



Spanish-English Dictionary of Law and Business, 2nd edition

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Publisher: Intermark Language Publications

Publication Date: June 21, 2012

Page count: 516

ISBNs: 13: 978-1-92957-01-0

10: 1-929570-01-5

Price: \$49.95

Review by Rosemary W. Dann, Esq.

My name is Rosemary and I am a bookaholic. There, I've admitted it! And because my books of choice are dictionaries, I relished the opportunity to review the second edition of Thomas L. West III's *Spanish English Dictionary of Law and Business*.

This is the revised, corrected and expanded edition of the book that has graced my shelves for a decade. I purchased the first edition because, after a quick glance, I found words and expressions I had not found in other dictionaries. In this respect, the second edition does not disappoint. Some 200 pages larger than the original, it differs in that it has over twice as many pages of entries from Spanish to English, but none from English to Spanish. This is, perhaps, in holding with the dictum that we should normally only translate into our native language.

While the first edition came out in hardback, the new version is in paperback - a plus in my view, as it would otherwise be a more cumbersome tome. Likewise, the print is smaller. The paper is a brighter white than the original, which I find easier to read.

Cosmetics aside, the new edition is far more detailed, and in many cases, includes within the individual entries pertinent statutes, laws listed as obsolete where applicable, and titles of courts that may have changed. For example, the entry for *abuso de confianza* reads as follows:

abuso de confianza (1) [DER PEN] *embezzlement, misappropriation of funds* (SYN)
apropiación ilícita, apropiación indebida, distracción de fondos, desfalso, malversación (2)
[DER PEN] Chi, Esp, Hon *criminal breach of trust* (DEF) In some countries *abuso de confianza*

is not a crime but an aggravating circumstance ('circunstancia agravante'). -> Art. 12 CP *Chi*, Art. 22.6 CP *Esp*, Art. 27 CP *Hon* (14)

The entry for *derrama judicial* cites and summarizes the specific statute:

derrama judicial *Per special welfare fund for judges and court employees (DEF)* Mediante Ley N° 24032 se creó la Derrama del Poder Judicial como fondo inembargable, para beneficio exclusivo de todos los servidores del Poder Judicial, con el fin de proporcionar ayuda económica a los aportantes en los supuestos de fallecimiento, jubilación, invalidez total y permanente, suspensión de plaza, cesantía involuntaria o voluntaria. (206)

The entries are presented in strict alphabetical order (e.g. *chantaje* follows *CFF -Codigo Fiscal Federal*.) This differs from the first edition, in which there was a separate appendix for acronyms. While the inclusion of an appendix would have been beneficial for quick reference, and would not have been burdensome, this is a minor point. Synonyms are also given for most terms, because, as the author explains, writers of legal Spanish use more elegant variation, whereas consistency, i.e. repetition of terms in mandatory legal English, is necessary because the use of another term may imply reference to a new or different concept.

The inclusion of vocabulary from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic is a welcome addition for those of us who practice on the East Coast. In his preface, the author explains the unique challenge of translating these terms because they are often literal translations from the English (Puerto Rico) and French (Dominican Republic) and includes an illustrative chart. (4)

The author makes detailed distinctions with respect to words which other dictionaries might consider relatively generic. For example, the entry for *libertad* includes 34 sub-entries (329-331); *delito* has 90 sub-entries (193-196). These are commonly used terms in criminal law, but civil law is also well represented. In the field of landlord/tenant law, the author distinguishes between *desahucio* and *evicción*:

desahucio (1) eviction (DEF) Forcing the tenant out of the leased premises. (DEF) Note that eviction is not "evicción" in Spanish. Evicción means "deprivation or disturbance of the right to quiet and peaceful enjoyment of property. ... (207)

In banking and finance, for *cajero automático*, there is a distinction between ATM (automated teller machine) in the US and ABM (automated banking machine) in Canada. (100) and *fuga de capitales* is explained:

fuga de capitales capital flight [DEF] The transfer of large sums of money from one country to another in order to seek greater security, higher interest rates or avoid political and economic upheaval. (SYN) **evasión de capitales** (271)

I could cite examples forever, but you get the point: this is a detailed, comprehensive dictionary of the broad spectrum of law and business and is an invaluable tool for the translator of Spanish into English. I only hope that the author provides us with an equally outstanding resource from English into Spanish.