

II. BOOK REVIEWS

Gonçalo Duarte. *Histórias de Bolso. 21 Contos de Autores Lusófonos Anotados para Estrangeiros.* Lisboa: Lidel. 2022 (reprint). Pp. 174

Ana Bela Almeida / Gonçalo Duarte / Joana Meiri. *Quiosque Literário. Aprender Português com a Literatura.* Lisboa: Lidel. 2021. Pp. 227

Literary works belong to the tools commonly used in glottodidactic practice. The fact that they are of interest to foreign language lecturers is related, among others, to the possibility of adapting them to most of the modern methods of foreign languages teaching. The argument that literary works help students develop all basic language skills is also of great importance. Literary works help with understanding written text, listening, writing and speaking, i.e., the basic skills checked during state exams for language certificates.

University lecturers of foreign languages a long time ago recognized the didactic potential of literary works. This is proved, among others, by numerous didactic publications in which literary texts are used for glottodidactic purposes. These textbooks are sometimes published as serial publications, in the form of numerous small volumes. An example of such cyclical publications is the Polish series entitled *Klasyka Literatury ze Słowniczkiem*, published by the Warsaw publishing house Edgard. This series includes literary works in Polish and in several other popular European languages. In the books that make up this cycle, a single, short literary work (e.g., a short story or a poem) is the starting point for the glottodidactic process.

Over many years, more extensive single-volume publications have also been gaining in popularity. They usually contain a large number of different literary works, presented in whole or in shorter fragments. For example, to remain in the context of the Polish language, its didactics was enriched by such works as *Śpiewajęco po polsku* by Anna Majkiewicz and Jolanta Tabor (2004) and *Literackie lustra kultury* by Tamara Czerkies (2019). In the former textbook, the teaching material is based on the texts of Polish pop songs, which in this case can be easily considered as literary texts (after all, in 2016, the Nobel Prize winner was Bob Dylan, who writes the lyrics to his own songs). In the latter, the author used a wide spectrum of contemporary literary works, mainly lyrical ones.

Of course, single-volume publications with literary texts intended for glottodidactics are also published in other countries. For example, in the Portuguese language, two very interesting and valuable books have been published in recent years by the publishing house Lidel, located in Lisbon. These are *Histórias de Bolso* by Gonçalo Duarte and a collective work entitled *Quiosque Literário*, written by Ana Bela Almeida, Gonçalo Duarte and Joana Meiri.

Both of these books are very similar in terms of content and can be used to learn Portuguese as a foreign language at advanced levels (from B2 to C2). For this purpose, they use literary texts, i.e., contemporary Lusophone literature, mainly prose, and can be used both in individual learning (this mode of work is possible thanks to the solutions to individual tasks that are placed at the end of the book) and during group language courses conducted by lecturers at universities.

Histórias de Bolso is – as the subtitle informs – a collection of 21 stories written by writers from various ethnic and national groups belonging to the Lusophone community. The reader can find songs written by authors from Portugal, Brazil, Angola, and Mozambique, and from such exotic countries as Guinea Bissau (this country is represented by Marinho de Pina), Cape Verde (Dina Salústio), East Timor (Luís Cardoso), and São Tomé and Príncipe (Olinda Beja). Many of these authors are as yet unknown to Polish readers. However, the volume also includes works by writers whose texts have already been translated into Polish. They include, among others, the short story *Tiroteio* written by the Brazilian Daniel Galera, known to Polish literature lovers from his excellent novel, *Broda zalana krwioq* (*Barba ensopada de sangue* – 2012).

There are several language exercises underneath each of the stories collected in the volume. These exercises are grouped into two separate categories: “text” (*o texto*) and “language” (*a língua*). Exercises of the first type strictly relate to a given story, check the level of understanding of the text, and propose conversational topics related to the subject of the story. In turn, the tasks in the second part go beyond the content of the piece of writing. This part includes, among others, tasks to check and develop the knowledge of grammar, as well as exercises in spelling and lexical issues (e.g., completing letters in words, selecting the correct word from among two given). In addition, next to each story, there is a glossary explaining in an accessible way the meaning of more difficult words. Supplementing the texts with this glossary and attaching to them various language exercises is to serve one of the most important goals of the book, about which the author writes in the Introduction. He wants to convince the reader that reading Portuguese literary works in the original is actually easier than one might think, provided the initial linguistic difficulties are overcome (p. V, preface).

The second, in turn, slightly more extensive publication, contains 23 literary works. Among them, several lyrical works appear but short prose definitely prevails there as well. The layout of the content is similar to that of the textbook *Histórias de Bolso*. A set of language exercises was, therefore, attached to each text. In *Quiosque Literário*, however, these exercises are more elaborate and varied than in Gonçalo Duarte’s work. We can find here standard language exercises, such as supplementing and transforming statements, as well as a lot of open-ended tasks included in separate parts named *Expressão oral e escrita*. These chapters deserve special attention, as both the number and quality of the tasks and suggestions they contain may positively surprise the reader. The authors’ ingenuity in constructing questions and commands deserves admiration and recognition. With their help, advanced students of Portuguese as a foreign language will have the opportunity to express themselves on many interesting topics or to construct a wide variety of written statements. A few examples from one of the subsections entitled *Escrita criativa* (creative writing) can provide the reader with some idea of how attractive and varied are the language exercises that this handbook offers. Therefore, under the poem *É bom lembrar lembranças dos outros* by the Brazilian poet Ana

Martins Marques, you can read the following commands: 1) "Watch a few people in a cafe, waiting room or at a bus stop. Then choose one of them and describe how you imagine their day"; 2) "Write a poem, based on the structure of the author's poem" (p. 23).

In the discussed textbook, attention is also drawn to numerous references to various cultural features of Lusophone countries, which seems to be extremely valuable from the point of view of cultural and – let us call it this way – humanistic didactics. This is a deliberate attempt by the authors, who in the Introduction emphasize that aspects of cultural didactics occupy an important place in their textbook. According to the authors' intentions, their book is not only to present a relatively broad and up-to-date panorama of contemporary Portuguese-language prose. It should also enhance the readers' awareness of participation in a globalized world in which each of them can comment on certain topics, regardless of their country of origin and belonging to specific cultural traditions. The authors pursue this assumed goal, among others, through appropriately formulated language tasks. For example, they encourage readers to reflect on the question of whether individual cultures and local traditions are still important in the era of globalization (p. 86). In addition, at the end of each chapter, in a separate box, there are suggestions to help interested audiences in exploring the Lusophone culture. Here, readers can find out which Portuguese-language books, films and songs deal with issues similar to that contained in the text of the originally analyzed work.

Two facts in *Quiosque Literário* also deserve attention. First, the preface to this volume was written by Anna M. Klobucka, born in Poland, a graduate of Iberian studies at a Polish university and of doctoral studies at Harvard University, and currently an employee of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. In addition, the authors of this book not only collected other people's texts, but also – specially for its needs – wrote three of their own works, placing them in a separate, final chapter. Thus, the three authors provided an additional, original certificate of genuine commitment to teaching Portuguese as a foreign language.

Both of the items presented here will first be picked up by lecturers of Portuguese as a foreign language and people learning this language at an advanced or at least an intermediate level. In addition, these books can be read easily by people who already speak Portuguese and are interested in the literary works of Lusophone countries. However, they can also be recommended to teachers of Polish as a foreign language who know Portuguese to the extent that they can read those texts freely. In these publications, these teachers will find a number of inspirations and interesting didactic solutions, which, if necessary, they will be able to introduce into their professional practice, adapting them to Polish language teaching.

Finally, there is one more very important group of potential readers of both publications. This group consists of people interested – professionally or as a hobby – in world literature. Both volumes contain 44 literary works from a variety of countries across the world, scattered over several continents. Reading these texts enables us to get to know, however slightly, contemporary literary works from these countries. At the same time, however, it is about something perhaps even more important, connected with a slightly differently understood "worldliness" of literature. Thus, contemporary Lusophone literature – mainly due to the open questions and issues attached to the texts – has also been shown as a source of inspiration for a reflection on the contemporary world and problems concerning modern people. In this literature, therefore, you can see works dealing with issues of a global, universal dimension.

Thus, the authors of both books managed to show the high intellectual and ethical potential of their work, to say nothing of its aesthetic values, which cannot be denied to any of the stories selected for these two publications.

Received: 18.07.2022; **revised:** 25.09.2022

SZYMON GĘBUŚ
Jilin International Studies University
szymon_gebus@interia.pl
ORCID: 0000-0002-6389-3315

DOI: 10.14746/gi.2022.49.2.09