

# Off the bookshelf

## Adrian Melman reviews the much anticipated second edition of a well-regarded Spanish-English dictionary, and finds it to be a 'lexicographical triumph'



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### **Spanish-English Dictionary of Law and Business by Thomas L. West III (£31.99, Intermark Language Publications)**

This is the long-awaited second edition that the author had been promising. The highly rated first edition has been constantly out of print or sold out. So without the benefit of such, I came to this second edition with an open mind or empty head, apart from *tour-de-force* translations (*amigable componeder* and Mexican creatures: *acciones de goce* and *juicio de amparo*) that had filtered through from online resources.

This compendious volume is a sturdy paperback, so likely to withstand dog-earing. It is Spanish into English only, but has an added bonus of (outstanding) translations of Latin expressions. There is no English-into-Spanish volume, so no risk of ITI members' complaints of a redundant language direction and wanting half of their money back.

Spanish-into-English legal and business interpreters and translators are already well served by specialist dictionaries – see the extensive bibliography. Here is a worthy addition.

There are many hints of a US pedigree. Indeed, US cases are quoted and, with spellings like installments, an offense, honor a check, practicing attorney, etc, the work could have been renamed a *Spanish-American Dictionary of Law and Business*. Note the order of the subjects.

I had to decide what hat I should put on to review the work: an American Stetson, Aussie cork hat,

Scottish tam or City of London bowler. I decided on a bowler to test its cross-Atlantic credentials.

The English-language alternatives are confined to the US (no sign of Canada) and the UK (GB + NI), rather than England & Wales, the British Isles or British Commonwealth etc, thereby conflating Scotland and its discrete Scots law terms. This contrasts with the wide range of Hispanic countries covered (20), a boon to those – not everybody – who diversify out of Spain. Puerto Rican (Pue vs PR) and Dominican (Dom) variations come in for special

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mention. Some regard is also had to the England & Wales civil justice terminology reforms of Lord Woolf (\*LW) since 1998.

The preface contains the usual caveat of no claim to comprehensiveness, and adds that the country indication does not necessarily mean that the term is only used, and it may not be the only term used, in that country – which begs the question whether the UK is a single country.

Spanish synonyms are flagged SYN, *canon* alleged to be a 'time-wasting' synonym of *regalla* for a royalty (payment).

Turning to the actual entries,

I found the bold typeface of the source terms and arrangement of the target entries user-friendly. I was struck by some of the opening entries together with explanations or lack of them:

*Abigeato*: theft of livestock; cattle-rustling – left me, recalling no horse-thief translations, puzzled why this term is regurgitated in just about every ES>EN legal dictionary.

*Absolución de posiciones*: (PRO CIV = civil procedure) answering of an oral request for admissions NOT 'answering of interrogatories' – no sign of an up-to-date E&W equivalent.

*Acciones preferentes*: the plural, ostensibly to contrast with collocations of an acción as a remedy or cause of action: (US) preferred shares; (UK) preference shares makes a welcome appearance.

*Acciones privilegiadas*: preferred stock, with no guidance as to whether this is AmE or BrE.

*Activo disponible*: cash on hand and in banks misses the prepositions of the BrE term: cash in hand and at banks or with bankers.

*Acto impugnado*: (admin.) action 'being' contested vs a more literal impugned or contested act.

*Actor*: plaintiff USA; claimant UK/ in a lawsuit (\*LW) but no sign of a pursuer in Scots law.

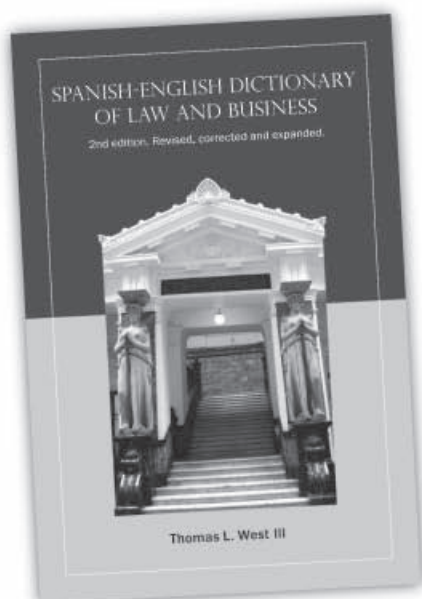
*Actuar ante el tribunal*: 'practice' before the court – glosses over who (an attorney?) is practising what (advocacy?) in court. Lawyers in England & Wales tend to build up practices out of court and a judge in a musical copyright case did indeed practise, on the Chancery Division bench, the chords of a song on an electric piano (to wit, Procol Harum's *Whiter Shade of Pale*).

Now on to my test words:

*Citación/llamamiento en causa/garantía: impleader* – is liable to be confused with *interpleader* and, despite a misconception, is unusable in E&W, which has third-party and joinder processes ('Part 20 claim' \*LW of the *tercería* entry: 'intervention' in a lawsuit).

*Expropiación forzosa* (Pue): 'condemnation' of property – surely not confined to (BrE) compulsory purchase on Puerto Rico alone.

*Insumos*: raw materials,



components, factors of production, inputs – no sign of feedstock.

*Intervenir*: many usable entries.

Pity no stab at the bugbear of '*intervenir una letra de cambio*'.

*Interventor*: again excellent entries, with the Mexican finale of a statutory auditor of a partnership.

*Jactancia*: slander of title; still no sign of malicious falsehood for E&W.

*Juramento decisorio/deferido*: has a 27-word, footnote-type explanation only. The opposite is *juramento indecisorio*. *Quaere*: how to compress when 'urgent'.

*Liquidación*: an expert coverage of business, corporate, employment, litigation, marital/matrimonial and tax permutations and combinations for this 'weasel word'.

*Otrosí*: additional prayer for relief; additional relief claimed (in E&W, claims in the alternative would look more natural).

*Usufructo*: impressively gives a life estate besides *usufruct* (civil law of La) – plus the inspired:

*Usufructo de acciones*: beneficial ownership of shares.

All in all, the dictionary is a lexicographical triumph. Some definitions may be long and unwieldy. Most translations, though, are snappy. It is also an eye-opener for (US) business terms and jargon. Indeed, it fills a gap and is strong on Latin American idiosyncrasies. As the author exhorts, there is no substitute for training and further (no doubt, cross-Atlantic financial and legal) research.



## ITI webinar, facilitated by eCPD Webinars

# SOCIAL MEDIA (NETWORKING) FOR TRANSLATORS

11am, 25 September 2012



The recent explosion of social media websites has forever changed the way we communicate with each other. You probably know how to use them for personal purposes, but do you know how to take advantage of these new and exciting tools to learn more and hone your expertise, network with fellow translators and other professionals, or gain exposure and engage with those who are interested in your services? Whether you are a freelancer, an in-house translator or an agency, in this webinar you will learn about:

- The various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and their potentials
- Using social media for developing expertise in your language and subject
- Building and maintaining professional contacts through social networking outlets
- Marketing your services in the social media context
- Choosing the right social media platform for your needs and preparing an effective strategy to achieve your goals
- Social media netiquette – dos and don'ts

The presentation will include practical live examples and a Q&A section.

### Presenters:

Katarzyna E Slobodzian-Taylor BA MA DPSI is a full-time freelance translator and a former police, court and medical interpreter. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in English Studies from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and in 2006, having completed a combined postgraduate programme in English and Dutch at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, she received a Master's degree specialising in Linguistics. Since then, Katarzyna has developed a specialism in healthcare and medical translation. She is also a keen techie with a particular interest in web design and online marketing. She broadens her translation and business skills by being a member of ITI's Medical and Pharmaceutical Network, the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and the Polish Business Club in Jakarta.

Marta Stelmaszak BA DPSI is a Polish-English translator and interpreter working in IT and business. She is currently pursuing a degree in Information Systems and Management at the London School of Economics and the University of London. Her practical and theoretical interests lie in the use of social media in the development of the language industry. She has recently conducted a survey on the use of social media by translators and published an e-book on best practices online. She is looking forward to developing her interpreting skills by undertaking an MA in Conference Interpreting at London Metropolitan University.

**Cost:** ITI member: £25. Student member: £15. Non-member: £30.

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Last registrations for the live event can be accepted two hours before the advertised start time at the absolute latest.