



Tomasz Zygmunt

The University College of Applied Sciences in Chełm (Poland)

ORCID: 0000-0002-8055-2053

**A review of “An Exercise Book of Translation”
by Klaudia Bednarova-Gibova and Jonathan Gresty**

**Recenzja książki p.t. „Podręcznik do ćwiczeń z translacji”
autorstwa Klaudii Bednarovej-Gibovej i Jonathana Gresty**

“An Exercise Book of Translation” is a publication by Klaudia Bednarova-Gibova and Jonathan Gresty, and issued by The University of Presov (Slovakia) in 2022.

The exercise book has been composed, as the authors say, *with the intention to provide students of the English Language and Anglophone Cultures study programme at the Institute of British and American Studies at the University of Presov with compact material for systematic practical preparation reflecting current translation competence requirements*. Nevertheless, the wide scope of the selected material along with its universal character, ranging from *belles-lettres*, formal language usage in tourist texts, academic discourse as well as examples of legal and business English, to medical and technical language, make the publication a very practicable teaching aid which is widely applicable to *other translation oriented courses*.

The uniqueness of the examined publication originates in the authors' choice of teaching material, combining both literary and non-literary texts of thematic variety. Besides, the texts selected for translation are in two languages: English and Slovak, which makes the teaching divergent, moving transla-

tion from one source language to the other. Also stylistic and lexical variety of the selected texts is linguistically significant. A literary genre is represented by novella, short stories, poems or children's literature; additionally, the student is familiarized with the writing and expressive style of operative texts, academic discourse, the language of official documents and journalism. The teaching material comprises of 26 texts including 12 passages in English exclusively, and four texts in the two languages: two, concerning poetry, one – on a location point in space and one devoted to medical language. Four other texts in Slovak concentrate on formal language which is presented with the use of original documents sourced from the Slovak administration system. Undoubtedly, the approach to the teaching material presented in the reviewed publication deserves both attention and approval as it combines the penetration of style and specialized lexis – i.e. terminology.

The inclusion of a Questions and Tasks Section made the teaching material more attractive than it otherwise would have been. Indeed, the Questions and Tasks substantially expands the course in *Introduction to Translation Theory & Practice*, changing it into a doubletrack teaching/learning program combining individual home studies with guided classroom instructions. In this case, independent studies cease being merely a typical assignment and rather turn into an undertaking which demands that students be intellectually active; it requires their critical thinking, discourse analysis, style recognition and verification. Without a doubt the questions and tasks section and its implementation deserve special attention as a particularly useful and effective part of the examined publication. Moreover, students, during their task completion, are directed towards sources which, in the form of either a bibliographical note or Internet link, are given at the end of each text. This is an excellent maneuver which allows for further penetration of the studied material and deepens the students' knowledge. It is worth stressing that the authors do their best to facilitate students' individual work on translation by making them sensitive to the key terminology encountered in the texts. Hence, the task units (14-26) designed for specialized language penetration and translation have been provided with a list of phrases and terms used in this type of language. Therefore, at the end of task units 14-26, students find a **glossary** in the form of an appendix to the text they are supposed to translate. Not only does it serve to facilitate the task itself but, more importantly, it turns into a terminology guide which helps students avoid lexical errors and thus – dubious translations. Although this technique of vocabulary learning, at least on a superficial level appears as simple, it, nevertheless, forms a powerful and effective tool in the develop-

ment of specialized language, particularly – its phraseology and terminology (for example, ESP).

As far as the construction of the examined exercise book is concerned, the reviewer's attention is directed at the **Key** to Questions and Tasks. Inserting the key into the main body of the book is not only an excellent idea from the didactic point of view, especially in this type of teaching aids, but it is also an effective instrument which helps students in their independent studies on language, and strengthens their confidence in doubtful situations. Nevertheless, the **Key**, as the authors admit in the **Foreword**, *does not contain model translations as these have intentionally been left for analysis and discussion during seminars*. Leaving an open space for the students to demonstrate their competence and creativity in both linguistic and cultural spheres while working on text translation, is worth recommending. In this respect, the **Key** becomes a feasible indicator that points to the right track for successful translation and, therefore, task completion.

The final section of the reviewed work is, as we might expect, the **Bibliography and References**. Very often students and also teachers consider the bibliography as an appendix which is unnecessary and thus – totally ignored. Such an attitude, however, is entirely reversed when checking the list of resources attached to **An Exercise Book of Translation**. The list of bibliographical positions and references is incredibly rich, taking into consideration the form and contents of the reviewed publication (130 pages of text excerpts included in the collection). Nevertheless, the bibliographical richness lies in a very selective and premeditated choice of source materials. Among them, the reader can easily distinguish **primary sources** which comprise an array of literary and non-literary texts in English and Slovak as well as **secondary sources** which represent bibliographical positions, *sensu stricto*. Since the translation tasks appear in two languages: the mother tongue of Slovak students, and the target language – English, the Bibliography and References provides students with quite a rich choice of **English and Slovak online dictionaries**. This serves as further evidence of the authors' premeditative attempt at facilitating the students' tasks.

The opinions and remarks presented above are based on the reviewer's analysis and judgment of **An Exercise Book of Translation**, and clearly display the values of the workbook, such as transparent construction and division into task units, their linguistic diversity allowing for entering into various language styles and forms. Also the book's demands on the students' critical thinking and independent studies, are one of its key assets. More importantly, the highest educational value is the book itself viewed

as a resource material and teaching aid designed especially for students of translation studies. The conviction of this publication's value is doubled when we are cognizant with the teaching material of this type available on the market. Not only are translation exercises in deficit but if they appear, they usually are one directional texts, focusing only on either literary or non-literary language. In this respect, **An Exercise Book of Translation by Klaudia Bednarova-Gibova and Jonathan Gresty** fills the gap in the teaching material designed for students of translation studies. Hence, their publication has the potential to become a standard source of material fostering future English philologists, especially translators. Therefore, without question and reservation the reviewed publication should be widely recommended as a valuable and highly useful teaching aid.

*Correspondence concerning this review should be addressed to Dr. Tomasz Zygmunt – Associate Professor and Head of the Institute of Modern Philology at The University College of Applied Sciences in Chełm (Poland).
E-mail: tomzyg@pwsz.chelm.pl*