

A Handbook on English-language Publishing in Japan

(Preliminary Draft)

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The publication of literature and information in English originating in Japan could be a flourishing industry if it were not hampered by the disorganized state of and inadequate support for professional expertise. As we indicate below, there is a pressing need to gather together the accumulated know-how and experience of those who have been working with English-language documents in Japan since the 1960s, in order to save time and effort for those taking up this work for the first time, whether in print or online. The scope of English-language publishing in Japan is so enormous, so a handbook of manageable size could not possibly cover every type of publication. This proposal, therefore, does not extend to technical translation or editing, and some types of scientific writing.

The production of English-language materials in Japan—newspapers, books, magazines, journals, conference and symposium papers, newsletters, brochures, research papers, contracts, letters, and so on—is growing constantly, both in print, online, and in other electronic media. Some of these materials promote business or national objectives, some are responses to the challenges of the “international era” as Japan sees it, and others advertise individual or corporate efforts and achievements. Despite the frequent complaint that Japan does not communicate much about itself, in fact a great deal more is published in English about the country than is true even in many Western countries.

Some of this material produced in Japan is professionally prepared and reaches international standards in form and content. But too much is poorly translated, inadequately edited, and unattractively designed. Rather than serving to enhance Japan’s international image, correct misperceptions, and attain the goals set by its producers, often it achieves quite different, unintended effects.

Meanwhile, the people who are responsible for producing English-language materials for their organizations often do not have adequate tools to do their job without a struggle. There are books on English grammar, manuals on how to write e-mail letters, how to write research papers in English, how to create websites, and how to translate. There are volumes on training for interpreting and conversation skills, and style guides for academic publishing and for journalism. Nonetheless, much of the “how-to” literature is aimed at projects working from English to Japanese. There is no guide for endeavors going the other direction—going from Japanese to English: how and where to start, how much and what kind of work is involved, how much it should cost, what kind of details have to be attended to, and how to plan and assess the results when the task is *Japanese to English*.

In short, there is no comprehensive handbook on the basic procedures and techniques for producing quality English-language documents in a Japanese publishing environment. Just as they did forty years ago, most people working in this field still proceed on a trial-and-error basis, and they still have to rely on fragmented information. They turn for support mainly to people they happen to know, professionals they come across by chance, by searching the Web, or by contracting the cheapest agent they can find. Too often their efforts produce less than satisfactory, often ineffective results, and are frequently attempted without adequate funds or a carefully considered schedule.

While the tradition of information *importing* goes back hundreds of years—and Japan has a truly impressive history in this field—the situation is different for *exporting* information. So-called exporting of information gathered momentum only during the postwar era, extending over roughly sixty years. The need for documentary information in English became critical after 1945, and for the first time organizations, businesses, foundations, and other Japanese bodies had to produce it themselves. The task could not be left to outside tourist agents, researchers, journalists, or writers, even though it meant producing documents and printed media in languages and forms that were often unfamiliar. The amount and importance of this work has been steadily growing and is now a major industry, but still it stumbles along without enough qualified professionals, reliable guides on procedure, style, and design, or even basic recognition of the kind of expertise needed. Although the technologies of word processing, graphic design, printing, machine translating, and publishing continue to push into completely new frontiers, the difficulties of producing publications of international caliber are as challenging as ever.

Passing on accumulated know-how

Publishers and other organizations (the client side) have long relied on the help of non-Japanese with various levels of expertise in J-E translation, English editing, copyediting, copywriting, proofreading, and English typographical and graphic design. Sometimes these people bring genuine, polished skills to Japan when arriving from overseas; sometimes they are professionals who have advanced skills built from long apprenticeships in Japan or elsewhere, or they may be self-trained. There are also some who have no training and no genuine skills at all, but are able to pass themselves off as experts because they are “native” speakers of the English language. In the post-World War II period through the end of the twentieth century, native speakers of English interested in Japan who happened to be here could be hired for such work, and they performed many of these tasks, sometimes very well, but often with mediocre results, and frequently, with very bad results. Usually transients, they were hired on a temporary, or piece-by-piece basis, and the general belief that these “native speaker” have polished English writing and editing skills still prevails. The myth that “native” equals proficiency in English is still strong and is still crippling the production of quality English-language materials.

A great deal has been learned, nevertheless, over several decades, both by those who undertook the work—both professional and amateur—and by the clients and publishers who paid for it. That said, their accumulated knowledge and skills have never been organized in a systematic, accessible form that can be continuously revised and elaborated. Today, such guidelines are needed more than ever; the amount and variety of documentary information (in printed, electronic, and other media) being generated are burgeoning, particularly with the new media made possible by the Internet. Professionals cannot handle all the work; amateurs have to be able to perform some or all of the tasks involved.

Further, organizations often do not want to commit large funds to the production of English-language materials, and the time allotted is frequently limited, determined by pre-arranged events or fiscal timelines. Those involved in such projects have to know the most efficient procedures for preparing and publishing these materials to avoid wasting funds, time, and human resources.

The abundance of newly available electronic and publishing know-how often requires people trained in certain areas to perform tasks formerly done by professionals in other areas. Until fairly recently, a translator did not have to deal with design-related problems such as line space, line widows, excessive hyphenation or inappropriate choice of fonts because there was an editor or designer in charge of those problems. Now, a translator may find that a text

rendered into English at great pains comes back from a printer looking hideous because no other professional was working in the interface. Translation, copywriting and copyediting, graphic and book design, typesetting, and printing, all were once distinct fields of expertise, handled by individuals or companies with tested experience and accumulated know-how. Now, translators—those of us connected with the output (*hasshin*) of information for international consumption—are often asked to serve as advisors or decision-makers for all these processes.

Supports for professionals

There are two professional groups offering support to people engaged in the production of English-language materials in Japan. One of them is the Society of Writers, Editors, and Translators based in Tokyo (with a strong Kansai chapter) and founded in 1980 (www.swet.jp). SWET extends networking and professional skills-sharing opportunities for established wordsmiths and newcomers alike. Its website and publishing archives house a rich record of professional skills and experience. SWET is an all-volunteer group run by an informal Steering Committee. The Japan Association of Translators, founded as an offshoot of SWET in 1985, is a similar volunteer-run organization. There are few other local organizations that support English-language wordsmiths working in Japan or with Japan-related material in English and provide channels for networking and sharing skills.

Existing resources and guides

Editors and translators in Japan rely for standard rules and guidelines on a number of authoritative works, mainly the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th ed.), *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, and the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. These works, however, are aimed primarily at texts originally written in English and do not give detailed help on handling translated non-Western content. So far, there are only two reliable reference works designed and compiled specifically for people working with the production of English materials in Japan. One is the *Japan Style Sheet*, originally published by SWET in 1983 and revised and published for the commercial market by Stone Bridge Press in 1998. The *Japan Style Sheet* is available through online distributors and major bookstores in Japan, and directly from SWET.

The *Japan Style Sheet* deals with style questions relating to Japanese not taken up in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, such as handling of romanized Japanese words in English text (capitalization, italics, hyphenation, romanization, etc.),

rendering personal names, specialized terms, place names, dates, weights and measures, and other matters. Its content is the result of tested practice by editors and translators since the 1950s.

The other, the *Monumenta Nipponica Style Sheet* (2008), is for academic publishing in the humanities and social sciences; it provides the base for style of a number of other leading academic journals on Japan. The *MN Style Sheet* is available online.

While these two style-related works are useful, no comprehensive, authoritative handbook exists to answer wider and more detailed questions pertaining to publishing English-language materials in Japan, whether print or online, or advise about best practices for professional collaboration. Such a handbook is needed. In March 2003 the authors participated in the conference “Research Writing in Japan” held at the Museum of Ethnology (Minpaku), Osaka. Their presentation led to the compilation of a first draft of what might be called a “Handbook on English-language Document Production and Publishing in Japan.” The draft has been updated and improved over the intervening 10 years and a tentative table of contents is given below.

Comments on this outline are welcome and may be sent to the authors (see the list of contributors) via the Center for Intercultural Communications website (cichonyaku.com).*

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*The Center for Intercultural Communications is a professional Japanese-to-English translation firm founded in 1990. Its office and staff carry on the translation craft and traditions of the staff of the *Japan Interpreter*, the journal of social and political ideas in Japan published from 1963 to 1980 (also introduced on this site). Lynne E. Riggs is Tokyo-based translator and editor at CIC. Patricia Murray served on the staff of the *Japan Interpreter* from 1968 to 1980 and has continued to work with CIC since then from her base in Massachusetts.

Translation, Production, and English-Language Document Publishing in Japan

A. Initiator's Checklist

A. Stages of a project

- Translation/Writing (translators/authors)
- Editing (includes research, fact-checking, and stylistic revision). This is a crucial phase requiring professional expertise. (Note the differences from “henshu,” which in the case of Japanese text is basically superficial copyediting.)
- Author/supervisor (may be the client’s person-in-charge) re-checking
- Editor collation of corrections; response to queries, final changes
- Permissions/copyright issues (for long quotations, photographs, poetry/verse, etc. require obtaining permissions in writing are required before publication and proper credits must be given in the text and design).
- Layout and design: Should begin when *complete* manuscript is ready.
- Copyediting and preparation of text for importing to the layout grid or website (capitalization, indentation, block quotes, headings, handling of footnotes and bibliography, etc.)
- Proofreading (usually in two stages, with final page layout stage at end).
- Captions, indexing
- Covers, editorial notes, copyright page data, title pages, cataloging information, ISBN/ISSN numbers, etc.

A professional English editor attends to matters of style, vocabulary, fact-checking, consistency, organization, coherence. This includes “line-editing” for accuracy, readability, effective presentation to target readership.

B. Specific Tasks

1. Translation or Writing

- What kind of translator/writer do you want?
 - Academic
 - Literary
 - General professional
- Where to look, who to consult, what to look for and to look out for (agencies, association directories, informed professionals, etc.)

- Testing a translator for your project; criteria in evaluating a J-E translation and preparing suitable samples and tests.

2. Planning, Cost/Time Analysis, Budgeting

- Amateur (do-it-yourself/in-house committee) vs. professional
- Doing the groundwork:
 - Assessing the quantity of work (page/word/character counts) (see *SWET Newsletter* article, http://www.swet.jp/resources/article/whats_in_a_page/_C31)
 - Collecting reference or background materials (e.g., images/photos accompanying the text; previous related publications, reference works or online sources)
 - Editing of original *Japanese ms.*
- Tables, charts, illustrations, photos (will they need reworking for non-Japanese readers?)
- Styling of notes (footnotes or endnotes), compilation of bibliography (assign from outset to translator or editor as needed), and other front or back matter.
- Time and scheduling
 - Big vs. small projects
 - Scheduling in stages for longer projects
 - Arranging for monitoring progress
- Budget
 - determine rate of remuneration
 - Clarify tasks (who does translation, editing, copyediting, proofreading)
- Identify special problems and find ways to address them for texts particularly not conducive to translation
- Prepare the manuscript for the translator and supply basic style sheet (format, spelling conventions, terms used in the text, dating)
- Publication
 - Rights issues
 - Finding a publisher

What kind of translator do you need?

- Mass-market translation (priority to basic information)
- Amateur translator with personal interest in the subject
- Professional translator with knowledge of other production processes
- Specialist in relevant field (including scholarly expertise) who can translate

- Designer (person knowledgeable in Western-language page layout, graphic design, and typography)
Role of the graphic designer (decide if important/necessary to the final publication)
Grid
Fonts (display and main text)
Special needs (bilingual text, photographs, etc.)
- Determine appropriate format for audience
- Select printing company (English font capable/ expertise in “ōbun insatsu”)

4. Handling Digital Files

- Keeping organized (dating, labeling, filing), formats, compatibility matters, conversion, working with collaborators (copyeditors, proofreaders, authors, clients) in digital or hard-copy form (high tech, mixed tech, and low tech).
- Using of printable data files (PDFs) for proofreading (advantages and disadvantages)

5. Preparing Final Copy and Layout/design

- Professional versus amateur, dividing up the work, preparing manuscript data for importing to the layout.
- Role of professional graphic designer and how to set up collaboration with editor and printer (e.g., author or client should work through *the editor* at this stage, not directly with printer; editor knows how to talk to the printer/production end).
- Manuscript mark-up protocols.
- Layout design pitfalls (line space, word/letter space, paragraph indents, special characters, short lines, heading treatment, caption location and expressions, bilingual text problems).
- Working with printers/layout text in Japan.
- Proofreading (coping with spacing, font, and character problems)
- Who is in charge? How to establish a production chain of command for best results in various situations.

Some questions to ask:

Does the editor need to be bilingual?

What to do if the person in charge (*tanto*) does not have professional expertise in publishing English materials?

When can the designer mediate?

What to do when no designer is involved?

What to consider when working directly with the printer?

6. Distribution

- Client should negotiate distribution terms and conditions if possible; study distribution plan if one exists and get expert opinion if you don't know much; avoid pitfalls in agreement (contract concerning distribution); if needed, get expert help in how to use agents.
- How to make information about the publication available and where, and how to do effective cost-analysis.

7. Methods of payment

- Understanding the needs of authors and translators, freelance editors, etc., who cannot wait for the job—which may extend over several months or even years—to be completed to be paid.
- Dealing with grant deadlines, professional contract categories, etc.
For example, “translation” can be charged as a flat fee covering everything from literal translation to proofreading, or it can be divided up into “translation,” *koetsu* (line editing) for style and effectiveness, copyediting, and proofreading.

Checklist for Professional Wordsmiths

Especially when working with a client for the first time, make sure mutually agreed-on terms are clearly established before work begins.

1. Before you accept a job

- Have the terms and conditions spelled out in as much detail as possible in a document, contract, or shared email documentation.
- Calculate the amount of text involved, list the different items, and set unit of charge.
- Schedule for payment (advance? first payment? number of payments if in installments); (due dates for different items in the list above).
- Read entire text or significant parts
- Meet the author/person in charge if possible

2. Do your homework

Before you begin, study the Japanese ms. or materials carefully and work with author/supervisor to determine:

- availability of a glossary of special terms and/or client's style sheet
- who will compile the front matter and back matter, including any bibliography?
- request periodic consultations with author/supervisor on choices of style and expression, and to ask questions.
- ask whether or not a third party will edit or copyedit your work (if you are an all-in-one translator, editor, *and* copyeditor, your rates will probably be higher).
- the exact content of work designated in Japanese, such as *henshū* or *kōsei*, which might appear in a contract or project work description.
- check whether client will accept your input into final decisions about author's/supervisor's revisions.

3. Ownership

Clarify at the start, preferably in your contract, conditions regarding the use of your work. If the client cancels the project at any point (for whatever reason), you need to establish your rights to payment up to that point.

Establish that any work that is not paid for belongs to you and cannot be used later in any context by the client.

D. Maximizing Professional Teamwork

It may help to survey the kinds of professional expertise needed for rendering a Japanese document into an English publication. For best results, at least three and sometimes four or five or more people are involved, each in a different stage of the project. The teamwork of several experienced professionals who are trusted and trust each other, and who know how to cope with whatever hurdles appear can be expected to turn out a very good result.

Translation

Accurate and effective J-E translation requires the collaboration of experienced professionals with complementary skills and deep knowledge of Japanese and of Japan; wide knowledge of research resources; and training and discipline in English writing skills. Competence in and sensitivity to style and field-specific

practices for various categories of writing (e.g., scholarly, journalistic, or scientific, PR, and advertising) are also crucial. Translating language involves translating culture, and so the J-E translator has to be familiar with cultural backgrounds and popular assumptions and must have access to appropriate sources of knowledge.

The ideal is a team process, which may take different forms. For example:

- If the translator is a Japanese native speaker, an English native-speaker editor or translator should collaborate, correcting the style and expression for effective results.
- If the translator is an English native speaker, a Japanese editor or translator should check and correct the draft to eliminate errors and assure that the logic, argument, and (as much as possible) nuances of the original are retained.
- If the Japanese author is very familiar with English and is confident of checking the translation, and the translator is a trained editor, the author and translator working together may suffice.

There are a few talented J-E translators who can work alone. The only way to assure an acceptable product is to build collaboration into the process. From long experience we strongly recommend two basic rules for the client:

Rule 1: If your J-E translator is Japanese, be sure that a professional English-language editor with knowledge about Japan does the line-editing (*koetsu*) of the draft.

If your J-E translator is a native English speaker, be sure that a Japanese with strong knowledge of English checks the entire draft to catch translation errors and misinterpretations and is able to look up terms and references that need amplification or clarification. This process should be done chapter-by-chapter. Do not wait until the first draft is finished to start the checking or editing processes.

Rule 2: Since J-E translation takes time and specialized expertise, the client should plan adequate time to secure the services of the translator of choice, as well as to check and edit the draft. The less time you have the more important it is to hire a highly qualified translator in order to assure that no mistakes are made. If you have more time, choosing a cheaper but less qualified translator may be an option. In the end, you will save money by using more experienced translators, even if the rate is higher.

Editing translations and non-native speaker writing

English readers have a very low tolerance for unnatural, poorly written English, which often results from word-for-word translation. They are likely to ignore, ridicule, or dismiss the result. For this reason, line editing has a long tradition in English-language publishing and the editor exercises considerable authority over the author in setting the standard of the text. This is quite different from the tradition in Japan, where the author holds the domination position and the editors limit their role to minor matters of style.

A translation, even by the most skilled translator, tends to favor its source, and traces of the process of switching from Japanese syntax and writing conventions to those of English inevitably remain. Rhetorical techniques in the two languages are completely different and these, too, must be “translated.” Such problems can be resolved through skillful editing. To end up with a natural English style, presentation, vocabulary, and flow requires professional expertise and a fresh perspective. No matter who writes the text or produces the translation, someone else should be assigned as editor.

Editing is different from “henshu” as it is practiced in Japanese publishing. Editing is more interventionist. It involves rewording, sometimes trimming or even reorganizing parts of the text, requesting amplifications, checking facts the author may have guessed at in haste, adding information the non-Japanese reader will need for understanding, eliminating inconsistencies, etc. The editor acts as an expert the author can rely on to assure a high-quality, saleable or effective publication.

The editor takes responsibility for making the text accessible and appealing and should make certain that it conforms to an organized structure and reads smoothly (the effectiveness of the final product depends heavily on these qualities). The editor also checks facts and details, queries the author when the meaning is unclear or the facts require checking, and incorporates diverse suggestions from readers of the draft. The more substantial the project (i.e., a book), the more crucial it is that the entire manuscript is carefully checked by a single editor. In short, the work of a good editor can boost readership and sales and have an impact on the reputation of the author. Here again, on the basis of long experience, we recommend the following rules.

Rule 1: The editing process is indispensable to a high-quality product. This applies no matter how experienced the translator. It is work that should be considered and remunerated separately from the translation.

Rule 2: If the translator is an English-native speaker and highly skilled, the editing required can be called “copyediting” and the rate of payment lower. Such editing consists predominantly of cutting out unnecessary words, improving phrasing, tightening sentence structure, and making usages and style consistent.

If the translator is less experienced or non-native in English, the editor will have to rewrite sentences, reorganize some text, sometimes improving on the Japanese text to achieve a high-quality product. This work takes more time and expertise and merits a higher rate of pay.

Copyediting

Once the translation and editing processes have been completed, the technical aspects of the text need to be organized to achieve consistent style and presentation (including headings, reference and citation styles, handling of illustrative material, etc.) for the particular publication involved (especially if it is a periodical). Copyediting may be done separately by the editor and/or translator, or by a third person, but it should be undertaken as a separate process, *prior to* any typesetting, layout, or website uploading process. It should never be done for the first time *after* the text has been laid out and typeset in galley form.

Computer-generated manuscripts, especially when several people are participating, have their own common pitfalls, including dropped words, words inadvertently left in the text, garbled characters, and omissions. A copyeditor coming fresh to the manuscript will see these problems more easily and resolve or query them.

The copyeditor does the final checking of spelling, numbers, figures in charts, names, dates, and heading consistency. For this purpose a carefully prepared pre-typesetting manuscript should always be printed on paper. This will usually be done using a word-processor, before the document is formatted for publication.

Proofreading

The term *kōsei* in Japanese, though generally translated as “proofreading,” is often used by clients to mean “editing” or “copyediting.” *Kōsei* may also be used to mean rewriting awkward sentences and correcting grammar. During the preliminary examination of the working text, both client and professional should take care to use this term carefully and with full understanding of the other side.

Proofreading in the strict sense, namely comparing newly produced copy (e.g., a galley) to the previous version, has been made easier with the introduction of advanced technology, but still needs professional attention.

A “style sheet” or list of points to which proofreaders should give special attention for the particular publication at hand should be prepared for each project. Usually based on an authoritative style guide such as the *Chicago Manual of Style*, it indicates document-specific treatment of words, preferred spellings, exceptions to standard editing rules, etc. that are discussed and agreed-upon between the client and the editor/translator.

New techniques of proofreading and author checking using PDF files are available, but the merits of traditional reading with paper galleys should always be considered.

Design

In the proposed handbook, the topic of design for publications and documents should be introduced by a specialist. There is a considerable gap between the objectives and assumptions of Japanese graphic design and those of English-language graphic design. Working in this field in Japan requires a thorough understanding of the people and practices, language skills, and knowledge of terminology on both sides. A few printers in Japan have experience of English-language page-layout and design; the rest, especially the smaller firms, can do what is needed, but they need special instructions, and care must be taken throughout the process to ensure that the right techniques and equipment are being used. (I.e., Japanese software settings and equipment used to produce layouts of English text are not likely to produce good results; once they know how to set their software for English text, the results will be better.)

Unfortunately, budget constraints often rule out the use of specialized and professional expertise (e.g., a graphic designer knowledgeable of English typography) even for the design and production of a document destined for wide distribution. The common practice of relying on the printing company for design-related tasks, which may have been acceptable for Japanese printing, is likely to lead to trouble for English-language publications. The newer problem of relying on a designer who may not have experience with English text presents other problems.

One major problem is that Japanese graphic designers often consider themselves creative artists who need not worry about the concerns of an editor and deserve higher pay than other members of the production team. The tension between the editor, who is concerned with a clear, readable, and internationally presentable design, and a designer, whose primary concern may be an opportunity for artistic showcasing, can cause considerable trouble for a project.

In producing English-language materials, mutual understanding should be sought at an early stage, and an effective compromise found.

Points to be discussed in this section of the Handbook include:

- Forms for submitting an edited manuscript to a designer for typesetting or digital/online layout and design
- Who marks the manuscript for the typesetting or computer-formatting operator?
- Channels for communication between editor and designer/printing operator
- How to solve English typesetting or formatting problems (word and letter space, hyphenation, special character problems, handling of bad breaks and extra text, etc.)
- How to compile an index or bibliography, if needed

Printing

Today translators and editors can prepare copy in digital form, turn over digital files to a graphic designer or to the printer, and then receive layout-pages (galleys) in printed or PDF format. Many problems still occur, however, resulting from the transfer of data from word-processing software to DTP layout software or printing layout equipment: poor word spacing, garbling of characters, ill-suited fonts and line-spacing, loss of italics, and excessively complicated layouts and font choices.

Any English-language publishing project needs a printer with equipment suited to production of Western-language printing and with expertise in typography, layout, and other aspects of design. Unfortunately, many clients prefer to use printing companies with which they have established relationships, even though those companies deal mainly with Japanese and they lack familiarity with English-language page-layout and printing. Ultimately, the printer’s lack of experience and the mistakes that result often cost more than using the services of a properly qualified printer.

With adequate instructions, inexperienced printer operators can be trained to maximize the capabilities of the equipment/software they possess and produce satisfactory results, but the editor or designer has to know how to teach the operator about software settings, techniques, etc.)

Japanese graphic designers, moreover, are often ill-equipped to guide the printing company through the pitfalls of English printing, often forcing the editor or even the translator—whose knowledge of printing and design techniques is usually amateur—to help the printer tackle problems in the typesetting and layout

Eventually, it is hoped that printing companies will take the initiative to learn the necessary procedures.

Various levels of technology are involved, depending on the scale of a project and the other professionals involved. In some cases traditional/physical typesetting still needs to be done at the printing company; at the other extreme the editorial side can produce perfect camera-ready copy and the printer simply makes plates and prints and binds the result. Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses.

E. In Sum: Need for Collaboration and Adequate Time and Money

As the above outline for the proposed *Handbook* indicates, any English-language publishing project will involve professionals in a number of different specialties, from translating, editing, copyediting, and proofreading, to designing and printing. The guide should be accessible, moreover, to the non-specialists who are likely to be commissioning the work, be they ministry clerical staff, corporate PR staff, foundation/institute/NPO staff, as well as individual scholars, writers, journalists, and translators. It should be published in bilingual format, Japanese and English.

A number of publishers specializing in English-language books about Japan were established after 1945, including Charles E. Tuttle, John Weatherhill, Inc., Kodansha International, and University of Tokyo Press. These publishers of English-language quarterlies, including the Center for Social Science Communication (*The Japan Interpreter*, etc) and its successor Center for Intercultural Communication, Japan Echo, Inc. (*Japan Echo*), Asahi Shimbunsha (English-language newspaper; *Japan Quarterly*), Toyo Keizai Shimbun (*Oriental Economist*), and others gained tremendous experience and know-how in the field. Translators, editors, and proofreaders who were trained at these organizations from the late 1960s through the 1990s are still active but are now scattered in freelance and independent careers, and many of the companies and publishers where they were trained have vanished.

The growing trend toward digitization of publishing, online and print-on-demand publishing, has meant that some of the technical know-how has been superseded, but the core skills of translation and editing, copyediting, and proofreading have evolved along with the technology. More sophisticated skills have raised efficiency and productivity. Even recognizing where new technology does not serve as well as the old is now a matter of unwritten professional experience that can be shared to broad benefit. This draft proposes a project to

compile a comprehensive handbook with the participation of experts from each related profession and input from as many experienced persons as possible. Institutional backing is needed to coordinate the project, provide at least some working funds, and to insure that it results in a publication that can be made authoritative and widely available. Expertise in the publishing of English-language materials in Japan is already available but needs to be documented, brought together, organized, and published and then widely distributed.

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Pressing Issues for Academic Translation and Editing

Telling our stories; what we do

Training of younger translators and editors

Consciousness-raising among academics

Consciousness-raising among authors and research institutions

List of guidelines for translators and editors of scholarly work

E.g.,

- look up all cited material originally in English or available in English as you work
- create footnotes and bibliography simultaneously with translation of text.
- insert queries for *everything* not checked
- translate everything with expectation of further editing, excising at later stage.
- obtain all visual materials and background reading possible from author.
- obtain a collaborator (author if possible) familiar with the content to query about meaning; establish access

Cultivating the groundwork for editing of texts intended for translation

Unified database of translated Japanese fiction and non-fiction (author, title, publisher, translator, date of translation, ISBN, etc. availability).

Institute dedicated to translation of source works and works of research.

Center for Translation in Japan (a proposal)

A home base for translators and translation in Japan and Asia:

- 1) Where translators can seek the advice of more experienced colleagues, find support and encouragement, access resources especially tailored to their needs in print and online, exchange information and experience, and work in ideal environment.
- 2) Where the history and lore of Japan-related translations and translation studies can be organized, written, and compiled.
- 3) Where the networks of translators in Japan and overseas can be based and maintained.

The center would be small-scale and, ideally, self-supporting

First year: Locate and Accumulate

- Acquire a property that is both tranquil and easily accessible
- In temporary facilities, accumulate dictionaries and other reference materials used by translators in a wide range of fields, primarily for J-E translation,
- Develop equipment for both reference and translation work, including necessary hardware, software, and furnishings.
- Plan research and database creation activities for following year.
- Establish and build a unified network of translators and bilingual editors

2nd year: Research and Compile

- Catalog and maintain a database of translations and works that are translated and need to be translated
- Hold international symposia on J-E translation history and practice
- Support a small staff of veteran translators to serve as resource persons, instructors, and organizers of events to improve the quality of translations,

Third year: Cultivate and Nurture

- Provide workrooms for translators engaged in specific projects
- Hold regular seminars, lectures, and symposiums on translation
- Outsource staff for instruction in universities and colleges
- Publish information of benefit to translators

Ideal environment for J-E translation

- Surroundings that are manifestly Japanese (conducive to awareness of being in a Japanese cultural setting)
- Quiet but not remote; combining private space with space for socializing
- Access to good library
- Access to full line of print and online dictionaries
- An adequate livelihood allowing one to devote time to study, translation, and maintenance of language skills.

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The books were first designed for university courses, so they cover a lot of situations and vocabulary aimed at students. This might be an advantage or disadvantage, depending on your situation! Genki was designed for use in classrooms so there are some exercises such as group discussions which can be hard to put into practice if you are a self learner. However, the book is still very easy to use. The Minna No Nihongo books are entirely written in Japanese. You can purchase a companion book with translations and notes in English (or any one of 13 other languages, if English is not your native language). Because of this, it's a great book for serious students! At the intermediate level, you should already be able to read basic Japanese. Your biggest challenge is probably speed.