

STUDIES IN PHYSICAL CULTURE AND TOURISM
Vol. 16, No. 1, 2009

EWA POLAK
Department of Physical Education, University of Rzeszów, Poland

THE USE OF INTERNATIONAL TERMINOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF DIVERSE GYMNASTIC SPORTS

Key words: competitive gymnastics, language of sports, English vocabulary.

ABSTRACT

The article discusses the problems of standardization of gymnastic terminology caused by the diversity of gymnastic disciplines of different origins. Although, the FIG makes every effort to standardize international gymnastic terminology, each gymnastic discipline still uses its own expressions and terms. These international professional terms are often misunderstood by laypeople and non-English speakers.

GYMNASTICS AS A SPORT

Gymnastics may be globally defined as any physical exercise on the floor or apparatus designed to promote endurance, strength, flexibility, agility, coordination, and body control. At its best, it is body management using functional movement to master the body. As such, it is different from sport games, which promote the mastery of objects and the accomplishment of a purpose such as overcoming an opponent; and from dancing, which promotes expression or communication of feelings, attitudes, ideas, and concepts [9, 5]. Gymnastics may be also defined as a sport in which both compulsory and optional physical exercises must be performed in an artistic yet formally correct manner.

The oldest international organization responsible for the structuring of gymnastics was founded in 1881. It was the Fédération Européenne de Gymnastique – FEG (the European Gymnastics Federation). When the FEG was established to supervise international competition, gymnastics became a recognized sport. In 1896 it was included in the programme of the first modern Olympic Games, although the events classified as gym-

nastics were far removed from today's gymnastics. The FEG, recognized by the International Olympic Committee, did not officially participate in the first modern Olympics as an international federation. Eighteen gymnasts from five countries fought for individual titles. In 1908, the FEG took part in the Olympic Games in London for the first time as an official international federation, responsible for gymnastics worldwide. In 1921 it became the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique – FIG (International Federation of Gymnastics), after first non-European countries were admitted into the Federation. The first non-European country of the FIG was the United States, which was admitted as the 16th member. The FIG sets standards for international competition, provides guidance to individual nations in establishing their own standards, and supervises technical aspects of different sports of gymnastics [3, 94]. The program of the Olympic Games includes at present artistic gymnastics for men and women, rhythmic gymnastics, and trampoline gymnastics for men and women (individual events only).

In the 20th century gymnastics branched out in many different directions. As time went by, new forms of gymnastics were created, which soon

became new international sports. The first competitive gymnastic sport was artistic gymnastics. The term itself emerged in the early 1800s to distinguish free-flowing styles from techniques used by the military. The rules of this sport were not explicit for a long time. Until the early 1950s, both national and international competitions involved a changing variety of exercises. The early Olympic Games featured some gymnastic disciplines, which could, however, scarcely be deemed artistic: rope climbing, tumbling and club swinging. The Olympic program began to settle in 1924, with men competing for individual medals and team events on each apparatus. Four years later, women began competing in Olympic gymnastics at the 1928 Games in Amsterdam. Team events for women were held at the 1928, 1936, and 1948 Olympic Games. The first full range of individual events for women was held during the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki. By the 1952 Olympics gymnastic apparatuses and events for both men and women had been standardized, and began to use the 10-point scoring system. From the Gymnastics World Championships in Antwerp 1903 until 1954, field events such as pole vault, broad jump and even shot put were featured occasionally as gymnastic events. Swimming was also included once during the 1922 championships. In 1931 the FIG organized its first World Championships in Paris, however, only for men. Women had to wait until 1934, when the first Women's World Championships were held in Budapest [5, p. 109]. At present, artistic gymnastics is the best known and most popular sport of gymnastics supervised by the FIG. Women's artistic gymnastics is composed of four events: vault, uneven parallel bars, balance beam and floor exercise. Gymnasts who compete on all four events in a single meet are considered All-Around competitors. Men's artistic gymnastics is composed of six events: floor exercise, parallel bars, high bar, pommel horse, rings, and vault. As with women's gymnastics, those who compete in all six events in a meet are All-Around competitors [1, 7-8].

The contemporary artistic gymnastics is a sport in which competitors perform short routines (from 30 to 90 seconds) on different apparatuses. The apparatuses used in Men's Artistic Gymnastics and Women's Artistic Gymnastics are different. Whereas the men's apparatus emphasizes strength requirements, the women's apparatus stresses artistry, balance and agility. The performance sequence on the men's apparatus is: horizontal bar,

parallel bars, pommel horse and rings; and for women: beam and uneven bars. Both men and women must also perform floor exercises and vault. Currently, during elite international competitions, a gymnastic meet is divided into several sessions: team qualifying, team finals, all-around finals and event finals. The gymnasts perform optional routines, composed of freely selected elements and combinations, the structure of which must correspond to the provisions in the FIG Code of Points [4, 115].

Rhythmic gymnastics became the next competitive sport of gymnastics. This graceful form of gymnastics was established at the turn of the 19th century as a means of movement expression. It is based on the ideas of dancers and musicians to make use of dancing movements in the process of exercising different parts of the human body, thus developing aesthetic expressiveness and gracefulness. The further recreation of this idea caused development of musicality and rhythm. But above all, it was the famous American dancer Isadora Duncan, whose usage of classical ballet to express feelings with dance finally gave rise to this new form of gymnastics. However, it also grew out of the German gymnastics system, which emphasized apparatus work for muscle development, combined with the Swedish system of free exercise for developing rhythm. In the mid-20th century its devotees started to call it modern gymnastics. As a competitive discipline, Rhythmic Gymnastics was first practiced in the former Soviet Union, where national championships were held since 1942. The FIG recognized rhythmic gymnastics as an official discipline in 1961. The first World Individual Championships took place in Budapest 1963, in which 28 gymnasts from 10 European countries took part. The first World Championships for group exercises were held in Copenhagen in 1967. It was the United States, which as the first non-European country, took part in the championships in 1973. The individual All-Around competition was included into the program of the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984, and rhythmic gymnastics still remains an Olympic sport [5, 110].

Rhythmic gymnastics combines dance movements with movements using hand apparatus. This is a sport in which individual competitors or five-person teams perform exercises with one of the five types of apparatus: ball, clubs, hoop, ribbon or rope. All exercises must be performed to music on a special 12 x 12 m floor area. The program for

individual gymnasts consists of four exercises using four of the five apparatus. The maximum length of each exercise is one and a half minutes. The program for groups usually consists of two exercises: one with one type of apparatus and the other with several types of apparatus. The maximum duration of each exercise is two and a half minutes. The winner is the gymnast who earns the most points, as awarded by a panel of judges for leaps, balances, pivots, flexibility, apparatus handling and artistic effect. In general, rhythmic gymnastics is practiced by women only, but it is also becoming more and more popular among men, for example, in Japan [4, 116].

The next form of competitive gymnastics was trampoline gymnastics. The origin of this sport is somewhat obscure. It was devised in France in the 18th or 19th century by professional acrobats and became popular in circuses [2, p. 200]. Modern trampoline gymnastics was created in the United States in the 1930s and was first called rebound tumbling. The precursor of the new gymnastics form was George Nissen – U.S. diving champion and devotee of the circus art. In 1928 he constructed and in 1939 he began the mass production of a new gymnastic apparatus called the trampoline. The first unofficial U.S. trampoline gymnastics championships were held in Dallas 1947. The new form of gymnastics was confirmed by the American Athletic Union, as an official sport in 1954 under the name of trampolining. The dynamic flourishing of trampolining in many countries led to the first attempts to establish this sport as a gymnastic discipline. Unfortunately, the FIG refused its admittance. Because of this decision representatives of many national trampoline associations decided to set up an independent international federation: the Fédération Internationale de Trampoline – FIT (International Federation of Trampoline) in 1964. Until 1998 it coordinated the development of various trampolining sports. The first trampoline World Championships were held in London 1964 with competitors from 12 countries. At the beginning, the trampoline competition program included women's individual and men's individual events only. Then synchro trampoline events for women and men were added, followed by tumbling for women and men and double-mini trampoline for women and men in 1976. When the FIG welcomed trampolining as its new discipline in 1998, the FIT was dissolved. Trampolining became an Olympic

sport in 1999 and was included into the program of the Sydney Olympic Games a year later, featuring both men's and women's individual events.

Modern trampoline gymnastics consists of three various activities. Trampoline gymnastics is a sport that requires technical mastery, perfect body control and harmonious movements to perform the numerous and complicated somersaults and twists carried out on a trampoline in midair. The events are men's individual, women's individual, men's synchronized, women's synchronized, men's team, and women's team. Trampoline competitions consist of two voluntary routines in the qualifying round and one voluntary routine in the finals. Each routine consists of ten elements. As a basis for all kinds of training, trampoline is practiced in every discipline which involves acrobatic elements.

Tumbling gymnastics is characterized by the complex, swift and rhythmical succession of acrobatic jumps from hands to feet, feet to hands or even feet directly back onto feet on a 25 meters long tumbling track. The tumbling gymnastics events are men's individual, women's individual, men's team and women's team. Tumbling competitions consist of two voluntary passes in the qualifying round, two voluntary passes in the individual finals and one voluntary pass in the team finals. Each pass consists of eight elements. Tumbling is a sport involving spectacular elements such as speed, rhythm and twists. Double mini-trampoline gymnastics is the sport in which, following a running jump, a gymnast performs an element on the mini trampoline, followed by another before landing on the mat. The top athletes can perform spectacular double somersaults with a twist. The tumbling events include men's individual, women's individual, men's team and women's team. Double mini-trampoline competitions consist of two voluntary passes in the qualifying round, two voluntary passes in the individual finals and one voluntary pass in the team finals. Each pass consists of two elements. The teams in trampoline, tumbling and double mini-trampoline competitions consist of minimum three and maximum four gymnasts [4, 116].

The next gymnastics sport is acrobatics. Although, the history of acrobatic stunts goes back to ancient Egypt, modern acrobatics was created in the late 19th century. It was popularized by the "Sokol" Gymnastic Associations, widespread among eastern European peoples such as the Czechs, Poles, Slovaks and Slovenians. It was also

practiced by the Germans and Russians as a part of gymnastics. The acrobatics became an independent sport in the Soviet Union, where the first national championships were held in 1939. The first international competition was organized in Poland 1957 with Bulgaria, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and the Soviet Union participating. Although acrobatics as a sport flourished in many countries, the FIG refused to recognize it as an official sport of gymnastics. To popularize it acrobatics was performed during the World Gymnaestradas in Zagreb 1958 and Vienna 1965. These acrobatic shows were performed by athletes from the Soviet Union, Hungary and Poland. Similarly, like in trampolining, the devotees of acrobatic sport made numerous attempts to form an independent organization, and the International Federation of Sport Acrobatics (IFSA) was formed in 1973. The first World Championships organized by the IFSA were held in Moscow in 1974. The IFSA merged with the FIG in 1999 and acrobatics became an official sport of gymnastics.

At present, acrobatic gymnastics is a sport which favors body control in various positions, both on the ground and in the air. It uses no apparatuses and is practiced by men's, women's or mixed pairs, women's groups (of three gymnasts each) or men's groups (of four gymnasts each). All exercises must be performed to music on a sprung gymnastic floor, which measures 12 x 12 m. All routines have a maximum duration of two and a half minutes. The exercises must include a harmonious combination of collective acrobatic elements (holds, throws, catches), and individual acrobatic elements (balance and tumbling), all perfectly synchronized and linked by choreography. Acrobatic competitions consist of three parts. The first part is the qualifying competition, during which the gymnasts must perform three exercises: static, dynamic and combined. In the finals only a combined exercise is executed. Competition II is the final for each category. Competition III are for teams only [4, p. 115].

The youngest sport of gymnastics is aerobics, originally evolved as a part of an astronaut-training program, pioneered in the late 1960s by American Kenneth Cooper. It was later popularized by Jane Fonda, who expanded the program both technically and commercially to become the popular fitness aerobics. This kind of gymnastic exercises, practiced with music became a sport when the FIG decided to set up a Sport Aerobics Commission in

1994 to structure aerobic gymnastics in a similar way to its other competitive sports. The first Aerobics World Championships were held in Paris in 1995 [5, p. 112]. Modern aerobic gymnastics features dynamic moves, strength, flexibility, coordination and musicality in a routine, lasting up to 1 minute and 50 seconds. The categories are individual men, individual women, mixed pairs, trios and (from 2002) groups of six gymnasts. The routine is performed on a 7 x 7 m area, except for the groups, which is on a 10 x 10 m area. Aerobic gymnastics is the ability to perform continuous complex and high intensity movement to music, which originated from traditional aerobics exercises. The routine must demonstrate continuous movement, flexibility, strength and the utilization of the seven basic steps: march, jog, skip, knee lift, kick, jack and lunge, with perfectly executed all the movements including the difficulty elements [4, 115].

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TERMINOLOGY IN SPORTS OF GYMNASTICS

The gymnastic disciplines are misunderstood and enigmatic. Although admired and enjoyed by millions of television viewers and an ever-growing number of devotees, they are understood only by few [7, 13]. The main reasons of this situation are complicated system of judging and incomprehension of gymnastic vocabulary.

Any gymnastic exercise would not be called correctly, or any gymnastic textbook or regulation would not be developed, without professional vocabulary and description of rules of each gymnastic element (separate human body movement). Most physical exercises performed in gymnastics could not be applied in everyday life. Thus, it was necessary to invent specific names for these exercises and stunts. The gymnastic terminology is essential for describing and understanding the technique of performed exercises. It is also essential to the realization of the teaching process and designing gymnastic textbooks or course materials for coaches and judges.

The creation of gymnastic vocabulary for separate gymnastic disciplines was related to the origins of various forms of gymnastics. It also depended on the language from which it originated. For example, artistic gymnastics with its roots in the German gymnastic system uses vocabulary

based on Jahn's terminology. As apparatus gymnastics spread, German gymnastic terminology was translated into different languages. The translations were usually made according to a simple scheme:

- terms describing utilitarian activities were replaced with suitable terms in another language, usually borrowing from military terminology;
- terms describing simple human body movement were replaced with anatomical terms used in another language;
- for terms without lexical equivalents in another language neologisms were invented.

The process of inventing the gymnastic terminology was usually based on the derivational material from the native language, but not only. Modern gymnastic terminology in many languages consists of borrowings from other languages. For example, English terms *ball*, *buck*, *rings*, *springboard* or *handstand* seem to be German loanwords, as the German language still possesses words such as *Ball*, *Barren*, *Bock*, *Ringe*, *Sprungbrett*, *Handstand*. In a similar way, English names of gymnastic grips of bars: *overgrip*, *undergrip*, *elgrip* or *L-grip* are German borrowings from *Nachgriff*, *Untergriff*, *Ellengriff*, respectively. Most of these simple gymnastic terms are perfectly understood to a layperson. Problems appear when we want to understand more complicated exercises. The athletes or coaches speaking different languages prefer to use jargon words or phrases. It is because professional terms or expressions which describe complicated gymnastic exercises are usually too long for practical applications. People who have professional contact with artistic gymnastics use various abbreviations or jargon words to call separate elements or combination of elements. The meanings of such terms as *cat leap*, *wolf jump* or *thief vault* are clear for English-speaking professional gymnasts, whereas they are incomprehensible to a layperson. Although, when gymnastics became popular in a larger number of countries, more and more languages invented its own gymnastic terminology. Then, if professional gymnasts from different countries needed to communicate to one another, it was hard to speak different languages about gymnastics. It was much easier to demonstrate an element or movement, than to call it using words. This is why the international gymnastic terminology is necessary in international communication and conversations between professional gymnasts.

The FIG has appointed the Technical Committees for each sport of gymnastics. These bodies are special authorities, which coordinate all technical regulations and, following the directives of the FIG Executive Committee, try to establish uniform international terminology for all the FIG sports. The FIG decided that the official languages for meetings, competitions, statutes, regulations and all documents related to gymnastics are French and English. But a more suitable language for inventing an international gymnastic terminology seems to be English, because it is one of the most important means of international communication. Moreover, it is extensively used by millions of people to transmit their thoughts and ideas to other people and communities [6, 130]. Although, the English language is recognized as an international language for gymnastic worldwide, the uniformity of gymnastic terminology seems impossible. The diversity of gymnastic disciplines, the differences between their origins and, the diversity of performed elements are the main problems. Many terms used in different sports of gymnastics are standardized, but each sport still features its own expressions and terms.

The most complicated gymnastic terminology is used in artistic gymnastic. The diversity of events in this sport caused the necessity of using a huge numbers of special terms, describing various gymnastic elements relative to their respective character, performed both on apparatus and on the floor. The terminology used for apparatus gymnastics consists of the names of different elements performed on each apparatus. The names of the elements performed on all kinds of bars are swings (*swing forward*, *swing backward*, *underswing*, *long swing in hang*), circle elements (*staldler circle forward*, *giant circle backward*, *hip circle*, *pike circle*), flight elements (*Jaeger salto*, *Tkachev piked*, *counter flight*, *vault*, *hecht*), mounts (*straddle vault*, *glide kip*, *cast to handstand*, *free straddle jump over the lover bar to hang the high bar*, *hecht jump to hand repulsion over the lover bar to hang on the high bar*) and dismounts (*clear underswing to salto forward*, *double salto backward*). For pommel horse they are *scissors*, *single leg swings*, *circles in cross support*, *Thomas flair*, *circle in travel forward* or *backward* and *Russian wende swing*. These terms are equivalents of separate groups of elements: *single leg swings*, *scissors*, *circles*, *spindles*, *handstands*, *travels in front and cross support*, *Kehr swings*, *wende swings*

and *dismounts*. The terms used for gymnastic elements performed on rings are kip and swing elements (*uprise forward to support, swing backward to support, kip to L-sit*), swings to handstand (*back kip to handstand, from support swing backward to handstand*), swings to strength hold elements (*kip to L-cross, uprise backward to support scale, back kip to inverted cross*), strength and hold elements (*hanging scale, support scale, V-sit, straddled sit, felge*), and dismounts (*salto forward, double salto backward*).

The names of the elements performed in women's artistic gymnastics on the balance beam consist of acrobatic elements (*roll backward to handstand, walkover forward in side position to side stand, cartwheel, round-off, handspring, flic-flac to front support, salto forward to cross stand, Arabian salto*); dance elements, which contain different forms of leaps, jumps, hoops (*split leap, straddle pike jump, Johnson with additional 1/2 turn, sissone, wolf hop*); body waves (*body wave through toe-balance stand*), turns (*turn on one leg, illusion turn, turn in knee scale*); holds (*planche, scale forward, standing split forward with hand support in front of support leg*); mounts (*flank to rear support, press to cross handstand, aerial walkover forward to cross stand*) and dismounts (*gainer salto, Arabian double salto forward tucked, salto backward stretched*).

In floor exercises the same terminology for women's and men's events is used. The main terms are acrobatic and dance elements. The former consist of rolls (*dive roll, Endo roll to handstand*), handstands (*Japanese handstand*), hand support elements with or without a flight phase (*press to handstand, handspring forward with twist after hand support, flic-flac, round-off*) and saltos (*aerial walkover, aerial cartwheel, salto forward, Arabian salto, gainer salto, whip salto*). The latter consist of turns (*turn in tuck stand, turn with free leg held upward, illusion turn*), leaps (*cat leap, split leap, split ring leap, switch leap with turn*), jumps (*straddle pike jump, wolf jump with turn*) and hops (*fouetté hop, wolf hop, tuck hop with turn*). The same terminology is also used in men's and women's vault. The groups of vaults include direct vaults (*stoop vault, hecht vault*), vaults with one turn in the first flight phase (*jump forward with one turn and handspring forward*), handspring and Yamashita style vaults (*forward handspring, Roche with 1/2 turn, Yamashita with turn*), vaults with 1/4 turn in the first flight phase (*Tsukahara piked*) and

round-off entry vaults (*round-off and handspring backward, Yurchenko stretched*) [4, 8].

The most enigmatic seem probably such terms as *Tkachev, Jaeger, Yurchenko* or *Tsukahara*. These highly professional terms, used only in artistic gymnastics, were invented to abbreviate long names which described very complicated elements. *Tkachev* is an element performed on the bar, in which the gymnast swings backwards and releases the bar close to the top of the swing, then flies backwards over the bar in straddle or pike position to catch the bar on the other side. *Jaeger* is a kind of somersault, performed on the bar, in which from reverse or el-grip, the gymnast swings forwards, releases the bar and does a forward salto before catching the bar with a regular grip. *Yurchenko* is a term used to name the entire group of vaults with round-off entries. One example is the *Yurchenko-double twist*, where the gymnast does a round-off onto the springboard, a back handspring onto the vaulting table, and a double twisting flip off the table. *Tsukahara* is also a term used to name the vault, in which the gymnast jumps off the springboard and then does a 1/2 twist before pushing off the vaulting table backwards. These kinds of gymnastic terms are invented in a simple way: the name of the new element is the surname of the athlete who performs it as the first during the competition. This way of the creation the new terms for more and more complex elements is universally applied.

The terminology used in rhythmic gymnastics seems also very complicated. This sport is deeply connected with dance so many terms came from ballet terminology. Examples of these professional terms include *plié, jeté, attitude* or *arabesque*. Furthermore, in rhythmic gymnastics typical gymnastic terms are used like *split, roll, walkover, cartwheel* or *scale*. Generally, terminology in rhythmic gymnastics consists of groups of names for jumps or leaps (*split leap, stag leap, scissors, fouetté, arch jumps, cabriole, jeté with a turn, vertical jump*), balance elements (*balance in passé, balance with stretched free leg in front, Arabesque, Attitude, side scale, back scale, balance on the knee*), pivots (*pivot with trunk bent forward, pivot with trunk in a horizontal position, pivot with change of the body shape, pivot with split without help*), flexibilities and waves (*front split and back bend of the trunk, back split with rotation, illusion forwards, total body wave, rotation on the stomach with back bend of the trunk*) and special elements

for connecting moves with the apparatus (*throws, catches, tosses, rotation, handling, passing through, passing over, snakes, spirals, figure eights*). However, the English vocabulary used in rhythmic gymnastics is unnatural, because the official language of this sport is French. Only to meet the requirements of the FIG English terminology has been invented [4, 8].

Aerobic gymnastics, the youngest sport of gymnastic created in the United States has also its own terminology. All terms used in this sport were invented to name the different elements belonging to four main groups: dynamic strength elements (*Wenson push up, Plio push up, A-frame, cut, leg circle, flair, helicopter, capoeira with twist*), static strength elements (*straddle support, L support, V support, Wenson support, lever support or planche*), jumps and leaps elements (*air turn, free fall, gainer, sagital scale to push up, Cossack jump, frontal split jump, scissor kick, scissor leap*), balance and flexibility elements (*turn, balance, high leg kicks, sagital split, frontal split, illusion, capoeira*). The specific aerobic terms are also the names of basic steps: *march, jog, skip, knee lift, kick, jack and lung*. Generally, the terminology used in aerobic gymnastics is based on terminology of artistic gymnastics [8].

The next sport with its own terminology is acrobatic gymnastics. The terminology used in this sport originally came from the Sokol gymnastic system. Many acrobatic terms are precisely the same as the terms used in general or artistic gymnastics. The difference is that most acrobatic expressions have a descriptive character, which is caused by the necessity of calling mutual positions of two or more human bodies. Generally, the acrobatic terminology consists of the names of individual and group elements both in static or dynamic character. The names of individual static elements are very similar or even the same as the names used in floor exercise events of artistic gymnastics (*handstand, headstand, arabesque, bridge, planche, butterfly, flairs, walkover, cartwheel, free walkover, somersault landing in split*). The acrobatic elements performed by a pair or a group of athletes are pyramids with their static character (*high hand to hand balance, stand on thighs*), dynamic elements with the phase of flight (*stretched somersault from hands to hands, double back somersaults off from hands*) and combined elements consisting of static and dynamic phases (*handstand to handspring dismount*). Of course,

there are also many acrobatic expressions which are symbolic names, like *four high* (the pyramid performed by men's group), *Mexican handstand, Russian lever, crocodile, wine glass split arabesque* (individual balance elements) or *basket* and *platform* (hand positions used in dynamic group elements) [4, 8].

The clearest and most comprehensible seems to be the terminology used in trampoline gymnastics. This is probably because this sport was invented and popularized by the Americans and the trampoline terms come from English. Its terminology consists of several groups of simple terms, which form the base for coining professional names for each separate element. This basic terms cover body positions in midair (*tuck, pike, stretched or layout, puk*), somersaults (*back, front, ball out, cody*), variants of front somersaults with twists (*barani, rudolph/rudy, randolph/randy, adolph*), variants of back somersaults with twists (*full, double full, triple full*), multiple somersaults (*fiffis, triffis, quadriffis*) and the indicators that the number of twists shown are performed in one of the parts of the multiple somersaults (*in, out, middle*) [8]. With these terms it is very easy to name each element performed on the trampoline, e.g. *barani ball out, triple back somersaults tuck, full in rudy out, half out triffis*. The terminology used in tumbling and double-mini trampoline is very similar. The difference lies in using additionally the names of few elements, which cannot be performed on the trampoline, e.g. *aerial, round-off, flic-flac, front handspring* and *whip back*.

This enormous diversity of gymnastic terms is caused by the great number of different movements and body positions assumed in gymnastic elements. Some gymnastic terms are always used exactly in the same form. For example, the names of body positions: *tuck, pike* and *stretched* are used in all kinds of gymnastic disciplines and these names always mean the same. But the rules of description of the separate element are different. A good example may be the name of the same element in three different sports of gymnastics: *stretched salto backwards* used in artistic gymnastics, *straight back salto* in acrobatic gymnastics and, *layout back salto* in trampoline gymnastics. Another example is the name of compositions which a gymnast performs during the competition: *program* used in artistic gymnastics, *composition* in rhythmic gymnastics, *routine* in acrobatic and trampoline gymnastics and *pass* in tumbling.

This lack of standardization of gymnastic terminology caused that many people can not or do not want to understand how the gymnastic elements are performed, and what is the real sense of gymnastics as a sport. People are always afraid of what they do not understand. Moreover, such a large number of different terms may cause various problems with understanding and translating the gymnastic official regulations, especially for people who do not speak English fluently. Subtle linguistic differences can be reasons for misunderstandings. The words which sound very similar do not always have the same meaning. For example, *artistic* in English does not have the same meaning as the Polish adjective *artystyczny* and the Poles often confuse artistic gymnastics with rhythmic gymnastics.

The FIG still tries to establish standardization of gymnastic sports. About twenty years ago the FIG Executive Committee attempted to introduce a new way of communication for gymnastic worldwide. It was the Women's Artistic Technical Committee, which as the first applied an international symbol language. This is a system of special graphic symbols which are substitutes for words. The idea of inventing the shorthand system was justified by the need for communication system among all the judges, coaches and gymnasts, breaking the linguistic barriers. Another example of uniformity among the FIG sports are decisions about standardization of the names of the FIG sports. Since the last year official international names of all sports of gymnastics have been coined according to a simple formula. Today's artistic gymnastics in the past was called gymnastics or Olympic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics was called callisthenics or modern gymnastics, acrobatic gymnastics was known in the past as sport acrobatics, aerobic gymnastics was known as sport aerobic and trampoline gymnastics was called trampolining for many years. Now, there is a big chance of inventing truly unified international gymnastic terminology.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cogan K.D., Vidmar P., Sport Psychology Library: Gymnastics, Fitness Information Technology, Inc., Morgantown, WV, 2000, pp. 7-8.
- [2] Lipoński W., Humanistyczna encyklopedia sportu (The Humanistic Encyclopedia of Sport), entry on Gimnastyka (Gymnastics), *Sport i Turystyka*, Warszawa 1987, pp. 96-99.
- [3] Newman G., ed., The Concise Encyclopedia of Sports, sec. revised ed., Frankil Watts, New York-London-Toronto 1986, pp. 93-96.
- [4] Polak E., Polsko-angielski słownik pojęć i terminów gimnastycznych (Polish-English Dictionary of Gymnastic Expressions and Terms), Rzeszów University Press, Rzeszów 2007.
- [5] Polak E., Huzarski M., Gymnastics in Modern Europe, (in:) J. Kosiewicz, K. Obodyński, eds., Sport and Society, European Association for Sociology of Sport and University of Rzeszów, Rzeszów 2004, pp. 105-115.
- [6] Polok K., Myszakowski-Connor H., Pros and Cons of Teaching of the sporting aspects of the so-called 'International English', *Przegląd Naukowy Kultury Fizycznej Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego*, (The Scientific Review of Physical Culture of Rzeszow University) 2007, vol. 2, pp. 128-133.
- [7] Prestidge P., Women's Gymnastics for Performer and Coach, Faber and Faber Limited, London 1974.
- [8] The International Federation of Gymnastics Code of Points 2009-2012, The Regulations for Women's Artistic Gymnastics, Men's Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Acrobatic Gymnastics, Aerobic Gymnastics and Trampoline Gymnastics.
- [9] Werner P.H., Teaching Children Gymnastics: Becoming a Master Teacher, Human Kinetics, Champaign 1994.