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BOOK REVIEWS

Ewa Polak, *Gymnastics. A Polish-English Dictionary of Terms and Concepts*, Rzeszów University Publishing House, Rzeszów 2009.

To ensure the dynamic growth of sports, new impulses are required to facilitate the development and promotion of new types and techniques of exercise, as well as new methods of sports training and coaching. The foreign language barrier is a frequent obstacle to international communication and contacts between experts in various sports. The complexity of a particular movement, the correctness of its performance, as well as the need to understand what the coach is trying to share with the athlete, pose difficulties for the instructors, coaches and athletes – both in the native tongue and a foreign one. Today, the lingua franca of multiple fields of human activity, including sport, is English. Consequently, there is strong demand for any means facilitating the unification and comprehension of specialized sports terminology. An example of a lexicographic work addressing these needs is *Gymnastics – A Polish-English Dictionary of Terms and Concepts* published by the Rzeszów University Publishing House in 2007. This unique dictionary on the Polish publishing market was written by Ewa Polak, a lecturer at the Department of Physical Education at the University of Rzeszów.

In recent years a number of lexicographic publications in English have appeared in Poland and abroad, intended for various groups of specialists. However, it must be emphasized that it is monolingual dictionaries which account for an overwhelming majority of these titles. They require an advanced level of language knowledge on the part of their prospective users on the one hand; and a certain degree of familiarity with the techniques of reading a lexicographic text or – to put it bluntly – the know-how necessary for the use of such a source, on the other hand. The publication by Ewa Polak is a specialized bilingual dictionary.

In the opinion of the author of this review, any lexicographic work offers a specific profile of the assumed objectives, scope and is directed at specific target audience. Accordingly, it must be observed that any lexicon or dictionary can be

evaluated from two different perspectives, namely that of a lexicographer and that of its prospective user. According to the author of the reviewed *Dictionary*, her lexicographic publication is intended mainly for the people who are eager to enhance their knowledge of English while augmenting their professional expertise. The potential users of the dictionary will include:

- a) people involved in the sports world;
- b) people involved in the discipline of gymnastics (athletes, coaches, judges, as well as sports and physical education students);
- c) people involved in physical recreation and physical education teachers who work with foreigners.

Gymnastics – A Polish-English Dictionary of Terms and Concepts is a thematic-alphabetic publication, with entries subdivided into four major thematic areas:

- 1) terminology related to physical movements;
- 2) terms, expressions and phrases which should be used by gymnastics teachers, instructors and coaches;
- 3) terminology of particular competitive gymnastic disciplines (i.e. Aerobic Gymnastics, Acrobatic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Artistic Gymnastics, Trampoline and Tumbling Gymnastics).

Within the thematic sections, particular dictionary entries (main and secondary) have been presented alphabetically. The author of the *Dictionary* uses – to some extent – the entry-nesting technique: a number of the entries have been structured based on the relations of hyponymy/hyperonymy and meronymy, as demonstrated by the structure of such entries as *palec*:

palec (nogi) – toe
kłob palucha – ball of the foot
mały palec – little toe
paluch – big toe; great toe

or *przerzut*:

przerzut – handspring; flip,

przerzut w przód z odbicia jednonóż – hand-spring,

przerzut w przód z odbicia obunóż – flyspring,

przerzut w tył – back handspring; back flip.

The most important elements of the grammatical information introduced by the author to the dictionary entries include – where applicable – the irregular plural forms of nouns, as well as the past participles and past forms of English irregular verbs.

Another aspect of the publication is the phonetic notation of English words. In general, the two most popular phonetic transcription systems used in contemporary lexicographic publications are the systems developed by D. Jones (1967) and J.C. Wells, whose *Pronunciation Dictionary* (2000) was complemented with the so-called General American pronunciation, which may be possibly interpreted as a linguistic interpretation of the latest globalization trends. Recently, yet another phonetic transcription system has been proposed by Kałuża (2000). In her *Dictionary*, Ewa Polak offers pronunciation transcripts based on Wells's (2000) system, consistently appended to all main entries. It might be suggested to the author that while working on a new edition of her publication, she should possibly allow for the accentuation of the most important expressions in a given entry, as well as the information on the pronunciation of compound words or set phrases found in many sections of the *Dictionary*. Importantly, the author differentiates between the British and American varieties of English, taking note both of their different spelling and pronunciation.

The *Dictionary* contains 1,400 entries, with 70 entries presented in a monolingual form (in English). For a better understanding of the specialized terminology, the author has included numerous pictures to help readers visualize the contents and thus understand the entries. This allows for precise identification of various entries concerned mainly with the body postures during exercise, the equipment and aids used in gymnastics, as well as elementary exercises. Apart from the official international gymnastic terminology, the *Dictionary* comprises a number of expressions used in the colloquial register. Consequently, both the pictures appended to particular entries, as well as explanations of everyday expressions (offered mainly in the fourth chapter) facilitate the accessibility of the contents to those readers who are not professionally involved

in gymnastics. This fact results in a substantial increase in the number of the prospective users of the *Dictionary* and allows for a better understanding of the intricacies of gymnastic routines.

Given the objectives assumed by the author of *Gymnastics – A Polish-English Dictionary of Terms and Concepts*, it seems that they have been fully attained. The publication is a valuable contribution and to the filling of the gap in the existing resources of Polish-English specialized dictionaries. On the Polish lexicographic market there has been no other title concerned with gymnastics as a sports discipline. The *Dictionary* constitutes a certain challenge to specialists in other sports, and demonstrates that it is worth promoting specialized sports terminology, also in the form of bilingual dictionaries. This brings two benefits: it promotes standardized sports terminology and makes it possible to increase athletes' linguistic competence of athletes. On the other hand, specialist terminology is thus made accessible to those who are not involved in sports but nevertheless find it necessary to translate various specialized texts into English.

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