialectal word.

Another example in the DTG *Venezia* is the use of ‘calli’ explained only in the middle of the guide after it had already been used several times. This guide also omits the local names of food and does not mention the ‘high water’ phenomenon, which might be a problematic issue as the visitors will not know how to handle the situation if it arises. Apart from *Venezia* (PaesiOnline), mention of ‘high water’ is also missing in *Venezia* City Book (TravellItalia.it) and in *Venezia* (ArrivalGuides). This important information is, however, present in all the DTGs in English, although it is not always thoroughly explained.

Table 4 illustrates how the DTGs in Italian show an even greater variation than the DTGs in English when they describe Venice and report local terms.

DTG (ITA)	'Toponyms', street names, etc.	Landmarks	Eno-gastronomic Traditions	Local Curiosities
<i>Guida di Venezia</i> (WeeAGoo)	oltre un ponte o una calle (tipica strada veneziana) [over a bridge or a calle (typical Venetian alley)]	Ca'	Le ricette più rinomate della cucina veneziana (il baccalà mantecato, pasta e fagioli, risi e bisi, le patate alla veneziana) [The most renowned recipes of the Venetian cuisine (the creamed codfish, pasta with beans, rice with peas, Venetian-style potatoes), <b>Bacari</b> , le tipiche taverne che devono il nome ad un vino pugliese popolare in città alla fine del diciottesimo secolo [Bacari, the local taverns owing their name to a Puglia wine popular in the city at the end of the eighteenth century]	I Dogi (capi del governo) di Venezia [The Dogi (leaders of the government) of Venice], Glossary with local terms (gondola, briciole [ <i>sic</i> ] e paline [*bricole and decorated poles], calle, cicheti, ombra [shadow], altane [turrets], baccalà [codfish], fundamenta [base of buildings], lancia [motor boat])



<p><i>Guida di Venezia</i> (Venezia.net)<sup>6</sup></p>	<p>-----</p>	<p><i>i Veneziani erano soliti raccogliersi in confraternite chiamate Scuole</i>, parola che deriva dal greco <i>schola</i> e che significa per l'appunto unione di persone [The Venetians used to gather in brotherhoods called Schools, term deriving from the Greek <i>schola</i> and which indeed means a gathering of people]</p>	<p>i tipici CICHETI (antipasti) [traditional cicheti (hors d'oeuvre)], Ma anche le soiole vengono spesso marinate nel saor... insieme con i bovoleti aglio e olio, l'anitra arrosto e i fasioi (fagioli)<sup>7</sup> [Sole is marinated in the <i>saor</i> (sweet-and-sour) sauce... as well as the <i>bovoleti</i> (snails) with oil and garlic, roast duck and <i>fasioi</i> (beans)]</p>	<p>«il volo dell'Angelo» [the flight of the Angel], «il Volo della Colombina» [the flight of the <i>Colombina</i>, lit. Little Dove]</p>
<p><i>Venezia City Book</i> (TravellItalia.it)</p>	<p>Calle [alley]<sup>8</sup>, campo/campielo [square/small square], fondamenta [base of buildings], ramo [a narrow <i>calle</i>], ruga [a <i>calle</i> with shops and houses], sestieri</p>	<p>No other information except for the meaning of <i>Scuole</i></p>	<p>----</p>	<p>----</p>

<sup>6</sup> The examples from this DTG are reported in bold and italic types as in the original.

<sup>7</sup> In this particular example, the author of the DTG uses terms for food and traditional dishes alternating the Standard Italian with the Venetian spelling (e.g. the fish called 'sole' is indicated with the local spelling of 'soiole' instead of the Italian 'sogliole'). This alternation is not indicated with any typographical convention, so it makes it difficult for the reader to distinguish between a local usage and a possible typo.

<sup>8</sup> The terms indicated in this column are part of a glossary, included in the DTG, in which the terms in Italian (rarely in Venetian) are provided just with a very short explanation.

	[neighbourhoods], terrà o terà [a <i>calle</i> where a canal used to flow, now paved]			
<i>Venezia</i> (ArrivalGuides)	... esplorate i labirinti dei piccoli quartieri. I sestieri <sup>9</sup> più interessanti sono... [explore the labyrinths of the small neighbourhoods. The most interesting sestieri are...]	----	fegato alla veneziana (fegato di vitello con polenta bianca) [Venetian- style liver (calf liver with white polenta)]	I bacari sono luoghi semplici in cui mangiare i cicchetti, antipasti veneziani [The <i>bacari</i> are simple places where you can eat <i>cicchetti</i> , Venetian appetizers]

Table 4. DTGs in Italian.

The guidebook *Guida di Venezia* (Venezia.net) contains more historical facts and anecdotes than the *Venice Guide* version in English but, on the other hand, it contains more words in the local dialect, given in a glossary at the end of the main text, in which the explanation of the meaning is reported. In this particular case, it is also worth mentioning that the DTGs *Guida di Venezia* (WeeAGoo) wrongly reports the name ‘*briciole*’ (meaning ‘crumbs’) instead of the correct term ‘*bricole*’ (wooden signpost poles for boats in the lagoon).

In some of the guidebooks, terms in the local dialect are not highlighted in any way, making it difficult for the reader to differentiate the terms in dialect from the rest of the text in Italian. The DTGs in Italian provide also scant explanations or synonyms, so the actual function and nature of the thing, dish or tradition referred to must often be inferred from the context, increasing the distance between the reader and the text. This tendency was noticed in all the DTGs in Italian, which makes them more similar to texts written by amateurs rather than by professionals in the field, especially if compared to the DTGs in English.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Sestieri’ recurs as an untranslated Venetian term in the original DTG in Italian.

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## 6. Conclusive Remarks

The analysis of the languaging technique used in DTGs in English and in Italian shows that, generally, DTGs highlight local terms using typographical strategies that have a well-established tradition in the language of tourism promotion, even though the frequency and homogeneity of these conventional strategies is not the one generally found in tourism texts (cf. Dann 1996). At times, the DTGs use italics, bold type, quotation marks, commas, and so forth, but they do not use a homogeneous style for the same category of items. This happens also within the same DTG, regardless of the number of authors who contributed to the text. The overall impression produced is that of lack of a coherent writing style and a general lack of attention to detail.

In addition, the analysis showed that the DTGs in English make a more frequent use of definitions, translations and explanations to accompany terms in Italian or in the Venetian dialect than the DTGs in Italian. This can be attributed to the fact that the linguistic and cultural gap between the guests and the host community is greater, and not only presumed by the authors but understood by the DTC authors in English.

All the DTGs in Italian, on the other hand, omit many elements and explanations, presuming a higher level of previous knowledge than what might actually be possessed by Italian, or by Italian-speaking, tourists. The omission increases the intra-national distance, creating a sense of incompleteness in the contents of the texts in Italian. Some guides simply give the literal meaning of the terms while others omit any form of explanation. For instance, *Venezia* (PaesiOnline) indicates that ‘sestieri’ is another name for ‘quartieri’ (literally, neighbourhoods), while *Guida di Venezia* (Venezia.net) does not provide any synonym or explanation. In this case, the word ‘sestiere’ might have been considered a familiar term to the general Italian tourist in the latter guide but it was not considered so in the former. It can be presumed that the decision regarding which terms are part of a passive Italian knowledge of local Venetian culture was left to the authors. The difficulty in ascertaining whether a term is omitted because its knowledge is taken for granted is also due to the lack of any authority on the subject (e.g. a dictionary or a glossary) that gives any information on what local terms are understood nationally. Even a source of this kind would not help since the author would not know if his/her particular readers would actually possess that level of knowledge, thus we might think that the guides that omit explanations of local terms aim at

addressing a public with a wider general knowledge, while those DTGs address a public who has none. The digital medium of the guidebooks, especially in the case of the Italian ones, does not fully justify the lack of homogeneity that emerges from the analysis of the languaging technique, nor can the dis-homogeneity be accounted for by the authors' assumptions regarding the tourists' presumed knowledge of the local culture. In both cases, the result is that of clumsy texts, written amateurishly, which do not favour the promotion of the city and its image. In actual fact, the risk of using incorrect languaging techniques that fail to transmit the importance of the local culture might mean that mutual understanding is not achieved. After all, guidebooks are the first means of communication between the host community and the prospective visitors, so making the tourists aware of the culture and traditions they will find once at the destination might be a first step towards the development of a quality tourism in Venice.

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