

Alan Stanton and Susan Morris:
CAE Practice Tests Plus (with key).
Longman / Pearson Education 1999,
Harlow, England.

For those of you that haven't taken a British-based internationally-marketed English exam recently, or who cannot remember acronyms, let me start with a bit of background. The CAE is one of the more recent of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate productions: the Certificate in Advanced English, from the people who brought you the First Certificate and the Proficiency exams. The CAE fits between the two, as it was felt by students and teachers for many years that the gap in level between these internationally-recognised standards of English language use was too wide for most people to leap at a single step. No doubt the fact that these exams earn a large income for the UCLES examining board, publishers, various British Council teaching institutes and other language academies also played a role in its design. It has been around for nearly ten years now, and is offered three times a year (in March, June and December), with five papers in the exam which each receive equal weighting in the mark scheme: Reading, Writing, English in Use, Listening and Speaking.

It could be a good exam standard for Spanish university students to attain, especially as the First Certificate tends

to be taken by highly-motivated teenagers or young adults, who are then left at the infamous «plateau» level of English, with near-native speaker level Proficiency English a far-off dream, more suitable to Swedes or the Dutch, who use English as a second language to a level that would put most British or American speakers to shame. People complain about exams, but they can provide an incentive to keep studying, and a focus for language concerns for teachers and students, especially when access to the language is not otherwise easy.

The test-book by Stanton and Morris under review here contributes positively to this need for higher levels of English and a serious approach to L2 learning. It provides a dual service, firstly by offering five practice tests in full (including transcripts of listening texts, for use with tapes, and glossy colour photos used as prompts in the Speaking part, so that students will be familiar with the format of the exam before the actual day). Secondly it offers a parallel Guide (useful for taught classes or individual study) which provides an overview of the whole exam, and explanation of the aims and objectives, the «formats and focuses», of each section. There are also the «Tip strips» set alongside the tests: highlighted exam tips and practical advice (not particularly original, but which it seems can never be repeated too often, given the state of nerves students get into

when faced with an exam). This guide includes detail about how each paper is marked, and uses valuable concepts such as skimming for general meaning and scanning for particular detail, looking for cohesion and coherence across texts, or paying attention to register and target audience when dealing with writing tasks.

The choice of texts is intelligent, authentic and adult, from a wide range of publications (*The Guardian* newspaper, *The Economist* magazine, *BBC Wildlife* magazine etc.) It may be a surprise to Spanish students to see that there is no specific «grammar» paper; the closest thing is the English in Use paper, which tests lexis (vocabulary, collocation, word formation) as well as grammatical constructions and appropriate style and register through cloze exercises, identification of errors and transformations, all text-based (i.e. they involve reading a short text), thus providing contextual clues, as real language use does.

A final point that will be much appreciated by students trying to understand not just the correct answer but, often much more difficult, why the other answers in a multiple-choice test are wrong: the Key offers comments and explanations on each answer, thus highlighting what strategies must be adopted by the sensitive examinee in order to pass this highly challenging, and ultimately rewarding, exam. (Dr.

Maureen MULLIGAN, *Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*).

Navarro, Fernando A. *Diccionario crítico de dudas inglés-español de medicina*. Madrid, Buenos Aires, Caracas, Guatemala, Lisboa, México, Nueva York, Panamá, San Juan, Santafé de Bogotá, Santiago, Saõ Paulo, Auckland, Hamburgo, Londres, Milán, Montreal, Nueva Delhi, París, San Francisco, Sydney, Singapur, St. Louis, Tokio, Toronto: McGraw – Hill – Interamericana. 2000. Pp.576.

Extenso y erudito, expansivo y discursivo. El resultado es un diccionario que nos habla de los términos y del uso de las palabras de especialidad médica y de su fuerza de expresión en el campo de la medicina. Las definiciones que se ofrecen a partir de las ricas reflexiones de su autor (médico especialista y traductor médico en los Laboratorios Roche, Basilea –Suiza–) se adentran sin misterio en la claridad y en el acierto de lo que significa en el mundo de la ciencia médica la efectividad en la comunicación.

El lenguaje para médicos se ha hecho mayor y vive en la posada del progreso constante. Un conjunto de nueva terminología convive con ricas e importantes expresiones anteriores. Los términos se definen y acoplan a nuevos y rigurosos criterios de significación. Les acompañan las frases y el contex-

to (británico o norteamericano); también la opinión y la justificación científica. En su conjunto, el Diccionario responde a una filosofía práctica de mantener aquello que es imperecedero en la campo de la comunicación médica con la inmediatez o fugacidad de algún quiebro léxico o terminológico marcado por los avatares de la investigación médica.

El *Diccionario crítico de dudas inglés-español de medicina* cubre más de veinte mil palabras y expresiones inglesas de traducción difícil y, en algunos casos, engañosa. Porque, según Navarro, «el inglés *anthrax* no significa ántrax, su *frenectomy* no es nuestra frenectomía, *matron* no es matrona, un *anesthetist* no es un anestesista, *evidence* no es evidencia, *osteoarthritis* no significa osteoartritis, *pest* no es la peste y tampoco *sleeping disease* es la enfermedad del sueño».

En unos tiempos en que se cuestiona cuál ha de ser el papel de los diccionarios en los campos de la Filología y la Traducción especializada o, más específicamente, cuál ha de ser su orientación titular, el hecho de no haber sido un diccionario de ciencias de la salud o un diccionario biomédico responde a la denuncia intrínseca que su autor pretende hacer sobre los eufemismos innecesarios y, a veces, interesados que provoca la industria farmacéutica al sustituir, por ejemplo, el vocablo «medicina» por el de «salud» con el fin de evitar posibles asociaciones con los

conceptos negativos de «enfermedad» y «dolor». Algo parecido ocurre en inglés con *toxicity* por *tolerability*.

Una buena parte de las publicaciones médicas que se hacen en lengua española son el resultado de un riguroso proceso de traducción a partir del inglés. La incorporación de un elevado volumen de citas bibliográficas que se hacen en revistas científicas de tirada periódica en el campo de la medicina así lo evidencia. En ese sentido, los destinatarios de dicho texto no han de ser sólo los traductores médicos sino también los médicos traductores. Ambos necesitarán seguramente adquirir una mayor especialización en el ejercicio de sus profesiones. De un lado, el traductor de especialidad que ha de escoger entre los diversos caminos para puntualizar mejor sus dudas; del otro lado, el médico que al hacer uso de su formación lingüística ha de precisar en el contexto médico la respuesta a su problemática léxica. Porque, como explica Navarro «la palabra *billion* corresponde a un billón en Inglaterra, pero sólo a mil millones en los Estados Unidos; los *pants* son calzoncillos para un lord inglés, pero pantalones para un californiano; el *gallon* británico equivale a 4,55 litros, mientras que el estadounidense sólo equivale a 3,79 litros; una *nursing-home* es una clínica particular en Inglaterra, pero una residencia de ancianos en los Estados Unidos; el título *MD* equivale a nuestro doctorado en Oxford, pero a nuestra licen-

ciatura en Harvard; el *Surgeon General* es en los Estados Unidos el director de los servicios estatales de salud pública, mientras que en Inglaterra es el jefe del cuerpo de sanidad de la armada». (Santiago HENRÍQUEZ JIMÉNEZ, *Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*).

Fortin, François. *SPORTS. The Complete Visual Reference.* Canada: Firefly Books. 2000. Pp.372.

In this highly original book, François Fortin looks afresh at Marathon, Javelin, Hammer, Cross-country, Shot Put, High Jump, Pole Vault, Long Jump, Triple Jump, Hephthalon and Decathlon, Race Walking, Discus, 100 Meters, 200 Meters,... Relays, (small ball and large ball), Combat Sports, Motor Sports and Sports of Aestheticism in their proper real context. Techniques, competitions, facilities, tactics, rules, calculations and marks, official's signals or how a competition is organized are some of the central ideas for discussion and exposition.

Sports... is an indispensable handbook for all those interested in specialised teaching. It offers an extensive account of the multiplicity and variety of sports and sport specialised language, while providing clear colourful pictures and drawings of real sport scenes excellently done. The book is full of key themes and images. The

author examines these with reference to a broad range of readers, from students, language teachers, university scholars, to professional sportmen and women who want to know more about the universe of sport. It is a sustained, intelligent and refreshingly passionate book about what constitutes the focus of physical activity. It is an excellent compendium of an admittedly broad subject in which those university students interested in approaching to this subject will surely find particular attention to what they are looking for within the world of sport.

As François Fortin writes in his «Editor's note» «Sports: the Complete Visual Reference... gives readers a real understanding of what athletes do and how each sport works... readers will discover the history of each sport and its evolution into its current form... the physical environment for competitions along with specific terms and expressions». It has a highly successful integration of language and pictures, grammar structures and texts, explanation of olympic symbols and sport as an international cultural phenomenon, conveying the social values of fame and success.

This approach derives from a perceived change in what constitutes «contemporary portrait of sport» in a period not only characterized by international competition but also by the achievement of excellence in the field of top-level sport.

From the language teaching point of view the most relevant aspect of *Sports...* is that it has separate chapters tracing the separation of specialised terms and meanings. «As a reader», imitating Dan Bartges' words in *Sports made simple* (1999), «each sport is wrapped in its own sensory atmosphere that can only be appreciated ringside... Reading sports is about enjoying

yourself». That is the way in which we have to approach the book. It will facilitate knowledge and learning of a specific english beginning to be demanded by university students and lecturers because sports continue to be the best example of globalization and it still seeks larger audiences. (Santiago HENRÍQUEZ JIMÉNEZ, *Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria*).