

**Service-learning with SPAN455 interpretation and translation at Milan C-2 School District**

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SPAN 455 has traditionally been a literary translation course, but I redesigned it to give students a real-life application of what we were learning in the classroom. I partnered with the Milan C-2 School District which is about 45 minutes west of Kirksville and has a very high percentage of Spanish speakers so that we could provide service-learning opportunities for our students as we helped meet the language needs of the school district.

**Translation**

Our first service-learning translation project was adding Spanish captions to [a Truman promotional YouTube video](#) aimed at parents of potential students. Note they were given translator credit.

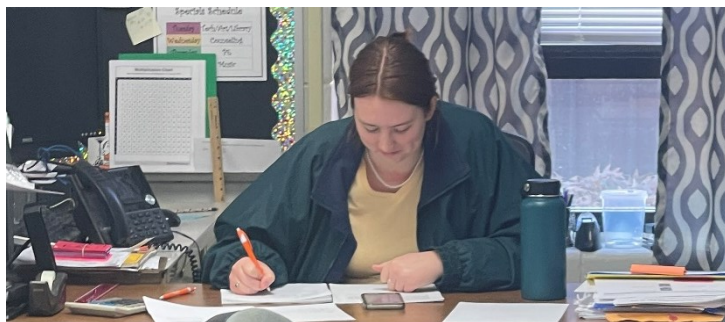
One of the needs the district had was a Spanish version of the 16pg document that explains the rules and regulations pertaining to English Language Learners. I paired up students and divided up the document among them so they could translate it for [the district website](#). Note they were given translator credit.

**Interpretation**

The district only has about 3 interpreters, so to support them, my students attended the kindergarten sign up days to be on hand to help parents fill out forms, and when there were not parents to help, students were able to go into ESL classrooms and support the teachers.

Students also went to Milan to make phone calls home to Spanish speaking parents. There is only one Spanish speaking teacher in the district, and a very large percentage of the population in Milan is Latino and Spanish speaking so there is frequently a language disconnect between the teachers and their students' parents. The district has one translator, who spends her day translating documents, and that person needed support translating the teacher's feedback for

parents into Spanish, so my students were on hand to take over. See some pictures below. They also made calls home to let the Spanish speaking parents know how their children's teachers said they are doing and took notes for the teachers.



## Results

The final was a reflective project on what they learned, what impacted them, and what their takeaway would be from the course. They were all thoroughly moved from having applied

their learning in a very tangible way, and from seeing how Spanish is not just a course but rather a skill that can be used to actively impact others in a positive way and make a real difference. I loved hearing about the “warm and fuzzies” they felt helping others, and how proud they felt seeing their names listed as translators on Truman’s YouTube and on Milan C-2’s District website for posterity. It was an experience they all agreed was like no other they have had at Truman. In fact, the course led to my interview and feature on Index Magazine and to a Truman TikTok of students doing a “práctica práctica!”

Word count:499