

Practicum Report

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Introduction: Interning at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Language Unit

During Spring 2024, I interned at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Language Unit as a Spanish interpreter for four months (16 hours per week) in fulfillment of the Spanish Translation and Interpreting Masters' Program requirements. During my tenure at the office, I developed my skills as a legal interpreter and translator. I learned about the requirements, professional norms and expectations of an interpreter in this professional environment, as compared to other professional interpreting experiences that I have had, such as medical or community interpreting. Through this essay, I will explore the functions of the Language Unit, my responsibilities, what I have learned, the skills I have developed, and the challenges faced.

Approximately 20% of the 1,694,251 individuals living in Manhattan report that they speak only Spanish at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023), which indicates the vital need of language services as part of our legal system. Language services are codified into law by Federal, State, and Local laws in New York City as a whole. For example, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that courts receiving federal funding must provide access to linguistic services for individuals with limited English proficiency; New York State Judiciary Law § 390 requires linguistic services for individuals with limited English proficiency; and the New York City Administrative Code requires any city agencies to provide interpretation and translation service access to non-English speakers.

New York City is divided into five boroughs, each with their own District Attorney's Office. The Language Unit at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office provides language services to the Assistant District Attorneys in various ways for cases in Manhattan. Interpreters will provide language services for office interviews and phone calls with witnesses or victims, judicial proceedings, and occasionally public presentations. Although the job titles typically include

“interpreter”, and that is how they refer to themselves as, they oftentimes also provide transcription and translation services for phone calls (e.g. from a prison or jail), text messages, police bodycam footage, and 911 calls.

Typically, an interpreter will be assigned in advance to a certain number of interpreting cases in a day, and there will be one interpreter who is “on call” to take phone calls or last-minute interpreting requests. When interpreters are not on a case, they are typically responsible for transcribing and translating the audios, videos, or texts described above.

Interpreting Experiences, Challenges and Lessons Learned

During my tenure, I assisted in interpretation for office interview and phone calls, as well as transcription and translation services. Through these experiences, I have learned worked to further solidify my understanding of what it means to be an interpreter in the judicial environment. Below, I will highlight some of my experiences and what I gained from them.

Language Variation

The Manhattan District Attorney’s Office serves over 330,000 individuals who only speak Spanish at home, not including individuals who speak English at any proficiency level, but would prefer to navigate in the legal system through Spanish. The Spanish-speaking population are made up of over 20 different ethnic groups, such as Dominican, Honduran, and Mexican (Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, n.d.), each speaking their own variety of Spanish. Although mutually intelligible, each variety of Spanish is modulated by cultural, social, and contextual factors that impact all parts of the language, such as the vocabulary, grammar, and phonology (Moreno Fernández, 2000). At the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office, I encountered this variation first-hand and had to learn how to cope with the grand linguistic diversity within Spanish.

The first interpretation service that I provided was for a phone interview between an Assistant District Attorney and her witness, “María”. When assigned a case, an interpreter is provided with a case file online that includes a police report and some general information about the perpetrator. Unfortunately, for last-minute cases, the interpreter typically does not have time to review the case information.

Before this case, I had never done telephonic interpretation, and it was a challenging first assignment. It is common for first-time interpreters to be stressed during their initial assignments, which can lead to reduced performance, such as short-term memory failure, due to anxieties (Yang & Tan, 2017).

Another challenge for this assignment was the variety of Spanish that María spoke, Dominican Spanish. Despite Dominicans making up the largest percentage of Latinx immigrants in New York City at about 41% (Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, n.d.), I do not have much experience interacting with Dominicans or hearing their language use. For example, María used the word *truncar* when talking about her travel plans being thwarted, a word that I did not recognize. Her phonological patterns also made it difficult for me to parse her speech, requiring me to use more cognitive effort than I would have to for other varieties of Spanish, taking away from cognitive resources that should have been devoted to working memory.

These two issues are within my control, and I became aware of the need to familiarize myself better with the population that the District Attorney’s Office serves, as well as work on coping mechanisms to prevent short-term memory failure. My advisor suggested that I utilize social media, such as Instagram, to find Dominican influencers (or any other variety as needed) who speak explicitly about the linguistic diversity within the Dominican Republic. Other methods include watching Dominican media or listening to Dominican music.

Fulfilling Interpreter Ethics

Later in my tenure, I provided interpreting services for a witness, “Carla”, in an office interview with an Assistant District Attorney. With my first-time nerves out of the way, and having shadowed other interpreters for office interviews, I felt more comfortable, but I still felt anxiety that my advisor was listening in on the interpretation and that it was official business.

My short-term memory did not fail as often, and she was Venezuelan, a variety of Spanish with which I am more familiar through other interpreting jobs. However, the cognitive tools at my disposal to work around linguistic issues and my theoretical knowledge of best practices sometimes did not surface as quickly as they should have, possibly due to anxiety. For example, the Assistant District Attorney asked, “Did he smash it, break it, snap it?” The semantically similar words made me stumble, and I unfortunately was not able to provide a full and accurate interpretation. I was able to provide the correct words for *smash* and *break*, but for *snap*, I had to resort to a hand gesture.

Although the message was communicated for the purpose of the interview, my actions did not align with standard interpreter ethics. The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators specifies that “[s]ource-language speech should be faithfully rendered into the target language” (2016), which I was unable to do at that time. Although I was aware of the ethical requirements of me as an interpreter, it is important to internalize these practices so that at the time of interpretation, they can be automatized under pressure.

Managing the Flow of Conversation

Within interpreting studies, there is an on-going debate about the interpreter’s (in)visibility. Although it is commonly taught, such as within my own experience during Masters’ program, that interpreters are meant to be “invisible” and only work as the voices of the interlocutors, there are

various ways that an interpreter “becomes visible”. One such way is through setting communication rules at the beginning of or during the encounter, as well as controlling the traffic of information (Roy, 2000). For example, an interpreter may explicitly set the rule that if they raise their hand, the interlocutors should pause speaking to give the interpreter a chance to interpret the utterance. The interpreter may choose to pause the interlocutor due to a strain on their working memory.

In another case, I had to grapple with “becoming visible” and managing the flow of conversation. I interpreted for “Ana” in an office interview with an Assistant District Attorney. In this case, I learned about managing the interlocutors and being more flexible. In the beginning, the client was partially covering her mouth and speaking softly, making it difficult to hear her utterances. My advisor noticed this, and she communicated the issue to the Assistant District Attorney, with the best practice of speaking in the third person, and the issue was resolved when he asked the client to move her hand away from her mouth and to speak louder. This demonstrated to me a situation in which it is necessary to “become visible” as the interpreter, and the best practices of doing so. That is, communicating in the third person to the service provider, not to the LEP.

Office interviews are typically conducted in the simultaneous mode to expedite the encounter, as was this one. However, the witness had to call someone. At this point, my advisor indicated for me to switch to consecutive, due to the poor quality of the phone call. Given the chaotic environment that interpreters can find themselves in, it is necessary to be flexible about their services. However, to provide the accurate service as required by NAJIT, an interpreter must “become visible” and advocate for their needs. A consistent issue that I had throughout my interpreting experiences was difficulty in managing the length of utterances in consecutive interpretation. Although I theoretically know how much information I can receive before straining my working memory, something I have demonstrated this to myself at other interpreting jobs

outside of the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, I found it difficult to intervene when an Assistant District Attorney or LEP began to speak for too long. In this instance, I found it difficult to "become difficult" to interrupt the LEP. Since I have been able to intervene in other instances, I think that the source of my difficulties lies in the environment: I may have been intimidated by the authority position of the Assistant District Attorney, as well as anxious about having my advisor listening to my interpretation.

As it is common for interpreters to have to interact with people in positions of authority, as well as to be observed by supervisors for quality control, this is an issue that I must control internally. For example, I need to desensitize myself to these factors, as well as create an automaticity of the action. The latter can be done through having a "script" already prepared of what to say when I need to intervene in English or Spanish.

Notetaking

Another mechanism that should be used in tandem with controlling the flow of conversation is notetaking. While completing my internship, I was also taking a medical interpreting course, where we explicitly worked on notetaking skills. Although the contexts are different, thus generally focusing on a different set of semantic vocabulary, the notetaking skills I was acquiring in that course helped me to begin developing my own notetaking practices and symbols that could be applied more generally.

Due to the great variety of cases, it was difficult to quickly come up with shorthand symbols that would benefit me during the interpreting encounter. However, when I was able to see the case report before interpreting, I would imagine key words that might come up. For example, for a domestic violence case, I made or reviewed symbols for spouse, child, house/home, hospital, hit. When vocabulary did come up, the symbols helped to put less strain on my working memory. The

greatest benefit I found for notetaking was with sequence of events, and I hope to continue developing my notetaking skills to assist me with this. When an interlocutor is recounting a story, either to explain what happened (e.g. the witness or victim) or to verify information (e.g. the Assistant District Attorney), I found that notetaking helped to less the cognitive load of the sequence.

Interestingly, I found that the majority of the interpreters did not utilize notetaking for their encounters. If they did bring a notebook with them, they usually utilized it very infrequently. Only one interpreter consistently took notes throughout her interpretations. For other interpreters, I found that they mainly used notetaking to write down proper names (e.g. names of people, addresses) or numbers, which I was taught during my coursework are some of the most important things to take notes of. Another time that they frequently used notetaking was when they encountered a difficult item for interpretation, which they would bring back to the Language Unit to discuss with their colleagues about possible translation solutions.

During my interpretation encounters, I was made aware of the necessity to hone my notetaking skills. Although it is not something actively used by all interpreters, it is yet another resource that can be taken advantage of to lessen the cognitive load of the encounter.

Transcription and Translation Services

Outside of interpreting services, I also provided transcription and translation services. During my time at the office, I transcribed and translated 911 calls, police interviews, and police bodycam footage. This gave me a greater opportunity to get exposure to the populations that the office serves. Although I was already familiar with transcription and translation practices from a theoretical perspective through classwork, having specific professional standards and best practices to abide by gave me a new perspective. I was glad to see that what I learned in class held

up to the professional environment, with minor tweaks that were specific to the environment. For example, specific formatting that is required by the office, as well as greater familiarity with affidavits of translation.

Timetables

As previously described, I performed a variety of tasks while interning at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. I categorized these tasks into 8 categories, the criteria of which are displayed in Table 1. These categories include Human Resources (HR), independent study, preparation, shadow, interpretation, guided review, translation, and transcription. It should be noted that all transcription tasks involved translating the transcribed audios, as well.

Table 1 Task types and criteria for the category.

| task_type | definition |
|-------------------|--|
| HR | Tasks assigned by HR, such as obligatory Title IX training videos. |
| Independent study | Tasks explicitly or not explicitly assigned to me, such as studying legal vocabulary or reading scholarly articles on legal translation. |
| Preparation | Tasks that prepared me for shadowing or interpreting assignments. |
| Shadow | Shadowing interpreters. |
| Interpretation | Interpretation and screening of videos or audios. |
| Guided review | Review with one of the interpreters of an interpretation or translation. |
| Translation | Translation of a document. |
| Transcription | Transcription and translation of a video or audio. |

| task_type | definition |
|------------------|--|
| Glossary | Work on creating and maintaining a glossary. |

Table 2 lays out the tasks that I did at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. It includes the date of the task, at what time I began the task, at what time I ended the task, the task itself, and the type of task.

Table 2 Timetables for my internship at the Manhattan DA's Office. The table includes the date, the time starting and ending a task, the task, and the type of task.

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|--|-------------------|
| 2/14/2024 | 09:30 | 11:00 | IT training | HR |
| 2/14/2024 | 11:00 | 13:00 | Review introductory material from District Attorney's Office | independent study |
| 2/14/2024 | 02:00 | 16:30 | Review introductory material from District Attorney's Office | independent study |
| 2/16/2024 | 09:00 | 10:00 | timekeeping training | HR |
| 2/16/2024 | 10:00 | 13:00 | Review introductory material from District Attorney's Office | independent study |
| 2/16/2024 | 14:00 | 14:30 | Orientation | independent study |
| 2/16/2024 | 14:30 | 16:30 | Review bodycam footage | preparation |
| 2/20/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | Shadow office interview | shadow |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|--|-------------------|
| 2/20/2024 | 10:30 | 11:00 | Office interview review with interpreter | guided review |
| 2/20/2024 | 11:00 | 13:00 | Study Acebo material | independent study |
| 2/20/2024 | 14:00 | 14:15 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/20/2024 | 14:15 | 14:30 | Office interview review with interpreter | guided review |
| 2/20/2024 | 14:30 | 16:00 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/20/2024 | 16:00 | 16:30 | Review victim impact statements | independent study |
| 2/22/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | preparation for video screening | preparation |
| 2/22/2024 | 10:30 | 11:00 | domestic incident report translation | translation |
| 2/22/2024 | 11:00 | 13:00 | Read Breaking Silence Training Manual | independent study |
| 2/22/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/22/2024 | 15:00 | 15:10 | video screening for ADA | interpretation |
| 2/22/2024 | 15:10 | 16:30 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/27/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/27/2024 | 10:30 | 11:00 | interpretation preparation | preparation |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|--|-------------------|
| 2/27/2024 | 11:00 | 12:00 | vocabulary review (clothing, physical description) | independent study |
| 2/27/2024 | 12:00 | 13:00 | Study Acebo material | independent study |
| 2/27/2024 | 14:00 | 16:00 | Study Acebo material | independent study |
| 2/29/2024 | 09:30 | 09:45 | Factual Basis translation | translation |
| 2/29/2024 | 09:45 | 10:15 | Read on proffer agreements | preparation |
| 2/29/2024 | 10:15 | 10:45 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/29/2024 | 10:45 | 11:15 | Review bodycam footage | preparation |
| 2/29/2024 | 11:15 | 11:30 | HR training video | HR |
| 2/29/2024 | 11:30 | 12:00 | Review proffer agreement and translation | preparation |
| 2/29/2024 | 13:00 | 14:00 | shadow Proffer interview | shadow |
| 2/29/2024 | 14:00 | 14:30 | Proffer review with interpreter | guided review |
| 2/29/2024 | 14:30 | 15:00 | Proffer review | independent study |
| 2/29/2024 | 15:00 | 16:00 | shadow office interview | shadow |
| 2/29/2024 | 16:00 | 16:30 | Office interview review with interpreter | guided review |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|----------|-----------|---------|--|-------------------|
| 3/5/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | HR training video | HR |
| 3/5/2024 | 10:30 | 11:00 | HR training video | HR |
| 3/5/2024 | 11:00 | 11:30 | glossary creation | glossary |
| 3/5/2024 | 11:30 | 13:00 | 911 call transcription and translation | transcription |
| 3/5/2024 | 14:00 | 16:00 | shadow proffer session | shadow |
| 3/5/2024 | 16:00 | 16:30 | 911 call transcription and translation | transcription |
| 3/7/2024 | 09:30 | 11:00 | Review details and vocab for cases | preparation |
| 3/7/2024 | 11:00 | 12:00 | 911 call transcription and translation | transcription |
| 3/7/2024 | 12:00 | 12:30 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/7/2024 | 12:30 | 13:00 | 911 call transcription and translation | transcription |
| 3/7/2024 | 14:00 | 14:15 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/7/2024 | 14:15 | 15:00 | Review Rikers call | preparation |
| 3/7/2024 | 15:00 | 15:30 | telephonic interpretation | interpretation |
| 3/7/2024 | 15:30 | 16:00 | 911 call transcription and translation | transcription |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|--|-------------------|
| 3/7/2024 | 16:00 | 16:30 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/12/2024 | 09:30 | 10:45 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/12/2024 | 10:45 | 11:15 | translate domestic incident report | translation |
| 3/12/2024 | 11:15 | 13:00 | Shadow office interview | shadow |
| 3/12/2024 | 14:00 | 14:15 | Read legal translation article | independent study |
| 3/12/2024 | 14:15 | 15:00 | shadow Proffer interview | shadow |
| 3/12/2024 | 15:00 | 15:30 | review translation with interpreter | guided review |
| 3/12/2024 | 15:30 | 16:30 | 911 call transcription and translation | transcription |
| 3/14/2024 | 09:30 | 11:15 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/14/2024 | 11:15 | 12:00 | translate three domestic incident reports | translation |
| 3/14/2024 | 12:00 | 12:30 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/14/2024 | 12:30 | 13:00 | translate three domestic incident reports | translation |
| 3/14/2024 | 14:30 | 16:00 | Review 911 transcription/translation, domestic incident reports, and misdemeanor factual basis | guided review |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 3/14/2024 | 16:00 | 16:30 | Edit domestic incident reports | translation |
| 3/19/2024 | 09:30 | 10:00 | HR training video | HR |
| 3/19/2024 | 10:00 | 11:00 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/19/2024 | 11:00 | 11:15 | Update internal units glossary | glossary |
| 3/19/2024 | 11:15 | 11:45 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/19/2024 | 11:45 | 12:45 | shadow office interview | shadow |
| 3/19/2024 | 12:45 | 13:00 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/19/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/19/2024 | 15:30 | 16:00 | shadow office interview | shadow |
| 3/19/2024 | 16:00 | 16:30 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/21/2024 | 09:30 | 09:45 | Update internal units glossary | glossary |
| 3/21/2024 | 09:45 | 10:00 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/21/2024 | 10:00 | 10:15 | review upcoming cases | preparation |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|---|-------------------|
| 3/21/2024 | 10:15 | 11:00 | Review strangulation domestic violence presentation | preparation |
| 3/21/2024 | 11:00 | 11:45 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 3/21/2024 | 11:45 | 12:15 | Transcribe/translate NYPD interview | transcription |
| 3/21/2024 | 12:15 | 12:45 | telephonic interpretation | interpretation |
| 3/21/2024 | 12:45 | 13:00 | Transcribe/translate NYPD interview | transcription |
| 3/21/2024 | 14:00 | 16:30 | Transcribe/translate NYPD interview | transcription |
| 3/24/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | domestic incident report translation | translation |
| 3/24/2024 | 10:30 | 11:30 | Read medical interpreting ethics | independent study |
| 3/24/2024 | 11:30 | 13:00 | shadow proffer | shadow |
| 3/24/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | Read medical interpreting ethics | independent study |
| 3/24/2024 | 15:00 | 15:30 | Review proffer vocab | guided review |
| 3/24/2024 | 15:30 | 16:30 | Read medical terminology chapter | independent study |
| 4/2/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | Study interpreting ethics | independent study |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|----------|-----------|---------|---|-------------------|
| 4/2/2024 | 10:30 | 10:45 | Review texts to prepare for screening | preparation |
| 4/2/2024 | 10:45 | 12:30 | shadow office interview | shadow |
| 4/2/2024 | 12:30 | 13:00 | Review legal vocab from office interview with interpreter | guided review |
| 4/2/2024 | 14:00 | 14:30 | domestic incident report translation | translation |
| 4/2/2024 | 14:30 | 16:30 | Study legal terminology | independent study |
| 4/4/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | Review case information | preparation |
| 4/4/2024 | 10:30 | 12:30 | shadow chuchotage in court | shadow |
| 4/4/2024 | 12:30 | 13:00 | screen video | interpretation |
| 4/4/2024 | 14:00 | 14:30 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 4/4/2024 | 14:30 | 15:30 | interpret office interview | interpretation |
| 4/4/2024 | 15:30 | 16:30 | review office interview interpretation with interpreter | guided review |
| 4/9/2024 | 09:30 | 10:00 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 4/9/2024 | 10:00 | 11:30 | Transcribe/translate NYPD interview | transcription |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 4/9/2024 | 11:30 | 12:00 | review rikers call | preparation |
| 4/9/2024 | 12:00 | 13:00 | review vocabulary for current cases | preparation |
| 4/9/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/9/2024 | 15:00 | 15:15 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 4/9/2024 | 15:15 | 15:30 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/9/2024 | 15:30 | 16:30 | Read articles on legal translation | independent study |
| 4/12/2024 | 09:30 | 13:00 | Study current cases | preparation |
| 4/12/2024 | 14:00 | 16:30 | Study vocabulary | independent study |
| 4/16/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | Study current cases | preparation |
| 4/16/2024 | 10:30 | 13:00 | Study current cases | preparation |
| 4/16/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | read psych eval articles | independent study |
| 4/16/2024 | 15:00 | 16:30 | Review Rikers call | preparation |
| 4/18/2024 | 09:30 | 11:10 | Review cases for the day | preparation |
| 4/18/2024 | 11:10 | 12:30 | screen bodycam footage | interpretation |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 4/18/2024 | 12:30 | 13:00 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/18/2024 | 14:00 | 16:30 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/23/2024 | 09:30 | 10:30 | review bodycam footage for screening | preparation |
| 4/23/2024 | 10:30 | 12:00 | Review psych eval footage | independent study |
| 4/23/2024 | 12:00 | 12:20 | bodycam footage screening | interpretation |
| 4/23/2024 | 12:20 | 13:00 | Review psych eval footage | independent study |
| 4/23/2024 | 14:00 | 16:30 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/25/2024 | 09:30 | 12:30 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/25/2024 | 12:30 | 13:00 | interpret office interview | interpretation |
| 4/25/2024 | 14:00 | 15:30 | federal court shadow | shadow |
| 4/25/2024 | 15:30 | 16:30 | translate text messages | translation |
| 4/30/2024 | 09:30 | 13:00 | translate antecedentes | translation |
| 4/30/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | translate antecedentes | translation |
| 4/30/2024 | 15:00 | 15:30 | Exit interview | HR |

| date | time_from | time_to | task | type |
|-----------|-----------|---------|--|-------------------|
| 4/30/2024 | 15:30 | 16:30 | translate antecedentes | translation |
| 5/2/2024 | 09:30 | 10:00 | review bodycam footage | independent study |
| 5/2/2024 | 10:00 | 13:00 | translate criminal complaint document | translation |
| 5/2/2024 | 14:00 | 15:00 | Prepare/Redact documents for practicum | translation |
| 5/2/2024 | 15:00 | 16:30 | translate criminal complaint document | translation |

Figure 1 displays raw time in minutes that I spent performing each task. Figure 2 displays the same information as a percentage of my total time. Approximately a third of my time spent at the internship was spent doing independent study, which includes studying material explicitly given to me by my advisors, as well as material outside of the internship that I believed would benefit me, such as scholarly articles on legal translation or interpretation ethics.

Only 3.1% (280 minutes) of my time was spent interpreting, which includes screening videos and audios for Assistant District Attorneys. This low percentage can be attributed to the high-stakes nature of the field, which at many times requires an interpreter with court interpreting credentials to interpret to prevent any legal issues. Furthermore, some of the tasks were considered too sensitive for me to participate in. For example, there were times at which a female interpreter was requested, which would prevent me from taking the assignment or shadowing.

Although transcription and translation are separate categories, note that for all transcription tasks, it was also necessary to translate the transcribed audios.

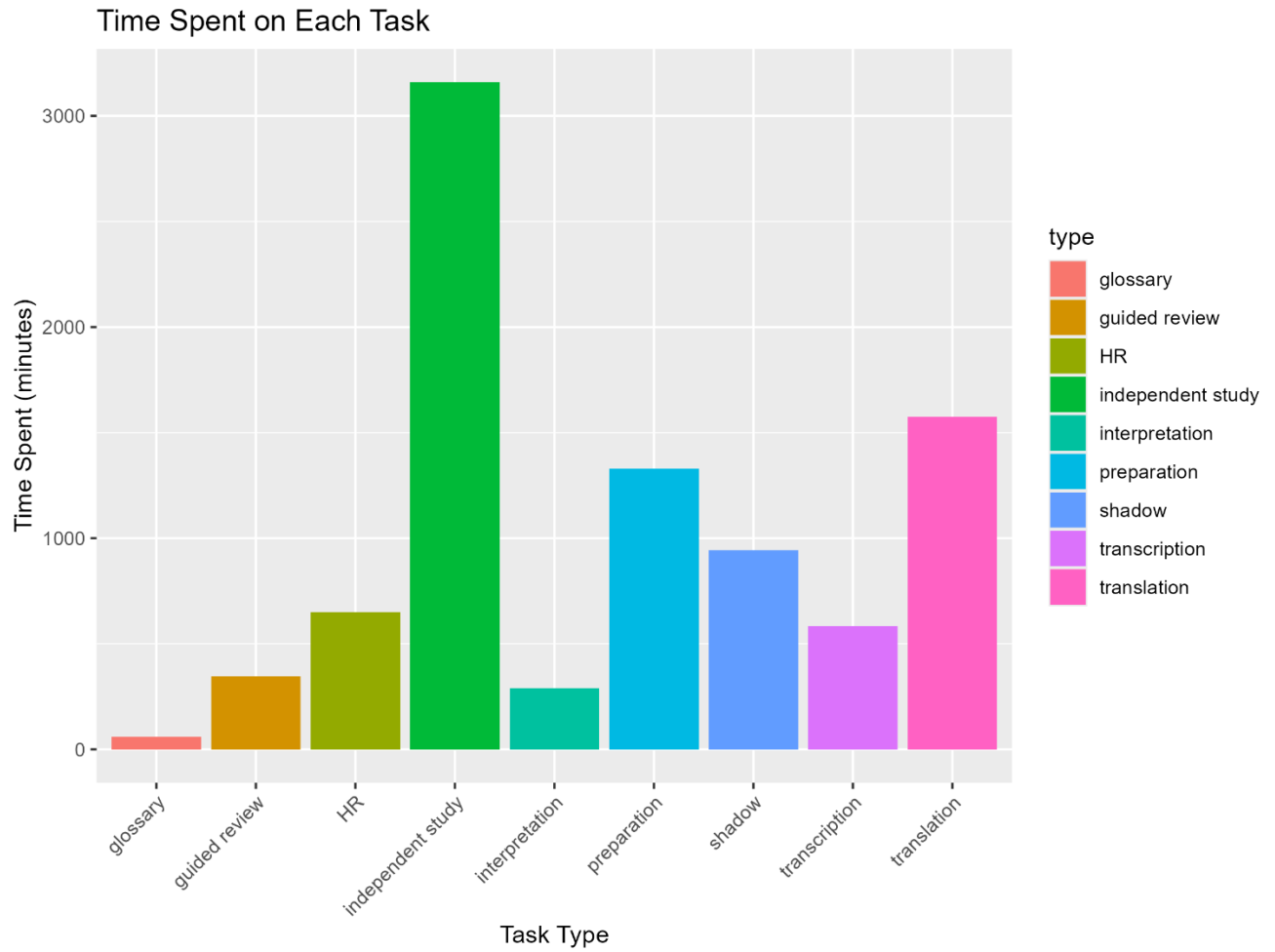


Figure 1 Total time spent on each task in minutes.

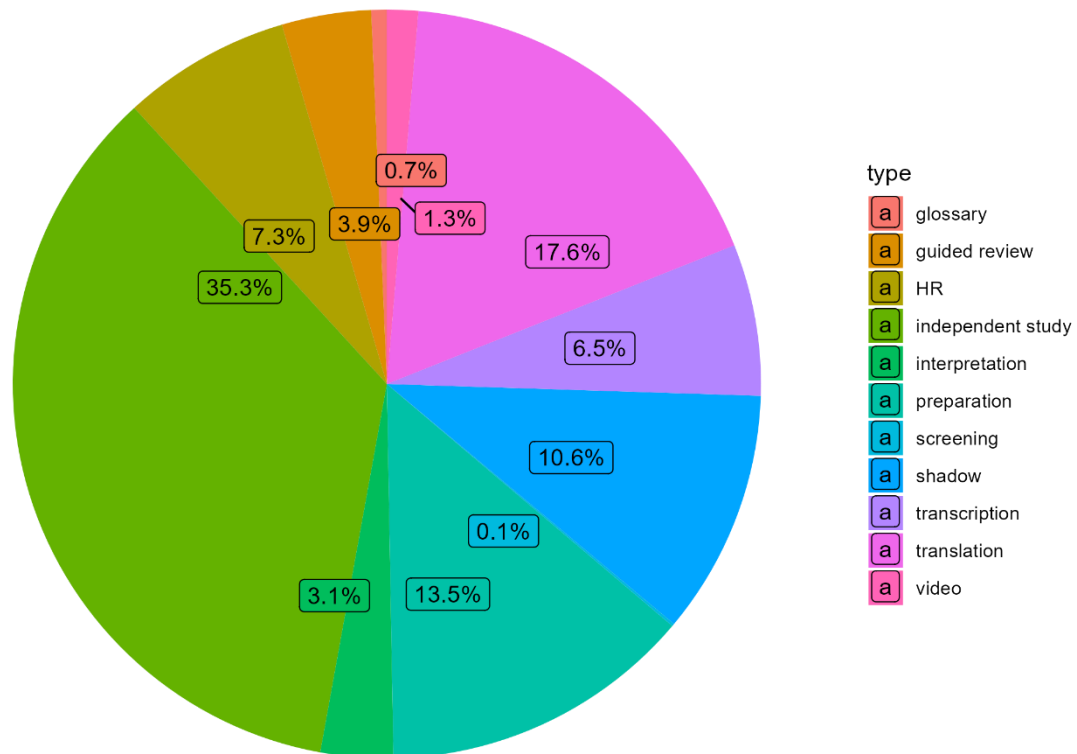


Figure 2 Percentage of time spent on each task.

Conclusions

Overall, I believe that the interpreting experiences that I had while at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office have been extremely beneficial to me with long-lasting effects. At other interpreting jobs, I have been praised for my professionalism and effectiveness by service providers after encounters. The skills that I learned during my internship are what led to the professionalism that I was able to provide in those encounters.

The experience at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office was unique and consequential to my development as an interpreter. Although I am not currently continuing to pursue a career in interpretation, I am still interested in maintaining my skills and eventually taking the New Jersey or

New York court interpreting exam for freelancing purposes. This internship gave me greater insight into what would be expected of me, and what skills I need to continue working on if I would like to pursue this opportunity.

Sample Translations

Below are two sample translations from my time at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.

Introduction to Sample Translation #1: Appeal

The first document is an appeal for a verdict given in Puerto Rico. The typical challenges of legal translation were present in this document: the mismatch of two legal systems' terminologies and complex syntax. For example, *tribunal de primera instancia*, which I found an equivalent in *trial court*. Another example is *Transportación y Obras Públicas*. Although the literal translation is straightforward ("Transportation and Public Works"), it is necessary to verify that this is the official or standard translation (which, it turns out, it is). This is especially pressing for a translation from Puerto Rico, for example, due to the bilingual nature of the country.

This text also demonstrates a mixture of high register and low register language. Although the majority of the text is produced by the court, which requires a high register with complex syntax, there is also a portion of the text handwritten by the appellant. This requires savviness on the translator's part to accurately render the register differences into the target language.

Sample Translation #1: Appeal (source text)

ESTADO LIBRE ASOCIADO DE PUERTO RICO
TRIBUNAL GENERAL DE JUSTICIA
TRIBUNAL DE PRIMERA INSTANCIA
SALA MUNICIPAL DE ARECIBO-MUNICIPAL

██████████
DEMANDANTE

VS.

DTOP-AGTE. ██████████ PLACA:- -
DEMANDADO

CASO NÚM.
SALÓN NÚM.-

SOBRE:
REVISIONES BOLETOS TRANSITO Y OBRAS PUBL

NOTIFICACIÓN

A: ██████████, ██████████
██████████@██████████, ██████████

CESCO-ARECIBO
PO BOX -
ARECIBO PR 00613

EL[LA] SECRETARIO[A] QUE SUSCRIBE CERTIFICA Y NOTIFICA A USTED QUE CON RELACIÓN
AL[A LA]: CASO DE EPÍGRAFE ESTE TRIBUNAL EMITIÓ UNA RESOLUCION EL
25 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2020.

SE ANEJA COPIA O INCLUYE ENLACE:

FDO. ██████████
██████████

SE LE ADVIERTE QUE AL SER UNA PARTE O SU REPRESENTANTE LEGAL EN EL CASO SUJETO A
ESTA RESOLUCION, USTED PUEDE PRESENTAR UN RECURSO DE APELACIÓN,
REVISIÓN O CERTIORARI, DE CONFORMIDAD CON EL PROCEDIMIENTO Y EN EL TÉRMINO
ESTABLECIDO POR LEY, REGLA O REGLAMENTO.

CERTIFICO QUE LA DETERMINACIÓN EMITIDA POR EL TRIBUNAL FUE DEBIDAMENTE REGISTRADA
Y ARCHIVADA HOY 14 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020, Y QUE SE ENVIÓ COPIA DE ESTA NOTIFICACIÓN
A LAS PERSONAS ANTES INDICADAS, A SUS DIRECCIONES REGISTRADAS EN EL CASO CONFORME
A LA NORMATIVA APLICABLE. EN ESTA MISMA FECHA FUE ARCHIVADA EN AUTOS COPIA DE ESTA
NOTIFICACIÓN.

EN ██████████, PUERTO RICO, A 14 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2020.

████████████████████
NOMBRE DEL (DE LA)
SECRETARIO(A) REGIONAL

Por: f ██████████
NOMBRE Y FIRMA DEL (DE LA)
SECRETARIO(A) AUXILIAR DEL TRIBUNAL

4. Los fundamentos en que se basa esta solicitud de revisión de la multa de tránsito impuesta son los siguientes:

E) d1ca ? z N sos-k> Jj--ioio hvbo UWIII -h,, t-ht L ...e.sfqb
lloviendo muchísimo. De camino a CVS de Arecibo (H2) la
iluminación era mínima. Sin tener intenciones entre por la salida.

5. Reconozco que las notificaciones del Tribunal con respecto al caso de e pigras serán remitidas a través de mi correo electrónico a la siguiente dirección: [REDACTED]

Además, la vista de Recurso de Revisión será celebrada mediante videoconferencia, salvo que expresamente notifique al Tribunal, por escrito, que no poseo el equipo necesario para comparecer de manera remota. De no comparecer a la vista, el Tribunal podrá declarar NO HA LUGAR el remedio aquí solicitado.

Por lo antes expuesto, solicito de este Tribunal que previo a los trámites correspondientes, declare Ha Lugar este recurso de revisión y ordene al Secretario de Transportación y Obras Públicas que proceda a cancelar el gravamen o la anotación creada por la multa administrativa cuya nulidad decreta el tribunal.

En Arecibo, Puerto Rico a 15 de enero de 2020.

Certifico que en el día de hoy he remitido copia de este Recurso de Revisión al (a la) Secretario(a) de Transportación y Obras Públicas de Puerto Rico.

[REDACTED]
Urgente o
del (de la) abogado(a)

[REDACTED]
Firma del (de la) recurrente o
del (de la) abogado(a)

[REDACTED]
Arecibo PR 00612

(Dirección Postal)

[REDACTED]
(Número de teléfono)

Para uso exclusivo de la Secretaría

Se señala la vista de Recurso de Revisión para el ____ de ____ de ____
a las ____ O am ____ pm, a través del sistema de videoconferencias, o en el piso
____ Sala _____

En _____, Puerto Rico a ____ de ____ de ____

Nombre del (de la) Secretario(a) Regional

Por: _____
Nombre del (de la)
Secretario(a) Auxiliar del Tribunal

Firma del (de la)
Secretario(a) Auxiliar del Tribunal

[Redacted]

Recurrente
(Persona que solicita la revisión. Utilice letra de molde e incluya ambos apellidos, si aplica)

V.

Departamento de Transportación
y Obras Públicas (DTOP)

Caso Número: [Redacted]

Sobre: Recurso de Revisión por:

O Falta Administrativa bajo la Ley Núm. 22-2000, según enmendada, conocida como Ley de Vehículos y Tránsito de Puerto Rico

RECURSO DE REVISIÓN POR FALTA ADMINISTRATIVA DE TRÁNSITO

INSTRUCCIONES:

- Complete el formulario en todas sus partes; incluyendo el dorso de este documento, si la información está disponible. Parte de la información requerida en los incisos uno (1), dos (2) y tres (3) se encuentra en el boleto; si la misma no está clara, favor de llenar solo lo que esté legible.
- El Recurso de Revisión será atendido por la sala del tribunal con competencia, entiéndase el tribunal o centro judicial correspondiente, según el lugar donde fue expedido el boleto objeto del recurso.
- Deberá notificar una copia del recurso presentado al DTOP. Recomendamos que retenga una copia adicional, con el sello de recibo del tribunal (ponchada).
- Cada multa administrativa que desee revisar conlleva la cancelación de un Sello de Rentas Internas por valor de \$6.00. Podrá adquirir los Sellos de Rentas Internas de manera electrónica a través de Colecturía Digital.
- La vista de recurso de revisión se atenderá de manera virtual mediante el sistema de videoconferencias. Deberá notificar al Tribunal si no posee el equipo necesario para celebrar la videoconferencia.

Comparece ante este Tribunal el (la) Recurrente por derecho propio o O representado(a) por su abogado(a) que suscribe, y respetuosamente, expone, alega y solicita:

1. El (La) Recurrente es O dueño(a), inductor(a), ☐ concesionario de ventas o O pasajero(a),
(A, fague la alternativa que mejor describa su situación)

afectado(a) por la notificación de multa administrativa, número [Redacted]

a. La licencia para conducir gravada por la multa administrativa es: Tipo: C, o, d, i, rotc.

Número: [Redacted] Fecha de Vencimiento: 2.9.2020 vn.o 2.02.1

(Esta información surge de su licencia de conducir)

b. La información del vehículo gravado por la multa administrativa es la siguiente:

Marca: To106

Modelo: Prul

Tablilla: [Redacted]

Color: fuvMPdtttdo

Año: 2014

2. La multa administrativa fue expedida en PY, ib. > el 11 de ju. nio de 2020, por,
(Municipio) (fecha)

Nombre del (de la) Agente: [Redacted], Número de placa: [Redacted]

Unidad o cuartel: [Redacted]

3. La multa administrativa fue expedida por una alegada violación a:

☐ Artículo: 2.0 de Ley de Tránsito, Ley 22-2000, según enmendada.

Sample Translation #1: Appeal (target text)

FREE ASSOCIATED STATE OF PUERTO RICO
GENERAL JUSTICE COURT
TRIAL COURT
MUNICIPAL CHAMBER OF ARECIBO MUNICIPAL

[redacted]
PLAINTIFF

CASE NO. [redacted]
ROOM NO. [redacted]

VS.

Department of Transportation & Public Works Agent [redacted]
PLATE: [redacted] TRANSIT TICKET REVIEW AND PUBLIC WORKS
DEFENDANT

NOTIFICATION

A: [redacted]
[redacted]@[redacted]

CESCO-ARECIBO
PO BOX [redacted]
ARECIBO PR 00613

The undersigned clerk certifies and notifies you that, in relation to: the case in the heading this trial has emitted a resolution on November 25, 2020.

A copy is annexed or a link is included:

SIGNED [redacted]
[redacted]

You are thus advised that being a party or legal representative in the case subject to this resolution, you can present a motion to appeal, a motion of revision, or a petition of certiorari in agreement with the process and established terms by law, rule or regulation.

I certify that the determination emitted by the court was duly registered and archived today, December 14, 2020, and that a copy was sent of this notification to the previously mentioned individuals, to their registered addresses in the case conforming to the applicative rule. On this same day, a true copy of this notification was archived.

In [redacted], Puerto Rico on December 14, 2020.

[redacted]
Name of
Regional Clerk

For: [redacted]
Name and Signature of
Assistant Court Clerk

Case number: _____

4. The basis for which this petition of revision of the imposed transit fine is supported is the following:

On August 22, 2020, there was a storm and it was
raining a lot. On the way to the Arecibo C #21 CVS the
lighting was minimal. Without meaning to, I entered through the exit.

5. I recognize that Court notifications related to the headlined case will be remitted to my email at the following email address: [redacted]. Also, the Motion of Revision hearing will be held via videoconference, unless I expressly notify the Court, by writing, that I do not possess the necessary equipment to appear remotely. By not appearing at the hearing, the Court can declare NO GROUNDS for the appeal requested here.

Based on what has been expressed above, I request that, before the corresponding processes, this Court declares Admissible this motion of revision and orders the Secretary of Transportation and Public Works to repeal the charge or record created by the administrative fine, whose nullity is decreed by the court.

In Arecibo, Puerto Rico on 15 September, 2020

I certify that today, I have remitted a copy of this Motion of Revision to the Secretary of Transportation and Public Works of Puerto Rico.

| | |
|---|--|
| _____ [redacted] Name of the appellant or lawyer | _____ [redacted] Signature of the appellant or lawyer |
| _____ [redacted] Arecibo PR 00612 | |
| _____ (Postal Address) | _____ [redacted] (Phone number) |

For exclusive use of the Secretary

The Motion of Revision hearing is scheduled for the ____ of _____ of _____ at _____ [] am [] pm via videoconference, or on floor _____ Chamber _____.

In _____, Puerto Rico on ____ of _____ of _____.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| _____ Name of Regional Secretary | For: _____ Name of Assistant Court Clerk |
|-------------------------------------|--|

Signature of
Assistant Court Clerk

[handwritten text reads:] Audiences Inbox

FREE ASSOCIATED STATE OF PUERTO RICO
GENERAL JUSTICE COURT
TRIAL COURT

☐ Superior ☐ Municipal Chamber _____

[stamp that reads:] Received TPI

[redacted]

Appellant

(The person that requests the appeal. Please write in
print and include both last names, if applicable)

V.

Department of Transport and Public Works

Arecibo Region

Case number: [redacted]

[stamp that reads:] 2020 Sep 15 [illegible stamp]

Matter: Motion to appeal because of:

☐ Administrative error under Puerto Rican Law
No. 22-2000, as amended, known as Law of
Vehicles and Transit of Puerto Rico

MOTION OF APPEAL DUE TO TRANSIT ADMINISTRATIVE ERROR

Instructions:

- Complete the form in all its parts, including the back of this document, if the information is available. Some of the information required in the sections one (1), two (2) and three (3) can be found on the ticket; if the ticket is not clear, please fill out only what is legible.
- The Motion to Appeal will be attended to by the court chamber with jurisdiction. Note the corresponding court or judicial center, according to the location where the ticket for the claim was received.
- You shall send a copy of the present motion to the Department of Transport and Public Works. We recommend that you retain an additional court-stamped copy (embossed).
- Each administrative fine that you wish to appeal comes with the fee of an Internal Revenue Stamp, which costs \$6.00. You will be able to acquire the Internal Revenue Stamp electronically through Colecturía Digital.
- The hearing for the motion to appeal will be attended virtually via videoconference. You shall notify the Court if you do not possess the necessary equipment to attend the videoconference.

The appellant appears before this court ☒ alone or ☐ represented by his/her undersigned lawyer, and respectfully sets forth, alleges and requests:

1. The appellant is the ☐ owner, ☒ driver, ☐ seller or ☐ passenger,

(Mark the option that best describes your situation)

affected by the notification of the administrative fine, number [redacted],

a. The driver's license charged for the administrative fine is: Type: _____ Driver _____

Number: [redacted] Expiration Date: 25 – June – 2023

(This information comes from your driver's license)

b. The information of the vehicle charged with the administrative fine is the following:

Make: Toyota Model: Prius License Plate: [redacted]

Color: Orange Year: 2014

2. The administrative fine was delivered in Arecibo on the 22nd of August of 2020 by,

(Municipal) (date)

Officer's Name: [redacted], shield number: [redacted]

Unit or precinct: [redacted]

3. The administrative fine was delivered for an alleged violation to:

☐ Article: 6.09 of the Transit Law, Puerto Rican Law 22-2200, as amended.

Introduction to Sample Translation #2: Subpoena Response

The second text is a response to a subpoena, in this case, a demand to produce documents regarding the individual's judicial history, from Puerto Rico. In this context, it is necessary to conform to the stylistic format of the target culture. Although Spanish legal texts tend to be verbose and syntactically complicated, this text did not present a major divergence from the equivalent text in English aimed at the American legal system.

Sample Translation #2: Subpoena Response (source text)



Poder Judicial de Puerto Rico

Oficina de Administración de los Tribunales

Oficina de Asuntos Legales

25 de abril de 2024

Sra. [REDACTED]
Asistente del Fiscal de Distrito
Condado de Nueva York
One Hogan Place
New York, NY 10013

**Re: SUBPOENA DUCES TECUM (*People v.* [REDACTED] CR---
24NY)**

Estimada [REDACTED]

Nos referimos al *subpoena* mediante el cual solicita los **portes de arresto y los casos** del Tribunal de Primera Instancia relacionados con [REDACTED], como parte de **cedimientos** ante un gran jurado en el asunto *People v.* No. CR---24NY. La petición fue referida a la Oficina del Alguacil General y Manejo de Emergencias y a la Directoria de Informática de la Oficina de Administración de los Tribunales, para la atención correspondiente.

En consideración a su facultad investigativa, según solicitado, le producimos la documentación que se acompaña con esta carta. En particular, se incluye certificación producida por la Directoria de Informática donde se informan los casos registrados en los sistemas relacionados con Pamela Aguayo Santiago. A su vez, para su referencia, incluimos copia digitalizada de dos expedientes judiciales disponibles de los casos identificados.¹ Como surge de la certificación provista por la Directoria de Informática, de los sistemas no surgen órdenes de arresto registradas con el nombre señalado.

¹ Con respecto al caso [REDACTED], destacamos que al tratarse de un asunto atendido bajo la Ley Núm. 408-2000, **Ordo** *Ley de la Jura Mental de Puerto Rico*, según enmendada, el expediente judicial es de carácter confidencial.

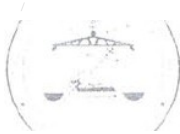
Le expresamos nuestra disposición para brindar la colaboración necesaria en torno a este asunto y cualquier otro que esté a nuestro alcance.

Cordialmente,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Directora
Oficina de Asuntos Legales

Anejos



Poder Judicial de Puerto Rico

Oficina de Administracion de los Tribunales

DirP.(to, íri uf.. Intrnrrnllil <

Ran1ón Tc,rn.:s Colón

1>1\11.,rd, 11,111111.11.,

Ledo. [REDACTED]

División Asuntos Legales

Oficina de Administración de Tribunales

CERTIFICACIÓN

Conforme la búsqueda realizada con el nombre del [REDACTED] en los sistemas: Sistema Integrado de Apoyo a Tribunales (SIAT), Sistema Tribunales (TRIB) y Sistema Unificado de Manejo y Administración de Casos (SUMAC) se incluyen los casos registrados en TRIS. De los sistemas no surgen órdenes de arresto registradas para el nombre de [REDACTED]. Se acompaña reporte que se hace formar parte de esta certificación.

En San Juan, Puerto Rico a 24 de abril de 2024.

Certifico correcto,

[REDACTED]

Sample Translation #2: Subpoena Response (target text)



Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico

Office of Court Administration

Office of Legal Matters

April 25, 2024

Ms. [redacted]
Assistant District Attorney
New York County
One Hogan Place
New York, NY 10013

Re: SUBPEONA DUCES TECUM ([*People v.* [redacted]] CR-[redacted]-24NY)

Dear [redacted],

We refer to the present *subpoena*, which solicits arrest reports and cases from the Trial Court related to [redacted], as part of procedures before a grand jury in the matter of [*People v.* [redacted]], No. CR-[redacted]-24NY. The request was referred to the Office of the General Sheriff and Emergency Management and the Information Directory of the Court's Administrative Office for the corresponding response.

In consideration of your investigatory power, as requested, we produce for you the document accompanying this letter. In particular, it includes a certification produced by the Information Directory, where registered cases are recorded in the registry related to [redacted]. At the same time, for your reference, we include a digitalized copy of two judicial files available for the identified cases.¹ As demonstrated by the provided certificate from the Information Directory, there are no arrest warrants registered for the indicated name.

¹ With respect to case [redacted], we emphasize that, since it is a matter that falls under Puerto Rican Law No. 408-2000, known as Mental Health Law of Puerto Rico [*Ley de Salud Mental de Puerto Rico*], as indicated, the judicial file is confidential.

We express our disposition to provide any necessary collaboration in regards to this matter and any other that is within our ability.

Cordially,
[redacted handwritten signature]
[redacted]
Director
Office of Legal Matters

Annexes



Judicial Branch of Puerto Rico
Office of Court Administration
Information Directory

Ramón Torres Colón
Director de Information Technology

[redacted] Esq.
Division of Legal Matters
Office of Court Administration

CERTIFICATION

In line with the search completed for the name [redacted] in the systems: Integrated Help System to the Courts (SIAT), Court Systems (TRIB) and Unified System of Management and Administration of Cases (SUMAC), the cases registered in TRIB are included. No arrest warrants registered for the name [redacted] were found in the systems. A report is included that forms part of this certification.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico on April 24, 2024

I hereby certify,

[redacted]

REFERENCES

- Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. (n.d.). *Hispanic immigrant fact sheet*. New York City Government. Retrieved August 14, 2024, from <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/immigrants/downloads/pdf/Hispanic-Immigrant-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
- Moreno Fernández, F. (2000). *Variedades de la lengua española*. Editorial Ariel.
- National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators. (2016). NAJIT code of ethics and professional responsibilities. Retrieved August 14, 2024, from <https://najit.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/NAJITCodeofEthicsFINAL.pdf>
- Roy, C. B. (2000). *Interpreting as a discourse process*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *Manhattan borough, New York County, New York: Race and Ethnicity*. Retrieved August 14, 2024, from https://data.census.gov/profile/Manhattan_borough,_New_York_County,_New_York?g=060XX00US3606144919#race-and-ethnicity
- Yang, K., & Tan, J. (2017). Two-dimensional study of the interaction between interpreting working memory and anxiety. In 2017 2nd International Conference on Education, Sports, Arts and Management Engineering (ICESAME 2017) (pp. 700-706). Atlantis Press.