TAICEP TALK

TAICEP News:

- 2018 Annual Conference Registration Open!

- TAICEP's newest Certificate Program offerings!

More details inside!

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Annual Conference

Registration is officially open for our 2018 annual conference!

Our list of 2018 sessions and pre-conference workshops are available here. We have an exciting list of over 35 sessions ranging from topics such as:

- An Update on Bologna in Africa

- Evaluating Law Degrees from Around the World

- Best practices for evaluating credentials from China

- Education in Mexico

- Data privacy regulations in the U.S and Canada for EU Citizens

You now have a great line-up of sessions to look forward to and a chance to save before prices go up after July 15th.

If you have any questions about the conference, please feel free to contact us at taicepconference@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you in Philadelphia!

Certificate Program

TAICEP 's newest certificate focuses on secondary school education and credentials. It has four components: a webinar, two workshops, and an on-line examination of knowledge. Candidates for this certificate must be members of TAICEP. The fee for the certificate is US$250, which does not include the workshop fees.

The webinar, reviewing secondary education in the major educational system patterns and other countries, was offered live on Wednesday, April 25, 2018. It has been recorded and is available on demand on the TAICEP website for those who were unable to participate in the live event.

Both workshops will focus on secondary school external examinations and non-traditional/non-academic secondary schools. Each workshop is approximately four hours. The two workshops will be offered live on Monday, October 1, 2018, at the TAICEP conference in Philadelphia. If you are able to participate in these workshops in person, please register HERE ($95 early/$115 late registration fees per workshop for TAICEP members. We anticipate that these workshops will be video recorded and available on demand for a fee for those who cannot attend the 2018 annual conference.

Following completion of the webinar and two workshops, certificate candidates will sit for an online examination of knowledge. After successfully passing the examination, certificate candidates will be awarded the TAICEP Secondary School Certificate.

If you are interested in pursuing the Secondary School Certificate, we encourage you to apply as soon as possible. Please feel free to share this message with your colleagues, and encourage them to become a member of TAICEP if they would like to apply for the Secondary School Certificate.

To register for the Secondary School Certificate, please go HERE.

Webinars

Overview of Secondary Education

Want to know about secondary education in major educational system patterns (British, French, Russian, and USA), including academic and vocation education, assessment systems, grading scales and credentials awarded?

Advance your career by gaining expertise in secondary education systems from around the globe.

This webinar covers the above information and is a requirement for TAICEP's Secondary School Credentials Certificate.

## Options for Credential Evaluator Certification

Are you a credential evaluator looking for ways to further your career?

Want to learn more about TAICEP's Foundation Certificate program and get a sneak peek at the new secondary education certificate that will be launched sometime later this year?

Our expert presenters will walk you through how to boost your credential evaluation career through TAICEP's certificate options

Find these and all other past webinars HERE.
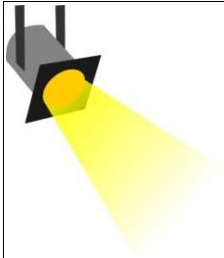
Member Spotlight

Nearly twenty years ago I began working for Indiana University. In the hills of Morgan County there is an outdoor center called Bradford Woods. Through environmental education and team building programs, the staff of Indiana University's Outdoor Center help Indiana's youth gain a sense of place. Whether the place be a person's natural environment or a group of their peers, understanding one's connection to that place is integral to their growth.

My work at Bradford Woods was a foundational part of my life that allowed me to work in an industry that makes the world a better place. In time, work in the outdoor team building industry led me through Georgia where I built structures for team building courses, including climbing towers and zip lines. Next this led to work inspecting and repairing of these same structures as well as training and evaluating other professionals in their usage.

Knowing a good opportunity when I saw it, I jumped at the chance to take my outdoor skills to paradise. In 2008 I moved to Hawaii to work as the in-house zip line inspection and training coordinator for the newest extreme tourism attraction on the island of Maui. We had guests from all over the world riding our zip lines through the peaks of Mauna Kahalawai, from which you could see all of the way to the ocean and across to the island of Molokai, and on a clear day, to Oahu. As our visitors drank in their beautiful surroundings, my goal was to ensure their equipment and guides were in top condition.

Hawaii is indeed a paradise, but it isn't home. In 2012 I returned to my roots to find my place in Indiana's budding tourism industry. In 2013 I realized Indiana does not have a budding tourism industry.

With a metaphorical toolbox full of clothing for working outdoors and casting judgment, I began work as an insurance risk evaluator. This position took me to parts of southern Indiana which I'd never seen before to photograph the house exteriors for new home insurance customers. I braved many slippery rooftops and hidden canine sentries, but when it was made clear to me that my Monday-to-Friday would soon become a Sunday-to-Saturday, I realized where my wellbeing was on the company's list of priorities. It was time to go, but where?

In the fall of 2015 I saw a listing for a position with Indiana University's Office of International Services (OIS). Reflecting on my own international experiences professionally and in my personal life, I realized the profound effect they have had on me. Seeing the similarities and differences I share with people from other communities has helped refine my understanding of my own communities and my place within them. And here, through Indiana University and OIS I could offer the same experience to local students and students from around the world. I knew here was another opportunity to work in an industry that makes the

world a better place, and I shouldn't let it pass me by. I updated my resume and sent it in. A few short weeks later, the opportunity had passed me by.

I applied again in the winter of 2015 and again in the spring of 2016. In the spring my interview went better. They invited me in for a second interview. I smiled, I charmed, I mentioned that they had turned me down twice before and if they turn me away again, like a weed, I'll just keep coming back. Maybe I wore them down, because they offered me the job.

There is a lot to learn when you begin a new career. Like, did you know an international student can transfer their SEVIS record without being a transfer student? Did you know earning straight Ds from the University of New South Wales would be a good thing? Did you know there's a Batman University?

Over the past 2 years in my position evaluating academic records as an International Admissions Credentials Analyst, I have grown in my position. I'm confident with reviewing documents from most secondary education systems around the world. I've become a resource to my peers in the office when it comes to evaluating graduation documents from China. I've participated in hiring committees seeking to add new credentials analysts to our team. I've delivered professional presentations to in-house staff and at a state conference. I've also delivered training to colleagues new to our office. Still I felt disconnected.

We see a lot of international applicants to Indiana University; thousands per admission cycle. We are good at what we do and we do a lot of it. But what happens outside of these doors? How does what I do interact with what seems to be infinite moving parts around campus? And how does it compare and connect to my peers at other universities? How do I fit into my new professional ecosystem?

This past March I had the opportunity to attend and present at the AACRAO Annual Meeting in Orlando. I attended sessions covering education systems from Cuba to Canada, sessions on inter-university software platforms, and the philosophy behind grading scale design. I even got the opportunity to join a roundtable discussion with the leadership team for TAICEP. Following the conference my supervisor asked what did I learn? I struggled to answer. It all seemed like a blur, a puzzle I was still trying to fit together with so many pieces still missing. I know what I've gained though.

I don't have all of the answers, but I've gained resources who can help me find answers. I've gained an awareness of other professionals facing the same questions I do every day. I've gained an appreciation for the ground I've covered so far in this field and a better idea about the path ahead. I've gained a sense of place.

Grant Adams
Credentials Analyst, Sr.
Indiana University

The AACRAO Dozen: The Adventure Begins

Members of TAICEP participate in the AACRAO Cuba Project

Last fall, AACRAO (The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers) put out a call for applications to participate in a new type of professional development program. By using an innovative funding model and joining a pre-existing research program on Cuban education, a team of representatives from American universities and professional associations, with AACRAO Deputy Director Melanie Gottlieb serving as lead, would get a chance to travel to Cuba. While in country, they would visit educational institutions and learn more from expert representatives, most notably the Asociación de Pedagogos de Cuba

(APC). The goals of the project included updating the Cuba profile in AACRAO EDGE (Electronic Database for Global Education), presenting the group's findings, and developing a publication on the Cuban education system. It was an amazing opportunity and I heard about it after the group had been chosen. I was excited to see that several people I knew were going to be involved in the year-long project. What an adventure!

Fast-forward to mid-December and one of the group members had to withdraw. Luckily tickets had not been purchased yet! AACRAO approached TAICEP to see if they wanted to fill the slot from their membership. It was a great opportunity for the two organizations to collaborate and for TAICEP to have someone representing them, an organization dedicated to the credential evaluation profession, within the larger long-term research project. The only catch was the timeline. The trip was scheduled for February and Cuban visas are not the easiest thing to get. TAICEP leadership organized a new application process, which mimicked the initial round. But this time, you had to be a TAICEP member to apply. Emails went out to the membership on Monday morning, but the applications, along with letters of support from their organizations, were due before the end of the week. It was a tight turn around, especially for the week before the winter holidays.

Having already reviewed the website with the list of participants, I had an advantage at my company. I already knew the qualifications. And I knew I was a decent fit. I had plenty of professional experience in the field. My passport was valid and I had traveled in Latin America before. I had a working knowledge of Spanish and a passing understanding of the Cuban educational system already. And I'm a research maniac. So I was the first person to approach management and they agreed that I was a qualified candidate to represent ECE (Educational Credential Evaluators) in the application process. They were willing to support me, if I was chosen. We were able to compile the paperwork and I got the application in as I was leaving for vacation. Christmas came early for me when I found out, just days after the deadline, that I had been selected as the twelfth member of the team. I submitted the visa forms, ordered a plane ticket, and started learning as much as possible as I could about Cuba. I wanted to be able to contribute, once we started doing research and especially once we arrived in country.

Now I need to take a second to backtrack here. I already mentioned that the AACRAO group was partnering with another research program to facilitate access. But I need to give a little background. For the past 24 years, the Búsquedas Investigativas (Academic Explorations) team has brought US higher educational professionals and graduate students to Cuba to meet with Cuban counterparts to explore different facets of their educational system. Doesn't that sound like the perfect opportunity to do some in-depth research on the educational system in Cuba? The alignment of missions was perfect. It was so perfect that it only happened by chance, when Melanie met the coordinator for the Búsquedas team at a party. Our trip was pre-ordained by fate. Credential evaluators do count as higher education professionals, so we were welcomed among the larger group. All told, we had over 50 representatives from the United States in our contingent. When we were traveling in country with our new Cuban colleagues, we had nearly 80 people. It was a little overwhelming when we finally arrived and were able to meet for the first time. I know I clung to our AACRAO subgroup for the first few days just because there were so many people. But that probably helped us gel as a group too. After all, our responsibilities will extend far after we come back from Havana and we need to be able to work together.

Luckily, the AACRAO Dozen, the name I gave us after the fact, was a wonderful group of people. We only had a few phone calls before the trip to try to plan and think about our research goals in a constructive manner. Before we left for Cuba, we tried to divvy up aspects of the education system to focus on when we arrived, so that we would have subject breadth and different people would go on different site visits. But everyone seemed excited and we certainly acted like old friends once we arrived in Havana. We had our first meeting, next to the pool with some Cuban cocktails, the first afternoon in country. And

we spent our first bit of free time going on a bus tour around the city together. Even though we were there as professionals, the vibe of being around so many students wore off on me. With the group meals, cultural explorations, and tiring schedule, it felt just like a study abroad experience. I even had a roommate! I enjoyed spending time with each one of them, getting to know little details like how Christie had visited my hometown or Mark's wife is from the city in Colombia where my sister had been living. I can't wait to begin work on the research and writing phase of our project, so I get to spend more time with them.

One of our mantras in Cuba was "be flexible". Our meetings were all prearranged. So the questions we had about university curricula and reforms were not appropriate when visiting a special education school. The medical school we visited was for international students, so we did not get a chance to see how Cuban medical professionals are educated. We did not get to meet with any ministerial staff. One of our Cuban friends realized we had very specific research needs and arranged for a small group of us to meet with Rector and Secretary General of the University of Matanzas. We were finally able to ask the right people the right sorts of questions, but the ad hoc nature of the meeting meant we couldn't review documents together or follow-up on some of the things they mentioned. We will be sure to contact them again. It turns out the Secretary General is the key to any documentation issues on Cuban university campuses, so any correspondence you send should be directed to them. So we were being flexible and trying to learn from every new person we met. But I know I came back from Cuba with more questions that I had when I arrived.
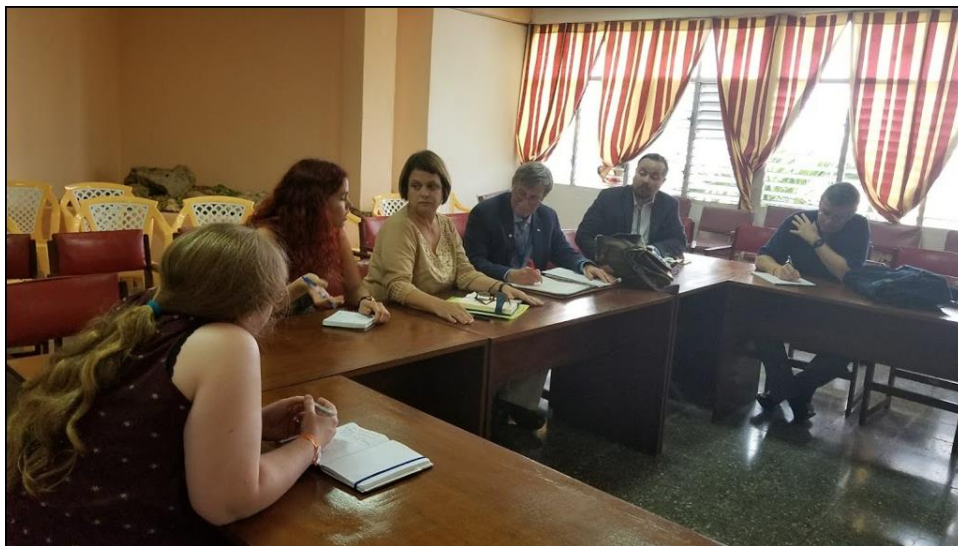
We compiled our notes once we returned, but twelve versions of the same educational session, that was geared towards the graduate students in the first place, may not be helpful in terms of research. Out first conference session, given at the national AACRAO meeting this spring, with half of the group participating, was a good start at actually seeing what we had learned. Preparing for our session showed me that we already have a lot of resources about Cuba, but they are in our evaluation files and in the samples we save. We have to suss out the

relevant information. We have already discovered contradictions between what our hosts at the [Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina](#) (ELAM) told us and what we are seeing in their documentation. And, frankly, that is exciting. We felt like there was a dearth of information about the Cuban educational system. But that's not true. We all have pieces of the puzzle sitting in our offices or document repositories. The trip to Cuba just gave us the ability to elucidate our questions more clearly, to know how much we know already, and to know what we need to do to learn more. For example, I think a timeline of the responsible parties at the major universities, like the secretaria general, decano, and rector, along with samples of their signatures, could be very beneficial. The same is true for a list of the MINREX (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores) staff that stamp and sign the official certified documents. And that is something I could prepare from the ECE archives. The other thing I realized it that there are resources on the Cuban educational system. But they are in Spanish. We will need to brush up on our translation skills.

When we first returned from Cuba, I was worried that we had not met with the right people and that what we learned was insignificant. After preparing the slides for our first educational session, I felt better. We did learn a great deal and we will be able to use that foundational knowledge to learn more going forward. Now I am focused on how to best represent TAICEP as part of the ongoing research project. I helped coordinate our first presentation. And we also submitted proposals for the TAICEP conference, so we are going to have two sessions on Cuba this fall in Philadelphia, one on secondary education and the other on post-secondary education. Luckily, I was not the only TAICEP member to go to Cuba. Several of us are involved in the organization. Even though I may be the TAICEP representative in the group, we all agree that sharing information with the TAICEP membership is essential. So I am focused on trying to get the members of the AACRAO Dozen to be more actively involved with TAICEP, such as writing articles for the newsletter or attending/presenting at the annual meeting. I hope you, the TAICEP members, appreciate our efforts. If you want to share anything about Cuba or their educational system, even questions you may have, then please let one of us know. We are happy to talk about it. And we are looking forward to continuing our research in the next year.

Martha Van Devender
Senior Evaluator
Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE)

EQPR Project

Credential evaluators' joint efforts for improving of the refugees' opportunities for qualifications assessments in the Council of Europe project.

This year marks the start of the next phase of the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees (EQPR) project. In 2017, the Council of Europe, the Greek ministry of education and four ENIC-NARIC offices (national information centres working on recognition issues) in Greece, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom tested a method for assessing refugees' qualifications, even when they cannot be adequately documented. The method was originally suggested by the Norwegian ENIC-NARIC (NOKUT) and UK NARIC in 2015 and tested in Norway by NOKUT in 2016.

https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/home

The project established the EQPR as a format for describing the qualifications in such a way that the assessment can be used for access to higher education or employment. It is designed to be of use not only in the country where the EQPR is issued but also in other countries in the European region. Several refugees assessed during the pilot have already been able to use the EQPR to access studies.

https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/recognition-of-refugees-qualifications

Given the success of the pilot project, a three-year project was launched to develop the EQPR further. The project will allow for testing in more countries and involve more partners: in addition to the former partners, the new project will involve the Italian ministry of education as well as the ENIC-NARICs of Armenia, Canada, France, Germany and the Netherlands. The project is run by Council of Europe. The UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, will also be more involved in this next stage. The project has so far received financial support from the ministers of education in Greece, Italy and Norway as well as from the Council of Europe.

https://www.coe.int/en/web/education/recognition-of-refugees-qualifications

In the next phase (2018-2020), the online assessment will be a key part, as will the development of secure electronic storage of the EQPRs issued. The goal will be to enable refugees to access their own EQPR and share it on an individual basis with any higher education institution or prospective employer.

The project's next phase will include new groups of refugees with different profiles. In the pilot phase, the interviewees were mainly Syrian, Iraqi or Afghan refugees claiming higher education qualifications. These groups will still be included in the new project, especially in Greece. However, the refugee population in Italy has a different profile – many of them coming from Sub-Saharan Africa and claiming secondary rather than higher education qualifications. This offers an opportunity to test the EQPR in new circumstances and potentially to expand its use.

In addition, the project will include developing an alumni network of EQPR holders. Alumni will help new holders of the EQPR to integrate better into their new local societies by accessing further studies and the labour market. The involvement of more ENIC-NARICs in the upcoming three-year project by Council of Europe will help put the EQPR more firmly on the agenda of the ENIC and NARIC Networks, which is crucial in developing recognition policy and practice in Europe.

The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees can be of use to any European country and is explicitly mentioned in the recommendation on the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee situation that the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee adopted in November 2017.

Marina Malgina
Head of Section / Seksjonssjef
Section for recognition of refugees' qualifications / Flyktningeseksjonen
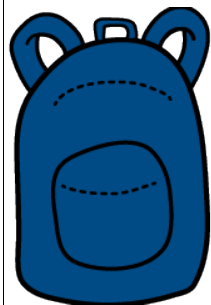**Department of Foreign Education**
Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT)

The Article 26 Backpack™

A Unique Human Rights Tool to Support Access to Higher Education

Over the last eight years, since the start of the Syrian crisis, the number of displaced persons has risen to a number never before seen. According to the most recent UNHCR data, there are currently 6.5 million persons who have been forcibly displaced, 22.5 million registered refugees, with 5.6 million from Syria alone. Although there has long been engagement by the international community to provide opportunities to access primary and secondary for refugees and displaced persons, access to tertiary education has not been a formal mandate, nor a priority. For refugee and displaced persons, access to tertiary education through regular pathways is virtually non-existent, due to the constraints of language, restrictions on movement either in-country or host country, political and cultural perspectives, lack of funding and information on opportunities, and bureaucratic policies at higher education institutions.

In July 2016, with a seed grant from the Open Society Foundations, Dr. Keith David Watenpaugh, Professor and Director of the University of California, Davis Human Rights Studies, brought together a small group of experts from the Harvard Humanitarian Institute and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers to brainstorm on how to break down some of the identified barriers to tertiary education, and the concept of the Article 26 Backpack™ emerged.

Through support of the Ford Foundation, and in consortium with the American University of Beirut and the American Association of Collegiate Registers and Admissions Officers, the University of California, Davis has further developed the concept and technical platform of the Article 26 Backpack™ (A26BP™). The A26BP™, named for article of the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights,* is a unique human rights tool that empowers young people, and supports academic mobility through providing a safe and secure place to store documents, images, and multimedia, with the added ability to share the contents with university admissions officers, potential employers, and when applicable, credential evaluation professionals. All components of the A26BP™ are supported by the underpinning human rights value that the Backpack, and all of its contents, is owned by the Backpacker, and only the Backpacker may choose to share the content.

Although there have been numerous projects that utilize technology to support access to higher education for vulnerable populations, the A26BP™ is distinct in that it not only utilizes emerging digital capabilities of document storage and sharing, but it also engages with the user, whom we call 'Backpackers', on a human level through the Backpack Guide System, My Story/ My Future and the Compass feature. Through the initial field exercises in Lebanon, November 2017, these components were shown to be of significant value, not only for the Backpackers, but also for the Backpack Guides.

The Backpack Guide System:

In order for the A26BP™ to be fully utilized by these vulnerable populations of young university age persons, it is necessary that a firm trust base between the A26BP™ and the potential Backpacker is established. To this end, the Backpack Guide System and training program was developed and implemented in the field. The Backpack Guide System utilizes the engagement of near-to-peer young people from the host and refugee communities to act as Backpack Guides, who are responsible for educating the potential Backpacker on what the Backpack is, and what it is not. The first cohort of Backpack Guides, recruited primarily through the American University of Beirut School of Education, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, received training based on the Backpack Guide Handbook. The Backpack Guide Handbook provides the Guide with a brief history of the A26BP™ concept, an outline of how the Backpack works, ethical and safety responsibilities of Guides in the field, and guidance on how to hold a Backpack event. In addition, one of the most important functions of the Backpack Guides is explaining the core rights of the Backpacker through a discussion of the Backpacker's bill of rights.

The Backpacker Bill of Rights
- The Backpacker has the right to control and keep private the contents of the Backpack;
- The Backpacker has the right to share the contents of the Backpack with any individual, agency, university or organization he or she chooses;
- The Backpacker has the right to expect that the digital platform's software and data storage have significant safeguards against unauthorized access or hacking.
- The Backpacker has the right to access the contents of the Backpack regardless of location.
- The Backpacker has the right to delete his or her Backpack at any time.

November, 2017, Lebanon Fall Field Exercise:

Our findings from the field exercise exceeded expectations in the area of the Backpack Guide System on multiple levels. First, the implementation of the Backpack Guides is viewed by the American University of Beirut, and other elite institutions in Lebanon, as an opportunity to support civic engagement, good citizenship and public service. Second, the Guide System is a key component in creating the trust base between the Backpack and potential Backpackers.

All core Backpack Team members were undeniably impressed with the commitment and dedication of this Cohort of Backpack Guides, and see this as an opportunity for the Guides to further impact their own communities through first-hand experience in working with the refugee population in Lebanon.

In the Spring and Fall Exercise, 2018 in Lebanon, teams of Backpack Guides will fan out across the country and help refugees open and fill over 600 Backpacks.

My Story/ My Future:

A second, unique component of the A26BP™ is the My Story/ My Future feature. My Story/ My Future is a short, visual personal statement of purpose, and is a critical part of the Backpack. My Story/ My Future allows the Backpacker to film and upload themselves talking about their lives, stories, academic and professional accomplishments, and to where they see themselves in the future. This is considered a critical component, as not only does it add a very personal human element to the Backpack, it allows the Backpacker an opportunity to self-reflect on their lives and achievements, and provides safe space to think of future possibilities in settings that do not readily support this type of reflection.

November, 2017, Lebanon Fall Field Exercise:

The first My Story/ My Future was recorded by a Backpacker in the Jarahiyya Camp School, located at the edge of a medium-sized informal refugee camp settlement off the Beirut-Damascus highway in the Central Biqa' Valley. This My Story/ My future recounts the Backpacker's experience of having one year to complete a
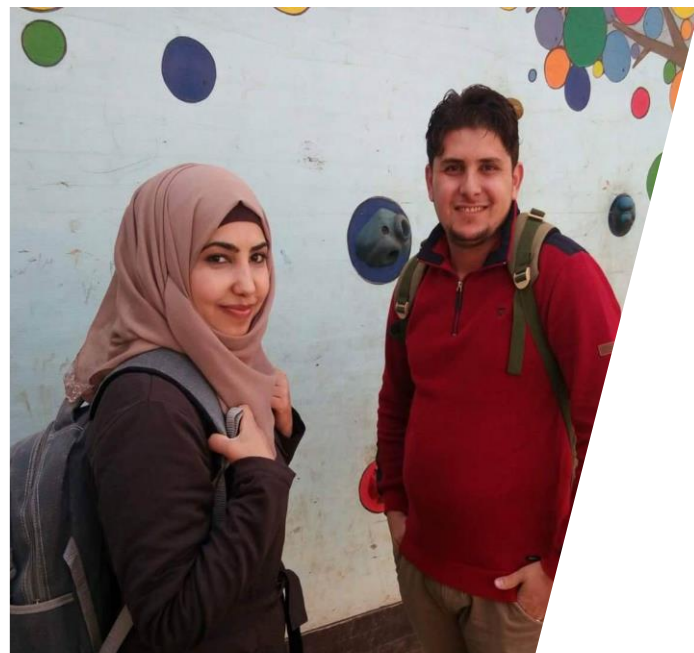
degree in Chemistry before being imprisoned and tortured in Syria for the Backpacker's political beliefs. After four years, the Backpacker was released, but was not able to resume studies at the university previously enrolled. After fleeing to Lebanon, this Backpacker currently teaches refugee children, but hopes to finish the degree and return to Syria—the country of the Backpacker's home.

Our findings from the field exercise for My Story/ My Future showed unequivocally the power that humanizing the conflict has. All core Backpack Team members, and Backpack Guides, were moved beyond tears. One of our Backpack Guides reflected upon return to Beirut that through this experience working with this Backpacker, she now has a completely different opinion of the refugees in Lebanon, and will make it a personal point to challenge popular notions regarding this population within her social and family networks.

Through the incorporation of My Story/My Future, the A26BP™ aims to put a face to digital portfolio and documentation, so that any end user will feel an immediate connection to the Backpacker.

The Compass:

Though slated for further development in the second phase of the A26BP™ project in Fall 2018, the Compass will play an integral part in expanding opportunities to local NGO (non-governmental organization) services, scholarship resources through partnership with the Institute of International Education PEER (Platform for Education in Emergencies Response), and career and education guidance and counseling.

In addition to functionality of the Compass to directly put the Backpacker in touch with those resources mentioned, the Compass will also allow the Backpacker the possibility to have an assessment of their educational documentation completed. This assessment, done by a professional credential evaluator, will be able to be shared by the Backpacker to any institution, in order to assist admissions officers in making an informed decision regarding the stored educational documentation.

We look forward to sharing our findings of the functionality of Compass in the Fall of 2018. The Article 26 Backpack™ is a human rights tool that takes digital document storage and sharing capability to the next level through the incorporation of face-to-face counseling and video statement of purpose. All components of the Article 26 Backpack™ are based on the

core human rights notion that the Backpacker, and only the Backpacker, owns the information and documentation stored within. In compliance with the University of California, Davis security protocols and EQPR (European Qualification Passport for Refugees), the Backpackers enjoy the same security of information that faculty, students and administrators have at U.C. Davis.

The complex intersection of both technology and human elements of the Article 26 Backpack™ make this a truly unique tool to support access to higher education, and empower Backpackers through the creation of their own personal narrative of past achievements, into those of the future.

Follow the Article 26 Backpack™ through our next phase of implementation in Lebanon, June 2018, and further developments of the platform.

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All photo credits go to Liz McAllister/ U.C. Davis

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Building a Resource Library

Part IV - Translation

Welcome back to the ongoing series on *Building a Resource Library*. In earlier articles in this series, I discussed the importance of building your own in-house resource library. Essentially, it doesn't help you to have wonderful, useful information if you aren't able to find it when you need it. The next article in this series focused on one method for organizing that data: a web-based database known as a wiki where you create and manage the content. The most recent article in the series focused on the importance of expanding your samples library and included numerous resources for tracking down and collecting samples. This article focuses on another layer of resources: namely, languages. In particular, I am referring to how you handle academic credentials that are issued in a language that you can't read.

Obviously, there are going to be many times when reading the documents in the native language is simply not an option, due to time, limited glossary resources, or simply lack of experience. What can you do if you don't read the language? The most obvious response is to have the student provide a translation. It's important to note that not all translations are created equally. I've come across many translations that were... generous, to put it mildly. Sometimes, translators try to help by interpreting what's been written rather than simply translating from another language to your language. Instead of listing a grade in the native grading system, they will attempt to convert it to your grading scale for you, but they may not use the same grading scale conversions you use. Some translators try to help you determine the equivalency of a credential via the translation. I've seen a number of 2-3 year technologist diplomas translated as Bachelor of Technology.

Sometimes cognates can throw you for a loop as well. It's very common for both *Bachiller* and *Baccalaureat* to be translated as Bachelor, for example, even though it is a high school leaving credential in many Spanish- and French-speaking countries. It's important for you as an evaluator to understand the native language terminology for the specific country of the documents as well as how those credentials fit within the educational system as a whole. Relying on a translation for either or both of those elements will put you in a position of potentially admitting or hiring an unqualified student.

On the other hand, translators can simply make mistakes, such as typographical errors, transposing numbers, omitting a subject or semester, and other unintentional mistakes. Translations are frequently incomplete, focusing on the elements that the translator (or student) think are important such as the graduation information or course listing and leaving off other critical elements on the native language documents such as entry requirements, grading or passing system, portion of coursework completed, or other information that might

assist you in your assessment of the student's abilities. I've also seen translations that have removed failed grades or mislabeled clearly-identified developmental coursework. Sometimes translations may freely switch between words like university, institution, academy, college, and other educational institutions, so sometimes researching an institution's recognition is complicated by the differences in how the institution's name is translated. The same goes for determining equivalencies based on translations rather than native language graduation documents.

By relying exclusively on translations, you also miss out on the really neat security features that many institutions are embedding in their official documents. While increasing numbers of universities and secondary leaving examination boards are providing digital methods of verifying their documents, there are still more physical documents than electronic records, so it's important (and fun!) to learn about the variety of security features in official native language documents.

My philosophy about translations is pretty simple: the more you have to rely on the translation, the more professional – and distant from the student – it should be. What does that mean? If you or others in your office can read the native language documents (at least well enough to check the translation for accuracy), then you might not be as particular in your requirements for who does the translation. You may even allow the student or a family member to translate because you can read the documents but simply don't have the time yourself to translate them. On the other hand, if you have to rely heavily on the translations, it's critical that the translation be removed from the applicant, either by having it done in-house or having it done by a reputable external translator, such as a certified translator in the home country or in your country. In the US, the American Translator's Association is a professional association of translators and interpreters that requires a certification examination for professional translators to ensure that the translation is an unbiased, professional, quality, and dependable translation. The ATA is a member of the *Federation International des Traducteurs* (International Federation of Translators), which includes more than 100 professional translations associations and would be a good place to start if you want to find a reputable translation organization in your country.

I've been talking about translation, which is essentially converting from one written language to another. An interpreter is someone who translates spoken words, and a translator does the same for the written language, allowing you to read the words in your own language. Another common term in our industry is transliterate. How is that different from translate? Transliteration is converting the individual characters from one alphabet into the characters or letters of your own alphabet with the intention of letting you approximate the pronunciation of a word in your own language.

Language	Native Term	Transliteration	Translation
Chinese	专科	Zhuanke	Undergraduate Non-degree Study
Chinese	本科	Benke	Undergraduate Degree Study
Chinese	硕士	Shuoshi	Master's Degree
Cyrillic	бакалавра	Bakalavra	Bachelor
Cyrillic	специалиста	Spetsialista	Specialist
Cyrillic	магистра	Magister	Master
Persian	کاردانی	Kardani	Associate
Persian	کارشناسی	Karshenasi	Bachelor
Persian	کارشناسی ارشد	Karshenasi-Arshad	Master
Arabic	شهادة	Shahada(t)	Diploma
Arabic	البكالوريوس	Albukalurius	Bachelor
Arabic	ماجستير	Majister	Master

Why am I talking about transliteration in a written document if transliteration is supposed to focus on the pronunciation? Some of the resources that we use in order to learn about an education system include transliterations of the indigenous documents or terms rather than the names in their native language. This is especially common for languages that use an alphabet that differs tremendously from the alphabet of the education resource. It is often difficult to know if the native language document you are working from is the right document or the credential mentioned in your resources when some of the country resources use the native language terminology and others use the transliteration. I don't know about you, but I'm not a polyglot. I've taken a few years of a few languages and have learned a smattering of "transcriptese" in several more, but I was relying more on translations than I care to admit before I decided to make it a priority to learn to read native language academic credentials. Obviously, this is easier for those languages whose alphabets are similar to the alphabet of my own language. For example, Romance languages (also known as Romanic languages or Latin languages), or modern languages that had a common origin in Latin, generally have a similar alphabet since they have their basis in the same Latin alphabet. As a result, the spoken languages may sound totally different from one another, but the written languages of Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, and French – the five most widely used Romance languages – share many similarities.

This makes it much easier to examine the native language documents from other Romance languages if you already have an understanding of one of them. While English is not a Romance language – it's technically a Germanic language due to the basic structure – many, many English words are borrowed from or influenced by Romance languages. English and Romance languages (and Germanic languages) all use various adaptations of the Latin

alphabet, which also helps simplify the process of figuring out which words need to be translated and added to your in-house glossary. Even if you're not able to read the document, the similar alphabet makes it much easier to search for a translation.

But even for those languages that you or your staff don't read, there are a number of strategies for working as much as possible with native language documents.

- Look for patterns in the graduation documents and transcripts
- Learn to read degree names, degree categories, and other relevant common terminology
- Learn to read numbers
- Learn to read grades in the native terminology

I'll discuss each of these steps in greater detail in the paragraphs below.
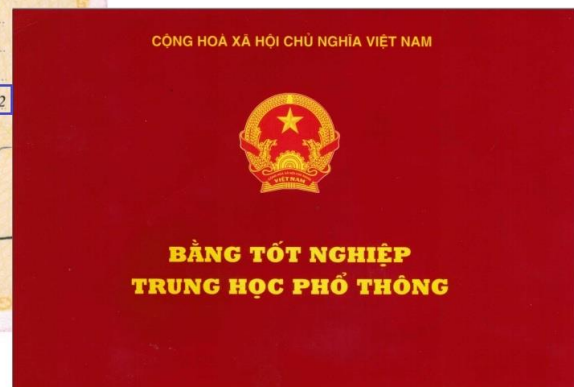
Look for Patterns

Initially, my plan to learn to read native language credentials stemmed from noticing that some countries have uniform graduation credentials. While I knew that reading the entire transcript would be beyond my nascent skills, I could certainly learn to identify standard patterns that appear on all of the credentials for a given country. Actually, you can start even smaller than focusing on an entire country. Learn to recognize the patterns to read a single qualification that you see regularly. Have verified samples that you can study and compare against.

Before I was even conscious I was doing it, I was "reading" native language secondary school diplomas for countries where the diplomas are issued by the Ministry of Education. Being issued by a central body (examination board, Ministry, single degree-granting university, technical council, etc.) increases the likelihood of standardization, which obviously makes it easier to consistently identify the characteristics that are unique to the individual, such as name and date of birth, while also easily identifying the appropriate evaluation elements, like grade average, graduation date, and school. These elements vary from country to credential, which is why it's so useful to focus initially on a single country or single credential when you're first starting out. I've included a sample of the contemporary *Bang Tot Nhgiep Trung Hoc Pho Thong*, or Graduation Diploma from General Upper Secondary Education, from Vietnam that has been awarded in this format since 2008/2009.

This credential from Vietnam is a good choice because it has all of the elements designed to make it straightforward to "read" the native language diploma: an alphabet similar in appearance to my own (other than the diacritics) since the Vietnamese alphabet uses the Latin script; a national document prepared by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and specific to the range of years issued; and obvious blank space for filling in the student-specific information. Once I learn the bare bones for this standardized document, I can apply that information to all others from the same time period and easily hone in to identify – and validate – the student-specific information. By understanding the elements in this native language document, I am able to rely less on the translation and focus more on the actual documentation provided. If your attention is on the translation, it's very easy to miss when the expected elements don't appear on the native language documents, when documents don't seem to match the appropriate format for the time period, when common anti-fraud security features aren't there, etc. In Vietnam, secondary school documents are all issued by the appropriate regional department of education on the same MOET-provided document so there's a lot of consistency or continuity. At the higher education level, there is still a great deal of standardization, but growing numbers of institutions have flexibility in their documentation practices. Of course, this standardization typically refers to the graduation credential only, so the transcripts themselves may be a free-for-all.

Learn to Read Common Terms

However, once you have mastered reading the elements on the native language diplomas and degrees, you will start feeling more comfortable looking at the native language transcripts and identifying and seeking out the commonalities found there, too. It's only a short step away until you're comfortably reading the key elements of the native language documents for a variety of languages and countries. Other countries that have standardization in their graduation documents include China, Iran, France, Russian Federation (and many of the former members of the Soviet Union), Bulgaria, and Romania. In addition, many countries award a standardized national leaving certificate upon completion of secondary schooling, like Ethiopia, the members of the Caribbean Examinations Council, Nigeria, Haiti, Italy, Cambodia, Jordan, Egypt, Hong Kong, Iraq, Rwanda, Algeria, Mongolia, and South Africa, among others. In addition, other countries may issue a specific national standard high school diploma and/or transcript rather than a leaving examination certificate that still follows a

common format, including Turkey, Afghanistan, Peru, Greece, Saudi Arabia, Canada (specific to province), and more. None of these are all-inclusive lists but simply a short set of examples to show you that much can be gained from attempting to learn to identify the patterned elements of native language documents.

In addition to learning to read patterns in the graduation credentials, it's also important to learn to recognize the names of the credentials, the types of degrees or categories that are typically awarded, and other important terminology. This helps you look for the important elements on the academic record or transcript, which is less likely to be issued in a uniform format. Some of the most useful terminology includes words like duration, examination, grade or marks, minimum pass, career or field of study, full-time or part-time, education level, semester, class hours, subjects, average grade, and a number of other terms that may vary by education level and country. In some countries, degrees are only offered in certain fields, and being able to recognize them helps to identify problematic documents. On the other hand, in some countries, different documents are issued for incomplete or in-progress studies, so what may appear as an unofficial record may actually just be non-standard but totally legitimate. In addition, sometimes unofficial records, like notarized copies, may have more stamps, embossed seals, or ribbons than their official counterparts.

It is incredibly helpful to maintain a country- or language-specific list of common terms in the native language to assist you in reading the documents. It is also useful to maintain a list of popular subjects; this is especially important (and easy!) for countries that have a national leaving examination or a series of mandatory undergraduate courses that must be completed by all students. I've included some starter resources at the end of this article, but you will find that many of the resources listed in previous installments in this series on building your resource library also include translation information.

Learn to Read Numbers

Latin Script	Chinese	Arabic	Persian	Hebrew
0	〇	٠	٠	
1	一	١	١	א
2	二	٢	٢	ב
3	三	٣	٣	ג
4	四	٤	۴	ד
5	五	٥	۵	ה
6	六	٦	۶	ו
7	七	٧	٧	ז
8	八	٨	٨	ח
9	九	٩	٩	ט

Reading the numbers on the native language documents is another integral step. It's easy for even the most professional translators to make mistakes in typing grades or units associated with a course. Even if you find that the particular font or handwriting of the graduation diploma, course names, and even the rest of the document is beyond your skills, reading the numbers is often much more straightforward. Many alphabets use a variation of the Latin script of the Hindu-Arabic numeral system.

Keep in mind that even in alphabets that are written right to left, like Arabic and Chinese, numbers are still written left to right. It's also useful to note that some documents may include a combination of Latin Script numbers in some parts of the documents and native language numbering in other places. In China, for example, transcripts usually list grades and hours or credits using the Latin numbering system, but graduation dates, start and end dates, dates of birth, and other dates are often written using Chinese numerals.

In addition, calendar dates are written day/month/year in most of the world, but parts of North America tend to use month/day/year models for dates. Some countries like Iran and Nepal use their own calendar dating that appears on the documents, and that information needs to be converted as well. Happily, the internet is a wonderful resource for identifying online date converters.

Learn to Read Grades

An important – and often easier – part of reading native language documents is reading the grades. Even countries that don't award documents on a Ministry-designed credential or have regulated degree categories may be inclined to use similar grading ranges. Obviously, if the grades are written on the native language documents in numbers, then this element doesn't apply, but a large number of educational systems award descriptive, or verbal, grades. If you're not familiar with that terminology, a descriptive or verbal grade simply means that the institution awards grades in the form of a word or phrase rather than numerical or letter grades. Common descriptive grades include Excellent, Good, Average, and Poor. Examples of countries with descriptive grades include France, Russian Federation, Mexico, China, Egypt, South Africa, and Australia. Some countries, like China, include a combination of numerical grades and descriptive grades.

In other countries such as Mexico, India, and Egypt, different faculties within the same institution may use numerical grading while others use descriptive grades. I've included a short chart that includes some common verbal or descriptive grades.

Please note that the chart below is NOT intended as a crosswalk across grading systems. A grade of Хорошо (Good) in Russian is not comparable to a grade of *Tres Bien* (Very Good) in French. This chart is simply to show some of the more common descriptive grades in use and rough approximations of their translation but is not meant to imply that they are equivalent grades from one language or system to another.

English	French	Arabic	Russian	Chinese	Spanish
Excellent	*Excellent*	ممتاز	Отлично	优秀	*Excelente*
Very Good	*Tres Bien*	جيد جدا		良好	*Muy Bien*
Good	*Bien*	جيد	Хорошо	中等	Bien
Satisfactory	*Assez Bien* or *Passable*	قبول	Удовлетворительно	及格	*Regular* or *Suficient*
Poor/Failed	*Ajourne*	مردود	Неудовлетворительно	不传	*No Suficient*
Passed			Зачет	合格 or 通过	*Acreditada*

Again, the chart above is meant only to highlight some of the more common descriptive grading systems and the importance of being able to read them in their native language. Even the most well-intentioned and professional of translators may use a different translation for a particular term than you use in-house, and it's easy to convert grades inappropriately if you rely on someone else's translation.

Now that we've identified what needs to be done in order to increase your reliance on the native-language documents themselves, how do you learn all of this? Are you expected to become fluent in ever written language in addition to all of the continuing education you need to learn the educational systems themselves? There are a number of strategies that you can employ to facilitate the process of using the native language documents themselves in your evaluation work. You can compare the translation you receive to your in-house glossary and then compare that to the native language document to ensure the translation makes sense. This allows you to validate your confidence in the translation that was provided if you are not doing the translations in-house. I've included some resources at the end of this article to help you build or grow your in-house glossary tools.

You can also look up the indigenous terms in your glossary or language dictionaries. This is obviously easier to do when using the same or similar base alphabet, but some glossaries or dictionaries are also organized by topic. In addition, the more time you spend looking at another alphabet, the more you start to identify unique letters or characters, and the easier it is to work with source material in the native language.

Another fun strategy is to use Google Translate with the obvious caveat that it should be used as one tool in your translation toolkit but not as a replacement for a professional translation from a certified translator. However, it's great for spot-checking translations and growing your in-house library. One of its many neat features is that you can use a handwriting feature to (try to) recreate the native language terms. This is not available for all languages, but I personally use the Arabic and Chinese handwriting options on a regular basis. If it's available
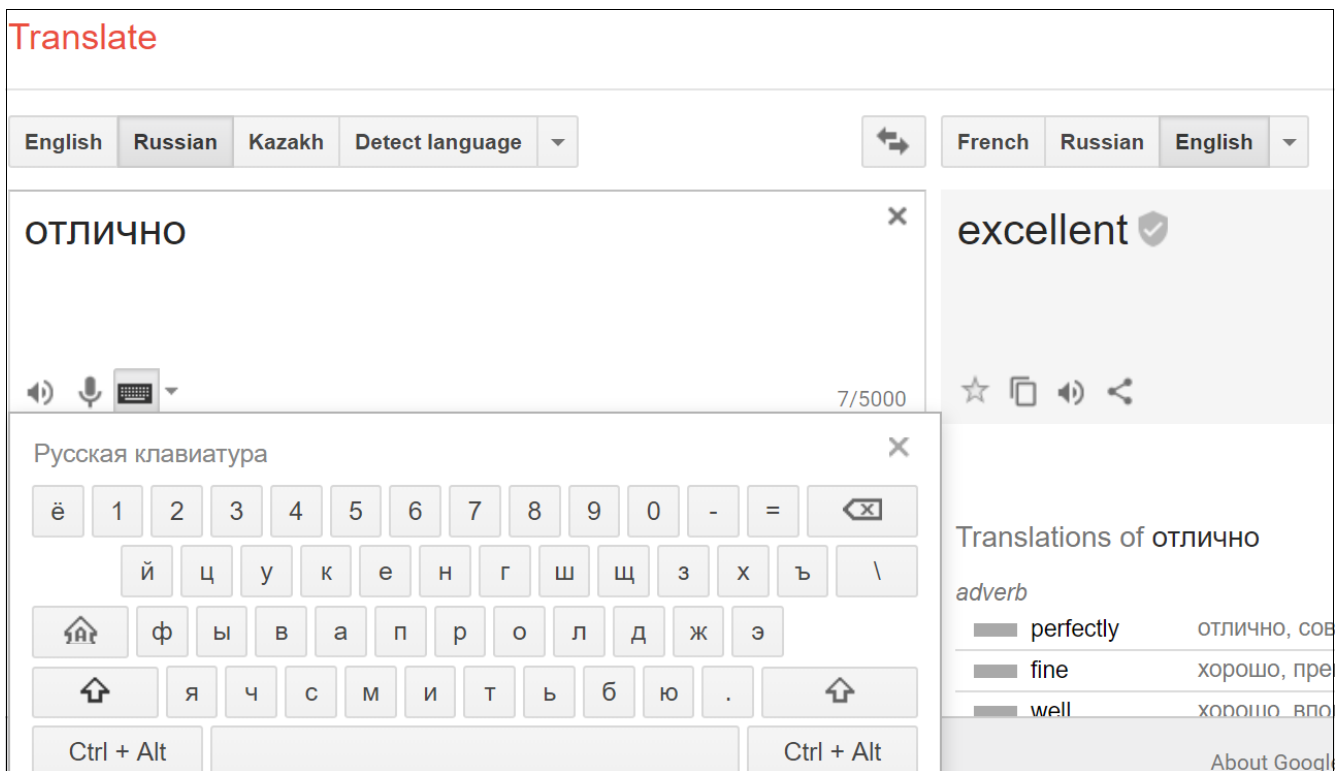
for that language, you simply select the pencil icon after selecting the native language. If the handwriting option is available, you will use your mouse (or digital pen if you're fortunate enough to have a smart stylus) to write your best effort. Google Translate will offer suggestions at the bottom of the drawing screen of what it thinks you're trying to write.

Translate

For some languages, however, it's easier to type the letters. Instead of having to install a language pack and learn the keyboard shortcuts for creating the various characters or letters, Google Translate itself provides a virtual keyboard. This onscreen keyboard allows you to easily type the native language characters to figure out if your translations are roughly accurate. Remember, this is an electronic tool and not a skilled person who is translating the terms within the context of the educational document. However, I often find that recreating terms using the virtual keyboard is the fastest way to identify the native language spelling of the institution, which frequently makes it much easier to look up the institution's recognition, which might not always match a list of recognized schools in your language. In addition, some countries offer online verification portals that may require personal data such as student name, and using a virtual keyboard can be much easier than trying to find the characters that make up a person's name.

Translate

| English | Russian | Kazakh | Detect language | ▾ |

| French | Russian | English | ▾ |

отлично   ×

🔊 🎤 ⌨ ▾   7/5000

Русская клавиатура   ×

ё	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	-	=	⌫
й	ц	у	к	е	н	г	ш	щ	з	х	ъ	\
🏠	ф	ы	в	а	п	р	о	л	д	ж	э
⇧	я	ч	с	м	и	т	ь	б	ю	.	⇧
Ctrl + Alt				Ctrl + Alt

excellent 🛡

☆ 🗍 🔊 ⋖

Translations of отлично

adverb

perfectly   отлично, сов
fine   хорошо, пре
well   хорошо, впо

About Googl

Just as the English language has different fonts, handwriting, spelling variations, and cases (upper and lower case) so do many other languages. You may think that have the wrong word, or your translation is suspect because things don't match up, but you may be dealing with simple variations that seem like totally different words but aren't.

Often, copying a native language term from Google Translate and then putting that word in italics can make it clearer that you're dealing with the same word. As an example, Отлично, *Отлично*, *Отлично*, and *Отлично* are all the same word but in different fonts and styles. To put it into perspective, remember that many words in English look completely different in type versus script, and you might realize how easily it is for the same word to look *completely* different.

Obviously, there is a learning curve, and you will get stuck. That's why you should still require a translation. Your goal here isn't to replace the translation with your own abilities. Your goal is simply to conduct as much of the evaluation work from the native language documents as possible. And the amount of work you do from the native language documents will grow over time as you become more familiar with the different alphabets, grow your in-house glossaries and libraries, and become less overwhelmed at this seemingly enormous task.

Where should you start? Look at the documents you receive. If you don't get Vietnamese high school graduates, then that's probably not the best starting point for you. On the other hand,

if you see a lot of Chinese documents crossing your desk, then learning how to identify the patterns on their graduation credentials and beginning to look for key terms on the transcripts should be a high priority for you, even if you're requiring verification from CHESICC or CDGDC (which I highly recommend). If you're trying to grow your program with students from a particular country or language, it's an excellent idea to spend some time familiarizing yourself not just with their educational system but with the native language documents, alphabet, and key terms.

If you're interested in learning more about translations and adding more samples to your sample library, I am scheduled to present on this topic in Philadelphia during the 2018 TAICEP Annual Meeting from October 1-4. The session will include samples and translation glossary information from credentials issued in French, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Cyrillic, Arabic, and Persian. These languages represent the six official languages of the United Nations as well as some of the countries that are increasingly sending their students abroad.

I've included a short list of some of the resources that you can use to build or grow your resource library with respect to translations. These are multi-country resources, and some of them require a membership or login to access them, but most of them are freely available online.

IERF Index of Educational Terms: http://www.ierf.org/for-institutions/ierfpublications/index-of-educational-terms/

QQI NARIC Ireland: http://qsearch.qqi.ie/WebPart/Search?searchtype=recognitions

CEDEFOP: http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/node/11730

IQAS International Education Guides: https://www.alberta.ca/iqas-educationguides.aspx

AACRAO EDGE: http://edge.aacrao.org/aacrao-edge-loginpage.php?uri=/

Australian Department of Education and Training: https://internationaleducation.gov.au/CEP

NAFSA Guide to Educational Systems around the World: https://www.nafsa.org/_/File/_/guide_educational_systems_2005.pdf

NUFFIC modules: https://www.nuffic.nl/en/diplomarecognition/foreign-education-systems

European Glossary on Education, Vol I-V: https://publications.europa.eu/en/publicationdetail/-/publication/6dc168d4-7a44-4a90-a247-4300e9769e47/language-en

Classbase: https://www.classbase.com/Countries/Armenia/Credentials

RecoNow: http://www.reconow.eu/en/index.aspx

Eurydice:
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/nationalpolicies/eurydice/content/glossary_en?2ndlanguage=

San Francisco Public Schools:
http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusdstaff/services/files/translation-interpretationglossary.pdf

Palm Beach Schools:
https://www.palmbeachschools.org/multicultural/wpcontent/uploads/sites/70/2016/04/TranscriptGuide.pdf

Everett Public Schools:
http://docushare.everett.k12.wa.us/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-6395   Collier County

School District: http://old.collierschools.com/ell/docs/Translation%20Binder.pdf
Transcript Research Glossary of Foreign Terms:
www.transcriptresearch.com/translations.pdf

Peggy Bell Hendrickson
Director
Transcript Research

Add to Your Library

Verification Resources

<u>Angola</u>
Universidade Mandume Ya Ndemofayo
- https://sigu-alunos.umn.ed.ao/nonio/documentos/validacao.do

<u>Australia</u>
University of Tasmania
- https://graduation-verification-service.utas.edu.au/

<u>Bangladesh</u>
University of Dhaka
- vcoffice@du.ac.bd
- examcontroller@du.ac.bd

<u>Belize</u>
University of Belize
- records@ub.edu.bz

<u>Brazil</u>
Universidad de Sao Paulo
- https://uspdigital.usp.br/webdoc/

Centro Universitario Internacional UNINTER
- https://www.uninter.com/documentosdigitais/

<u>Congo, (Democratic Republic of)</u>
Ecole Superiuere d'Informatique Salama / ESIS
- sgac@esisalama.org

<u>Congo, (Republic of)</u>
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
- http://www.enseignement-general.gouv.cg/bacresultats

<u>India</u>
SRM University
- http://evarsity.srmuniv.ac.in/certverify/Login.jsp

Iran
Amirkabir University
- intrel@aut.ac.ir

  Amirmohammad Abhary, Office of Scientific and International Cooperation
- abhary.m@aut.ac.ir

Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology, Center for International Scientific Cooperation
- cisc@msrt.ir

Malaysia
Tunku Abdul Rahman College / TARC
- examinations@mail.tarc.edu.my

Nigeria
Lead City University
  Registrar
- registrar@lcu.edu.ng

  Yomi Ige, Verification Specialist
- leadcity@lcu.edu.ng

Portugal
Universidade de Coimbra
- https://verificacaodocumentos.uc.pt/nonio/documentos/validacao.do

Saudi Arabia
Umm-Al-Qura University degree verification
- https://uquportal.uqu.edu.sa/Services/Pages/Graduation.aspx

Senegal
Universite Alioune Diop de Bambey
- ousseynou.ka@uadb.edu.sn
- rhuadb@uadb.edu.sn

Serbia
University of Nis, Faculty of Philosophy
- info@filfak.ni.ac.rs

Somaliland
Amoud University
- mjibril114@yahoo.com
- registrar@amoud.edu.so

Sri Lanka
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
- sarexam@wyb.ac.lk

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Sudan University of Science and Technology
- acad@sustech.edu
- vicechancellor@sustech.edu
- principal@sustech.edu
- sca@sustech.edu
- ero@sustech.edu

Turkey
Namik Kemal University
- http://euniversite.nku.edu.tr/diplomasorgu/

United Arab Emirates
University of Sharjah
- registrar@sharjah.ac.ae

United Kingdom
University of Ulster
- examsJN@ulster.ac.uk

Thanks to Peggy Bell Hendrickson of Transcript Research for these resources!

From the TAICEP Website

Events Calendar

https://www.taicep.org

Add your upcoming events to the TAICEP Website!

We invite you to submit relevant events and professional activities for our events calendar. Our calendar is visible to all credential evaluation professionals who visit the TAICEP website, and the current month is conveniently displayed in the right-hand corner of our homepage.

By sharing your event on our calendar with the TAICEP community, you can help increase the visibility of your networking events, webinars, or professional training activities. Adding your events to our calendar is fast and easy! You can click here to learn more.

If you don't have any events to add, please consider supporting fellow members by checking our calendar regularly for activities that may be of interest to you and that can help spread the word to other professionals. We are always looking for innovative ways to engage with and support our members and we hope that this new service will be helpful to you all.

Member Benefit Program

The primary reason for having member benefits is to provide TAICEP members with access to discounted or free products and services that will assist them with their jobs as international credential evaluators. A secondary reason for having member benefits is to develop productive and meaningful relationships with providers who support the mission and goals of TAICEP.

For those who wish to provide a member benefit under this program, please see the guidelines here: Member Benefit Program Guidelines

Submissions for consideration should be sent to Robert Prather at robertpprather@gmail.com.

Check the website for updated information about current member benefits at https://www.taicep.org/taiceporgwp/professional-development/member-benefit-program/

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