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*Rzecz o nieobecnych. O słownikach polskiego języka migowego*

*On the absent ones. Dictionaries of the polish sign language*

**Słowa kluczowe:** lingwistyka migowa; leksykografia; polski język migowy;

**Keywords:** sign linguistics; polish sign language; lexicography

### Summary

The paper focuses on the description of three lexicographic works: “Słownik mimiczny dla głuchoniemych i osób z nimi styczność mających” (J. Hollak, Warszawa 1879), “Słownik polskiego języka migowego” (J.K. Hendzel, Olsztyn 1986) and “Leksykon języka migowego” (O. Kosiba, P. Grenda, Bogatynia 2011). Both the vocabulary included in the dictionaries and the theoretical assumptions adopted by their authors are analyzed in order to provide answers to a number of questions. The main issue is whether the discussed dictionaries are truly concerned with the Polish Sign Language. It is argued that the dictionaries do not in fact register lexical items belonging to the Polish Sign Language, and that they constitute merely sets of signs roughly equivalent to the Polish lexemes (entries). This also calls for establishing the actual audience of a sign language dictionary. The authors of the analyzed dictionaries view their work’s function in various ways. However, none of them takes the language that is supposed to be illustrated as the starting point – in all the cases, it is the Polish language that constitutes the point of departure. Such solutions entail specific simplifications and deformations of the linguistic material. While analyzing the solutions adapted by the authors of dictionaries, we also take into consideration the circumstances that have influenced or may have influenced their the final shape. In addition, we will point to the difficulties experienced by a lexicographer who intends to create a sign language dictionary. The sign language lexicography faces problems at all stages of the work: from data collecting, through elaborating the method of description, up to compiling entries for specific units. Our report attempts at establishing what kind of a sign language dictionary is anticipated, and why it is so impatiently awaited. The issue of sign language notation is not raised in the paper.