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

Corso di Traduzione in Lingua inglese John Gilbert

from *Odd Pairs & False Friends, Dizionario di false analogie e ambigue affinità fra inglese*

*e italiano ((A) Dictionary of False Analogies and Ambiguous Affinities between English and Italian)*

by Virginia Browne (Zanichelli: Bologna, 1992, pp. III-IV).

“Preface”

Having just got/gotten off the airplane/plane in Pisa, an English tourist on his first trip to Italy

As soon as he got off//Just after getting/having gotten/got off

went sight-seeing in that city.

went to visit the historic landmarks?/sights?/buildings?/places of (historic/architectural) interest?/

attractions? in/of that city. The splendo(u)r/majesty/treasures and the beauty/magnificence/cultural

of his surroundings

patrimony which/that//of what surrounded him/surrounding him led him to use/make use of (one of)

(which/that//of what) he was surrounded by prompted him

those (little) machines which/that provide (a) recorded commentary. But he was left puzzled/perplexed

offering (a pre-recorded message.)

by/on hearing/when he heard/to hear that many works were “characteristic” («Of what?» he asked himself

/wondered), while others were “suggestive” («Really? I must have missed those»)(,) and that

“when he eventually went to Padua” («But how does the commentator know I'm going there?») he

would be able to admire many other/more treasures. As fate/destiny/justice/chance would have it,

Ironically(,)/Only justice would have it that

It was meant to be that

this same English gentleman/Englishman soon met/should meet an Italian friend shortly afterward(s)/

would/should soon meet

soon thereafter/a little later and, while they were chatting/talking about this and that, (at one point) at a certain point in their conversation,

while having a chat/while they were chit-chatting, he said/remarked to

/told him enthusiastically/with enthusiasm:/, “You know, I was at/went to a concert of your daughter’s

one of your daughter’s concerts

(Leave entire sentence in Italian? *«Sai, a Londra sono stato a un concerto di tua figlia e devo dire che era semplicemente* ***tremenda****»*,)

in London, and I’ve got to/have to/must say/confess that she was simply ‘*tremenda’ (NdR “awful”),”* and,

‘horrible’ *(NdR “tremenda”),*

amazed

seeing him astonished/speechless/astounded/at a loss for words by/at so much/such frankness/cando(u)r/

honesty, he hurried/rushed/hastened to add:/, “And then I had the pleasure of meeting/to meet your

wife. Oh, what/such a marvel(l)ous/wonderful/amazing woman/lady! How pleasant, smart(,) (and) witty she is!

delightful What a nice, smart, sharp woman she is!

She is so agreeable, intelligent, spirited!

She is such a lovely, …, quick-witted woman!

She knows how to speak with such grace and wit/so politely and wittily, even of/about the most ‘*triviale’*

*(NdR “coarse”, “vulgar”, “indecent”)* matters/questions/topics/subjects!” These things (do) happen./(Stuff like this

happens.)/(That’s life(?). This (gentle)man, in a word/in other words/in short, was in a short (span of) time/in

little time/in no time the/both (the) victim and perpetrator of/the victim **of** and guilty **of** misunderstandings

due to/caused by false analogies between English and Italian. Even for/(to) those (people) who/that know (well)

both languages well, often it seems/appears obvious that words (which/that appear/seem (to be)//are) written in

an almost identical manner/in practically the same way/almost identically and occur/recur in similar contexts have

/share the same meaning, when in reality/while actually it is not so/that way/like that/they do not/that is not the

case, and even though/although/though the existence of “false friends” is well known/a well-known thing/fact,

often they/(we)/those people find themselves in difficulty/trouble when having to//they/(we) must/have to

often it is difficult for those people when it comes to translating them.

often difficulties are encountered by those people when… often those people face difficulties when…

translate them.

(…)

(…) In/When deciding/To decide what the most appropriate equivalent is, it is always necessary to

When choosing the most suitable equivalent, one/people always has/have to remember

it must always be remembered

there is always the need to keep/bear in mind

in any case that (the) English is not a translation of (the) Italian, but the expression of a profoundly

different mentality/mindset/mind-set and culture.

(…)