

The Oxford Studijní slovník – a New Semi-Bilingual Dictionary for Czech Learners of English

Martin Prošek

Institute of the Czech Language, The Academy of the Sciences
of the Czech Republic, Prague
prosek@ujc.cas.cz

Janet Phillips

janet.phillips@oup.com
Oxford University Press

Abstract:

Two semi-bilingual dictionaries for Czech learners of English entered the Czech market in the 1990s, and last year OUP brought out a new one: *Oxford Studijní slovník: výkladový slovník angličtiny s českým překladem*. In this article, we look at the particular elements which make this new dictionary semi-bilingual and why this style of dictionary was adopted. We discuss the pedagogical benefits of a dictionary that contains both L1 (Czech) translations and L2 (English) definitions, referring to existing research specifically on the use of semi-bilingual dictionaries and drawing on studies that examine more broadly the benefits of use of the L1 in the learning of a foreign language. We also look in detail at the key features of the *Oxford Studijní slovník* – the relationship between the English definitions and their Czech translations, example sentences, usage notes, the Czech-English side to the dictionary, and additional features in the CD-ROM version of the dictionary – including how it differs from previous semi-bilinguals for Czech learners.

Key words:

bilingualised/bilingualized, Czech, dictionary, English, learner's/learners'/learner dictionary, semi-bilingual

Introduction: What is a Semi-Bilingual Learner's Dictionary?

Many students and teachers of English throughout the world are now familiar with monolingual learners' dictionaries and what they offer to learners of the language in comparison with conventional bilinguals. They expect to find in them coverage – appropriate to the student's level – of the contemporary language necessary for speaking and everyday (non-literary) writing (often with American or British variants), clear definitions that avoid words the user is unlikely to know, examples showing typical contexts and common collocations, grammar labelling and usage notes, and study pages. Above all they expect a learner's dictionary to do more than tell them the meanings of words: it must also help them learn to use them correctly.

Less familiar are learner bilinguals, and even more so the sub-group of semi-bilingual or bilingualized dictionaries. What indeed is meant by semi-bilingual/bilingualized? These terms are applied to a range of dictionary styles: dictionaries that adapt pre-existing monolingual dictionaries by replacing the English definitions with translations; dictionaries that retain the English definitions but supplement each sense with a translation into the L1; and dictionaries that translate the definition into the L1. Some semi-bilinguals are one-sided (L2–L1) dictionaries, while others have some kind of L1–L2 side – making them thus useful for encoding in the L2 as well as decoding. Semi-bilinguals vary too in the extent to which the L1 is used or not for grammar labels, usage notes and translation of English examples.

Two semi-bilinguals entered the Czech market in the 1990s: *Password: Anglický výkladový slovník s českými ekvivalenty* (1991); and *Anglicko-český výkladový slovník* (1998). *Password* (1991) is based on the 1985/6 edition of the *Chambers Concise Usage Dictionary*, a dictionary written for a broad audience, not just foreign learners of the language. The English definitions were kept, and Czech translations were added to the end of each sense. Examples, labels and usage notes were left untranslated, and there is no Czech-English section. The *Lidové noviny* publication was based on the 1990 edition of the *Collins COBUILD Student's Dictionary* as part of the Bridge Project. It also retained the English definitions (full sentences in the Cobuild style) but added full translations of them in Czech. Direct translation equivalents were given only in cases where the languages are close enough for further explanation to be redundant. The dictionary has only an English-Czech side. Notes on usage are translated into Czech, but the examples are untranslated.

Oxford University Press brought out a new semi-bilingual dictionary for Czech learners of English towards the end of 2010: the *Oxford Studijní slovník: výkladový slovník angličtiny s českým překladem (OSS)*. What were the motivations for publishing another semi-bilingual for Czech learners, and how does it differ from the ones that came before it? We will discuss first of all what we consider to be the pedagogical strengths of the semi-bilingual style we chose for the *OSS*. Then we will describe in greater detail the style of the dictionary and its various features.

What are the merits of a semi-bilingual dictionary?

The *OSS* is based on the monolingual *Oxford Student's Dictionary* (2007)¹ and as such is suited to students at intermediate to advanced level, in particular secondary-school students, including those studying other subjects through the medium of English. The English definitions, grammar labelling and examples have been retained from the parent dictionary, and Czech translations have been added to each sense. Explanatory usage notes have been translated into Czech, whereas notes presenting collocations and related vocabulary have been kept in English. The dictionary has a Czech-English section, the creation of which we explain below.

In the following passage on the merits of semi-bilinguals, 'semi-bilingual' refers only to the style of the *OSS* (in essence, English definitions + Czech translations).

Opinions differ on the extent to which use of the L1 in L2 language learning is a help or a hindrance. Fashionable for a good part of the last century in pedagogical theory were the

1 The *OSS* has 52,000 words, expressions and meanings in British and American English, 32,000 English examples, 54,000 Czech equivalents, and 2,300 usage notes.

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ideas of the Direct Method, which eschewed the use of the L1. As Guy Cook has suggested in his recent book *Translation in Language Teaching* (Cook, 2010), the growth of the English teaching industry, the proliferation of multi-national classes, and the prestige accorded to native-speaker teachers were not unrelated to this fashion. While classroom practice, particularly where students shared the same L1, may have continued using the L1 to varying extents, it is only in recent years that theorists have started to scrutinize the claims of the Direct Method and argue the benefits of some use of the L1. There is a growing body of writing and research which argues that relating a new language to the student's first language increases the depth and speed of comprehension, and helps anchor pieces of the new language in his/her memory. Contrary to the fears of those who have advocated monolingual teaching of new languages, a judicious use of the L1, rather than being detrimental to the development of fluency and the ability to think in the L2, may actually help students reach those goals. In his book, Cook (2010) advocates use of the L1 (including the practice of translation) as one of various techniques for effective language teaching. There could be lessons or parts of lessons that make a close study of new material involving translation or drawing on comparisons with the L1; and other times when students are encouraged to work solely in the L2, to reinforce what they have learnt and develop their fluency. A quick translation of a word, or explanation in the L1 of either a point of usage or the nature of the task set, may enhance the learning experience in a variety of ways.²

Likewise, monolingual learners' dictionaries have been considered the more pedagogically sound choice by many teachers for immersing students in the L2 and thereby pushing them to learn new material through the medium of the L2 and, in theory, enhancing their ability to think in the L2. As Beryl Atkins (1985, p. 22) put it in her comparison of monolingual and bilingual dictionaries:

‘Monolinguals are good for you (like wholemeal bread and green vegetables); bilinguals (like alcohol, sugar and fatty foods) are not, though you may like them better.’

The climate may, however, now be changing so that teachers view bilingual learners' dictionaries more favourably, not just as the easier option but as having certain pedagogical benefits, one being as a bridge towards use at advanced levels of a monolingual dictionary.

Batia Laufer, in collaboration with other linguists, has researched various aspects of the use of the L1 in L2 teaching, including semi-bilingual dictionary usage. In their experiment comparing the test results for the teaching of 10 English words and 10 collocations by three different teaching methods, Laufer and Girsai (2008) found that it was the students taught through contrastive analysis with the L1 and translation who achieved significantly higher results on all tests.

2 Cook argues that acknowledgement of and respect for the students' cultural backgrounds through reference to the L1 can improve their self-esteem and with it the attitude they bring to learning the L2. He also makes the point in connection with translation as a classroom task that 'To produce a good translation, learners cannot avoid problematic words or structures since they are predetermined by the source language', and refers to M. Källkvist's evidence from cognitive psychology 'that the elaborate processing required to deal with translation may aid retention in the memory' (Cook, 2010, p. 90).

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Laufer's research on dictionary usage points to benefits students gain from having both an L1 translation and L2 definition. In their article 'Assessing the effectiveness of monolingual, bilingual and 'bilingualised' dictionaries in the comprehension and production of new words', Laufer and Hadar (1997, p. 195) comment:

'Even when the monolingual part of the entry is used to its full potential, as in the case of our good dictionary users, the translation may still be helpful in reassuring and reinforcing the learner's decisions about the meaning and use of new words.'

In the case of L2 words which have a full equivalent in the L1, the student will more easily grasp the meaning of the new English item via a single-word translation than an English definition. But, of course, a lot of words simply do not correspond one-for-one between languages. Looking at new L2 words and expressions in comparison with the L1 can pinpoint the vocabulary and grammar which does not neatly map between the two, and so requires special attention and effort. Much has been made of the inexactitude of translation and the fact that word-for-word translation rarely works, or at least not in achieving idiomatic and grammatical language equal in meaning. One-for-one equivalents may often be insufficient, without elaboration, to convey all the nuances and limitations of a word or phrase. There are classic cases of this: the lack of a simple match for the German *gemütlich*; no complete equivalents for words such as *privacy*, *sophisticated* and *efficient* in Russian; more detailed terms for types of camel in Arabic than in English, etc. Items peculiar to a particular culture are always difficult to translate (e.g. in the case of Czech, *pomlázka*, *knedlík*, *koláč*, and different types of mushroom all of which the average English native speaker would refer to by the generic term *mushroom*). It would be nonsense, however, to suggest that good translation is not pretty successful overall in conveying meanings of other languages to learners, or at least a conceptual starting point from which they can refine their understanding of a word as their knowledge and experience of the L2 grows. Even when translation as such is not part of the curriculum, it takes place in the brains of the students, to varying extents. Then there is the question of efficiency. While it is easy enough in the classroom to hold up a pencil and teach the word *pencil*, the amount of language required to explain more complex terms for which you do not have an object or picture to hand is considerable. Of course, the teacher can draw on dictionary definitions, but there are times - for example, when the meaning of an unknown word is not the main focus of the lesson- where it would be reasonable to refer the student to an L1 translation. As Hrdlička (2009, p. 15) has commented in relation to the teaching of Czech as a foreign language (though the same applies to any foreign language):

„[...] přímá metoda nepracuje s jazykem výchozím, tj. mateřským [...], ani s překladem (což ale při opisu neznámého výrazu může vést ke zbytečným a zdlouhavým ‚piruetám‘).“ [Translation: '... the direct method does not make use of the first language (i.e. the mother tongue) [...], nor of translation (which means, however, that explanation of an unknown word can result in unnecessary and long-winded "pirouettes").']

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A semi-bilingual dictionary that provides students with translations as well as a rich quantity of material in the L2 – in the form of definitions and examples – gives them scope to develop both semantic and grammatical accuracy and fluency in the L2. Teachers might dream of users reading through the whole of each dictionary entry – so in the case of a semi-bilingual – reading both the definition and translation, as well as all the examples and usage notes – but that is probably most often not the case. Time alone means that students will often choose the quickest solution. A semi-bilingual dictionary offers students a range of material from which they can select what best suits their particular needs at the moment or their inclinations as learners. In their investigation of how bilingualized dictionaries are used, Laufer and Kimmel (1997, pp. 361–369) collected data on exclusive use of either the translation or the definition, alternation between the two, or use of both.³ They concluded that:

‘The bilingualised dictionary seems to cater for a variety of look-up possibilities and individual preferences.’

Features of the *OSS*

There are several features that distinguish the *OSS* from conventional bilingual dictionaries, namely: L2 (English) definitions in addition to L1 (Czech) translations, example sentences, usage notes, an index-like Czech-English side to the dictionary, and a CD-ROM containing an electronic version of the dictionary and supplementary material. Each of these features merits closer examination.

1. English Definitions and Czech translations

Students may not initially see the point of having both definitions and translations. The definitions in the *OSS* are not there just to make life difficult for them, but because they can – in some cases in particular – offer more than a simple translation is able to achieve.⁴ Let us look at some entries from the *OSS* where the importance or efficacy of translation vary.

A) Concrete nouns that usually have a one-for-one translation which fully and unambiguously conveys the meaning of the English word:

daisy /ˈdeɪzi/ noun [C] (pl. **daisies**) a small white flower with a yellow centre, which usually grows wild in grass ► **sedmikráska**

knee ɔː /miː/ noun [C] **1** the place where your leg bends in the middle ► **koleno**: *Angie fell and grazed her knee.* ◊ *She was on her hands and knees (ležla po čtyřech) on the floor looking for her earrings.* ◊ *Come and sit on my knee.* **2** the part of a pair of trousers, etc. that covers the knee ► **koleno**: *There's a hole in the knee of those jeans.*

3 10 per cent of the students tested used both the Hebrew translation and the English definition each time; an additional 9.5 per cent used all three approaches throughout the test: just the translation, just the definition, or both (Laufer – Kimmel, 1997, p. 367).

4 Another benefit of the definitions is that, together with the examples, they helped focus the minds of the translators on the elements of meaning and usage their translations needed to cover.

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'drawing pin (US thumbtack) noun [C] a short pin with a flat top, used for fastening paper, etc. to a board or wall ► **připínáček**

The translations in category A are more precise and efficient than the definitions. Students may know other flowers that fit the daisy definition, but *sedmikráska* eliminates any ambiguity or vagueness. *Koleno* makes crystal clear what part of the leg anatomy we are talking about. And *připínáček* is unambiguous.

B) Senses of words (typically adjectives) containing several elements of meaning, depending on context, and which can be translated in more than one way – The nuances and range of each word are made explicit in the definition. The translations work better in some contexts than others:

pleasant ⁰⁻⁷ /'pleznt/ adj. nice, enjoyable or friendly ► **příjemný, hezký**: *a pleasant evening/climate/place/view* ◊ *a pleasant smile/voice/manner*
OPP UNPLEASANT

intense /m'tens/ adj. very great, strong or serious ► **intenzivní, silný, vysoký**: *intense heat/cold/pressure* ◊ *intense anger/interest/desire*

sophisticated /sə'fɪstɪkətɪd/ adj. **1** having or showing a lot of experience of the world and social situations; knowing about fashion, culture, etc. ► **sofistikovaný, kultivovaný, světaznalý** **2** (used about machines, systems, etc.) advanced and complicated ► **sofistikovaný, technicky propracovaný** **3** able to understand difficult or complicated things ► **zkušený, znalý**: *Voters are much more sophisticated these days.*

In category B, the definition and translations bolster each other, and a significant role is played by the examples, which provide typical contexts and collocations.

C) Words which do not have an equivalent in Czech so require a definition-style translation:

custard /'kʌstəd/ noun [U] a sweet yellow sauce made from milk, eggs and sugar. In Britain it is eaten hot or cold with sweet dishes. ► **vaječný pudinkový krém**

ASBO /'æzbəʊ/ noun [C] **antisocial behaviour order**; in the UK, an order made by a court which says that sb must stop behaving in a harmful or annoying way to other people ► **soudní příkaz k zamezení protispolečenského jednání**

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AS (level) /eɪ 'es levl/ noun [C,U] **Advanced Subsidiary (level)**; a British exam usually taken in Year 12 of school or college (= the year before the final year) when students are aged 17. Together with A2 EXAMS, AS levels form A LEVELS, which are needed for entrance to universities. ► **postupové zkoušky v předposledním roce střední školy**: *She's doing an AS (level) in French.* ⇨ look at A2 (LEVEL)

The translations in category C are mini-definitions, but the English definitions carry the greater burden of conveying the elements in the words' meanings.

It could be argued that definitions, especially for category C, would be more user-friendly in the L1 than the L2, but there are good reasons for having them in the L2 throughout the dictionary:

- 1) definitions in the L2 would make the addition of single-word translations (where they are possible) look redundant;
 - 2) the style used in the *OSS* makes more explicit where close equivalence exists between the two languages, and where it does not;
 - 3) English-language definitions provide more advanced or ambitious students with the challenge of trying to understand through the medium of the target language and, with it, fluency practice, and they help them develop the real-world skill of defining something when you do not know the L2 term for it (defining language, including superordinates, and syntactic patterns appropriate to each part of speech, such as: 'a tool/a piece of equipment/a substance/a chemical element/a liquid/an object'; 'the state of being...'; use of past participles and passive constructions – 'that is used for [+ing (sth)]', 'connected with...', '...found [somewhere]', etc.). (Both the translations and the definitions could be extracted from entries for use in the classroom in vocabulary-building games or for tests on new material.)
- D) Cases where no general translation is given at all – It is not always possible to give a meaningful translation of the headword in isolation. In this category, the relevant phrase has instead been translated within the examples of the sense. Sometimes a general translation can neatly convey the general concept (see sense 1 of the adverb *off*), but individual contexts require different translations.

muddle /'mʌdl/ verb, noun

● **verb** [T] **1 ~ sth (up)** to put things in the wrong place or order or to make them untidy ► **pomíchat, zpřeházet**: *Try not to get those papers muddled up.* **2 ~ sb (up)** to confuse sb ► **poplést koho**: *I do my homework and schoolwork in separate books so that I don't get muddled up.*

■ **muddled adj.** ► **zmatený**: *muddled thinking*

● **noun** [C,U]: *If you get in a muddle (zamotáš se), I'll help you.*

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off ɔːf /ɒf/ adv., prep., adj.● **adv.**

Případy ustáleného užití ve spojení se slovesy, např. **go off**, najdete v příslušných slovesných heslech.

1 away from a place or a position on sth ► **prýč**: *I shouted to him but he just walked off.* ◊ *I must be off* (musím jít). *It's getting late.* ◊ *When are you off* (kdy odjíždíš) *to Spain?* ◊ *The lid fell off the box.* Víko krabice spadlo. **2** used to say that something has been removed: *She took her coat off.* Sundala kabát. **3** at some distance in space or time ► **daleko**: *Christmas is still a long way off.* **4** (used about a machine, a light, etc.) not connected, working or being used ► **vypnutý**: *Please make sure the TV/light/heating is off.* [OP] ON **5** not present at work, school, etc. ► **neprítomný**: *She's off sick with flu.* Leží doma s chřipkou. ◊ *I'm having a day off* (volno) *next week.* **6** (used about a plan or arrangement) not going to happen; cancelled ► **zrušený**: *The meeting/wedding/trip is off.* [OP] ON **7** cheaper; less by a certain amount ► **se slevou**: *cars with £400 off*

2. Example sentences

Conventional bilingual dictionaries, where they give example sentences, tend to translate them in full. In the *OSS*, however, to encourage users to work with the English as much as possible without the crutch of Czech, examples are only translated when the general translation for the headword would not neatly slot into a full translation of the example, were it given. In the first sense of *old*, the first two examples do not require any translations as one or both of the sense translations – *starý* and *starobylý* – cover the meanings of *old* there; and Czechs do not need to have it explained which contexts *starý* fits and which *starobylý*. In the third example, though, the phrase *In the old days* does not translate word-for-word into Czech, so the appropriate idiomatic translation *v minulosti* is inserted. The rest of the sentence is left untranslated. The focus of the translation remains in each entry on the headword and its particular usages. Sometimes it is necessary to translate an entire example, either for phrases such as *to get/grow old*:

old ɔːld /əʊld/ adj., noun

● **adj.** **1** that has existed for a long time; connected with past times ► **starý**, **starobylý**: *This house is quite old.* ◊ *old ideas/traditions* ◊ *In the old days* (v minulosti), *people generally had larger families than nowadays.* [OP] NEW, MODERN **2** (used about people and animals) having lived a long time ► **starý**: *My mother wasn't very old when she died.* ◊ *He's only 50 but he looks older.* ◊ *to get/grow old* stárnout [OP] YOUNG **3** (used with a period of time or with *how*) of a particular age ► **starý**: *That building is 500 years old.* ◊ *The book is aimed at eight- to ten-year-olds.* ◊ *How old are you?* **4** having been used a lot ► **starý**; **použitý**, **obnošený**: *I got rid of all my old clothes.* [OP] NEW ☉ look at SECOND-HAND **5** [only before a noun] former; previous ► **starý**, **předchozí**: *I earn more now than I did in my old job.* **6** [only before a noun] known for a long time ► **starý**, **dlouholetý**: *She's a very old friend of mine. We knew each other at school.* **7** [only before a noun] (informal) used for emphasizing that sth has little importance or value: *I write any old rubbish* (všelijaké hlouposti) *in my diary.*

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or because the different syntax or idiomaticity between the two languages make it impossible to translate meaningfully only a portion of the example.

anathema /əˈnæθəmə/ noun [U, C, usually sing.] (formal) a thing or an idea which you hate because it is the opposite of what you believe ► **nenáviděná věc/ myšlenka**: *Racial prejudice is (an) anathema to me.*
Nenávidím rasové předsudky.

3. Usage notes

Usage notes in monolingual dictionaries are prompted in part by common learner mistakes identified by teachers in the field and editors, but what constitutes a common mistake or what are confusable or difficult items of vocabulary for one language group are not always so for another. Bilingual dictionaries, however, with their narrower audience, are able to tailor the dictionary information more closely to the particular needs of each language group.

In the *OSS*, unnecessary notes in the parent dictionary were cut and some new ones added on problems specific to Czech learners. The notes cover issues of grammar (countability, transitivity, irregular forms, complement frames, etc.), synonyms, confusable words, mis-translations and culture (in the broader sense). Explanatory text is translated into Czech, as in the note on the grammar of *baggage* and *luggage*, and the note on usage of *please*:

Baggage a **luggage** jsou nepočitatelná podstatná jména, takže nelze říct *a baggage/luggage* nebo *some baggages/luggages*. Používá se: *a piece of baggage/luggage* a: *a lot of baggage/luggage*.

Všimněte si, že **please** nelze užít jako odpověď na **thank you**. V angličtině nemusíte reagovat vůbec, pokud ale chcete, a to zejména v případě, že jste pro někoho něco udělali, můžete použít jedno z následujících spojení: **that's all right/OK, it's/it was a pleasure, my pleasure, don't mention it**, (zejm. v americké angličtině) **you're welcome** nebo formálněji **not at all**.

Když něco někomu podáváte či mu nabízíte místo k sezení nebo něco k jídlu, nemůžete použít samotné **please** (jako *prosím*). Při podávání něčeho můžete říct **Here/There you are**, ale není to nutné.

Where the purpose of the note is, however, to give related vocabulary and collocations, the text is left in English:

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COLLOCATIONS AND PATTERNS**Agriculture**

Fruit and vegetables **grow** or **are grown**.

Pineapples grow in tropical climates.

We have been growing strawberries for many years.

When fruit is almost ready to pick and eat, it **ripens** or becomes **ripe**.

Peaches ripen in the sun.

Those pears are not quite ripe yet.

A plant **produces** fruit or vegetables.

The tree produces very sweet plums.

The amount of fruit/vegetables collected is the **harvest/crop**.

Growers are expecting a plentiful harvest this year.

Hereford enjoyed a bumper crop of apples.

Fruit that grows on trees grows in **orchards** or **groves**. Nuts grow in **groves**.

apple/cherry orchards

almond/citrus/lemon/olive/orange groves

Plantations are large areas of land where fruit and other crops grow.

banana/coffee/rice/sugar/tea plantations

At the end of a flex there is a **plug** which you fit into a **socket** or a **power point** (US **outlet**).

Notes, such as the one at *sympathetic*, alert the user to the danger of assuming an English word similar in form to a Czech one always has the same meaning:

Pozor! V angličtině má **sympathetic** jiný význam než český výraz *sympatický*, jehož protějškem je **nice** nebo **pleasant**: *I met Alex's sister yesterday. She's very nice.*

The supplementary material in the CD version of the *OSS* also contains a table of English-Czech false friends.

4. The Czech-English Side of the Dictionary

The *OSS* can be used for encoding as well as decoding – production as well as comprehension. The Czech-English side makes this possible. Unlike a conventional bilingual, where both sides are fairly balanced in the amount of material they provide, *OSS*'s Czech-English side is considerably shorter and simpler in content than the English-Czech side. Its style is more that of an index. The intention is that the user, after locating roughly the English word(s) or phrase(s) they might need, then goes to the English side to explore more precisely the properties of each before settling on their choice. For that reason, there is nothing about the pronunciation, grammar or usage of the English items listed under the Czech headwords; such information is found on the English side only. The Czech contents of the Czech-English side all

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derive from the translations given in the initial editing of the dictionary for each sense of each item on the English side. However, these translations do not all show in the English entries. This is the moment to say something about the dictionary's policy on headword translations.

In a conventional bilingual dictionary, which caters to native speakers of both languages, words are usually translated by several synonyms, at least where they exist and are common equivalents – and some dictionaries may also include more obscure synonyms of limited applicability. Synonyms are not always completely interchangeable, so the user will often need further guidance – on nuances of meaning, register and collocation – to make the right choices for production purposes. The *OSS*, being solely for Czech learners (and not in any respect for learners of Czech), has the luxury of giving only as much translation as serves the Czech learner's purposes. We considered it important not to overload the user with more text, more Czech matches, to consider than was necessary so endeavoured to limit the number of translations on the English side to those that were needed to convey the meaning of the English as defined and as shown in the examples. Therefore, the translations on the English side have above all a decoding function. This policy also helped save space in the book and make the entries look less forbidding. Common synonyms were, however, listed by the translators and then in many cases confined to the Czech side of the dictionary, where they became headwords or phrases. In this way, we made sure there were as few gaps as possible in what the user might look up on the Czech side.

As noted above, the Czech side of the dictionary is essentially an index to the English side. With common or very general words, for example *hloupý*, it is not surprising to find a long list of English matches:

hloupý silly, stupid, brainless,
clueless, dense, dozy, dumb, inane,
mindless, obtuse

The English translations are roughly ordered in terms of frequency and usefulness, but to be sure of the nuances and usage of each, the user needs to look them up on the English side of the dictionary.

Sense divisions are numbered and discriminated, and the entries include phrases and separate sections of idioms:

kruh 1 (*geom.*) circle, ring!; ~y pod
očíma bags; udělat ~ kolem koho/
čeho ring² **2** (*lidí*) circle; (**kruhy**)
quarter; vyšší ~y upper class;
nejúžší rodinný ~ (*rodíče a děti*)
nuclear family **3** (*zeměp.*): jižní
polární ~ the Antarctic Circle;
severní polární ~ the Arctic Circle
IDM začarovaný ~ a vicious circle

5. The *OSS* CD-ROM and Supplementary Material

The *OSS* CD-ROM contains the full text of the dictionary, with additional examples, usage notes and illustrations. The user can easily move from one side of the dictionary to the other, and double-click on any English word for a pop-up definition. The pronunciation can be listened to for each headword in either British or American English.

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One of the functions of the *OSS* CD-ROM enables users to hide the translations from the English entries, and then bring them back again. In that way the learner can choose to use the dictionary monolingually or bilingually, or to test their comprehension of the definitions by clicking the Czech translations back in after trying to read the entry without the translations visible.

In addition to the appendices on irregular verbs, geographical terms, number expressions and pronunciation in the book, the CD-ROM contains a range of supplementary material. The section providing help with writing, valuable in particular to secondary-school students, was confined to the CD-ROM so that the dictionary would not be disqualified from use in maturita exams.

Summary

The *Oxford Studijní slovník* has all the features of a monolingual learner's dictionary: the words and phrases from contemporary English (British, with American variants) students need, definitions in clear accessible language, illustrative examples showing typical contexts and key collocations, simple grammar labelling, notes on various aspects of usage, vocabulary-building notes and references, and a rich selection of supplementary material. In addition, there are Czech translations, which provide learners either with reassurance in their L1 of what they have already gleaned from the English material, or the option in each case of using the English definition or the Czech translation – or both – as their means of understanding and learning new language. Having a Czech-English side makes it possible to use the dictionary for production as well as comprehension. The *OSS*'s semi-bilingual style helps build students' confidence that they can not only operate with L2 language they have already acquired but also gain new language through the medium of the L2. For students who continue with their studies in English, the *OSS* may prove to be an effective bridging dictionary to an advanced monolingual dictionary.

In comparison with the semi-bilingual dictionaries published in the nineties for Czech learners, the new *OSS* offers up-to-date language, definitions and notes written specially for foreign learners, a Czech-English section and a CD-ROM.

The Oxford Studijní slovník – a New Semi-Bilingual Dictionary for Czech Learners of English

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