Università di Firenze Dipartimento di Formazione, Lingue, Intercultura, Letterature e Psicologia

Corso di Traduzione in Lingua inglese John Gilbert

*Condizionale passato:* expressing unreal hypotheses about the past or the future in the past

N.B. Some of the texts have been modified from the original.

**from *Partigiano a 15 anni* by Aldo Fagioli**

1. “Fu deciso che Tebaldo, l’unico con scarponi militari, sarebbe uscito in ricognizione.”

It was decided that Tebaldo, the only one with military boots/who had army/combat boots, would go out on reconnaissance.

 on patrol/to scout around/to reconnoitre/er.

2. “Avremmo voluto andargli incontro ma la prudenza non ce lo permise.”

We would have liked to go (and/to) meet him, but prudence did not permit it/caution would not allow us to (do so).

**from “L’imbroglio” by Alberto Moravia**

3. “Decise finalmente: avrebbe parlato ad una delle persone che abitavano con lui nella pensione.”

He finally decided: he would speak with one of the people who lived with him in the pension.

Finally he decided: he was going to talk with one of the people that lived with him in the boarding house/guest house.

4. “In quel momento gli sarebbe stato difficile dire se la ragazza gli piacesse veramente.”

At that moment it would have been difficult/hard for him to say if/whether he really/actually/truly liked the girl.

5. “Una volta che l’avesse avvicinata, l’avrebbe certamente corteggiata.”

Once he had approached her/Once after having met her/Once he had made her acquaintance/Once he had become acquainted with her, he would certainly/surely court her.

6. “Prese una decisione: prima della mezzanotte egli avrebbe parlato a Santina.”

He decided/took/made a decision: before midnight he was going to/he would speak/talk to Santina.

**from “I due autisti” by Dino Buzzati**

7. “io avrei invece giurato che a mia mamma sarebbe piaciuto correre via a centoventi all’ora.”

I (instead) would have sworn (instead) that my mama would have liked to take off at a hundred (and) twenty an hour.

But I/While I/Whereas I to speed along/race along/go (off) fast…

**from *Se questo è un uomo* by Primo Levi**

8. “L'arrivo di un piccolo reparto di SS tedesche avrebbe dovuto far dubitare anche gli ottimisti.”

The arrival of a small unit/detachment/squad of German SS (men) should have made even the optimists doubtful.

 caused even the optimists to have doubts.

 raised (some) doubts even in the minds of the optimists.

**from *Lessico familiare* by Natalia Ginzburg**

9. “Noi eravamo, al momento dell’invasione del Belgio, spaventati ma ancora fiduciosi che l’avanzata tedesca si fermasse.”

At the time of the invasion of Belgium, we were afraid/frightened but still hopeful/confident that the German advance would be stopped/(stop).

10. “Rognetta diceva che la Germania avrebbe invaso tra poco non solo la Francia e anche certo l’Italia, ma tutto il mondo.”

Rognetta said that Germany would soon invade/would soon be invading/was soon going to invade not only

France and certainly also Italy/Italy as well of course, but the whole/entire world.

11. “Non l’avrei rivisto che molti anni più tardi.”

I would see him again only many years later/I was not to see him again for many years//until/till many years later.

2

**from *Due di due* by Andrea De Carlo**

12. “Dopo la morte di Guido abbiamo discusso di cosa fare della seconda casa, adesso che lui non ci sarebbe più andato ad abitare.”

For the week following the death of Guido, we talked about/spoke of

For a week after Guido’s death, we discussed what to do with/about the second house, now that he would no longer be going to live there/was not going to go (to/and) live there anymore.

13. “Martina ha detto che avremmo potuto lasciare la casa com’era, nel caso che qualcun altro venisse a vivere con noi o Livia e Paolo facessero dei figli.”

Martina said that we could leave it as it was, in case someone else came/were to come to live with us,

 keep it (just) the way it was, in the event that someone else were to come (and) live with us,

or (if) Livia and Paolo had children/were to have kids.

14. “Pensavo che questo era un funerale di cui Guido non si sarebbe vergognato; che forse avrebbe potuto addirittura immaginarselo lui.”

I thought that this/it was a funeral of which Guido would not have been ashamed,

 (which/that) Guido would not have been ashamed of, one) that perhaps he would/could have actually/even been able to imagine (it) himself/even imagined himself.

**from “La vergine e la droga” by Alberto Moravia**

15. “Insomma, lui non aveva soldi e voleva che lo portassi fino ad un certo bar dove avrebbe incontrato qualcuno.”

In short,/Basically,/Well,/In a word, he had no money and wanted me to take/drive him to a certain far-away/far-off bar,

 didn’t have any money to some café which/that was quite distant. where he would meet somebody.

There he was going to meet/was to meet someone.

16. “Gli ho detto che avrei fatto tutto quello che voleva, ma dopo, non prima.”

I told him bluntly/crudely/roughly (that) I would do everything/whatever/anything he wanted/wished/liked, but afterward(s), not before/beforehand.

17. “L’ho preso per un braccio, quasi temendo che mi scappasse.”

I took (him by) his arm/him by the/an arm, almost afraid/fearing (that) he would/could get away/slip away from me/escape me.

18. “Perché non glielo avevo detto subito, allora non sarebbe salito, avrebbe cercato qualcun altro.”

Why hadn’t I told him (that/it) immediately/at once/right away, then he would not have come up (NdR to her apartment)/got (BE)/gotten (NAmE) in (NdR the car). He would have looked for someone/somebody else.

19. “Avevo, insomma, trovato qualcuno a cui dedicarmi e, salvandolo, avrei salvato anche me stessa.”

In short, I had found someone/somebody to dedicate myself to/to whom to dedicate myself and, saving him, I would also save myself.

**from *Volevo i pantaloni* by Lara Cardella**

20. “Se fossi vissuta in un’altra casa, avrei potuto pensare che mia madre avesse buttato il piatto a terra.”

If I had been living in another house, I could/might have thought that my mother had thrown a plate on/to the floor/ground.

21. “Neppure in un momento di follia, ne ero sicura, mia madre avrebbe rotto un piatto.”

Not even in a moment of folly/madness, I was sure/certain (of it/that), would my mother have broken a plate.

**from *Intervista col vampiro* by Anne Rice**

22. “Nessuno sarebbe riuscito a fuggire da quella casa a meno di correre via con noi, al nostro fianco.”

No one/Nobody would have managed to escape from/could have escaped from/would have been able to escape from/could have succeeded in getting out of that house except by running/having run out with us/unless they had run out with us, at/by our side.

23. “Un viaggio che ci avrebbe subito portato lontano dalle scintillanti capitali d’Europa verso il Mar Nero, dove saremmo attraccati a Varna.”

A journey/voyage/trip which/that would immediately/at once/right away take us far away from the glittering/sparkling capitals of Europe towards the Black Sea, where we would dock at/in Varna.

3

**from *Una storia semplice* by Leonardo Sciascia**

24. “Stava per scrivere di quel che aveva trovato, ormai dubitando che la polizia arrivasse.”

He was about to write/going to write/at the point of writing about what he had found, by now doubting that the police would arrive/were going to arrive.

**from *La disobbedienza* by Alberto Moravia**

25. “Luca tornò in città con la sensazione che non stava bene e si sarebbe presto ammalato.”

Luca came back/returned to the city with the sensation/feeling that he was not well and soon would be/get ill/sick.

**from “La seggiolina del Florian” by Mario Soldati**

26. “Avrebbe, dunque, rubato una delle sedie. Non sarebbe stata la stessa di ventinove anni fa, naturalmente. Ma identica a quella.”

So she would steal one of the chairs. It would not be the same as twenty-nine years before, naturally/of course. But identical to/the same as that.

27. “Avrebbe spaccato la sedia, così da farla stare nella valigia.”

She would break the chair in two/split the chair, so as to (be able to) fit it into the suitcase.

28. “Poi a Londra, (…) l’avrebbe fatta accomodare per pochi scellini.”

Then in London, (…) she would have/get it fixed/repaired for a few shillings.

29. “Prese il passaporto: nel caso che l’avessero arrestata. Aveva anche pensato a ciò che avrebbe detto.”

She took her passport: in case they arrested her. She had also/even thought of/about what she would say.