Illegal Drugs Terminology for Judiciary Interpreters

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Total of 293 pages: 96 pages (dictionary); 24 pages (English-Spanish glossary of drug slang); 9 pages (Spanish-English glossary of street names and common terms for drugs); 22 pages (drug screening and testing information in English); 11 pages (screening and testing glossary); 123 pages (information about drugs); 1 page (bibliography and source information).

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www.eberkana.us/products/illegal-drugs-terminology

Type of work:
Dictionary, glossary, drug information compendium

The Illegal Drugs Terminology for Judiciary Interpreters is a soft-cover, spiral-bound dictionary. The paper is thin, so there is some show-through of text from one side of the page to the other. The font is a very legible size.

The first section is 123 pages and contains very thorough information (in English) about drugs, including their official names and, in many cases, their street names. This section also describes the ingestion method, medicinal uses, and effects. It has a detailed explanation about meth labs and hazards. There are many pictures of the drugs, plants, and packaging, albeit sometimes they are not that clear. Other topics covered include customs, the border patrol, and money laundering.

The dictionary section has a large amount of terminology from the world of drug trafficking and usage, including many street slang phrases. I would say that this section would be helpful to legal interpreters as well as translators and transcribers who specialize in drug cases and terminology. Looking up terms is easy since the dictionary follows the standard alphabetical order.

There is a large amount of filler words that can easily be found in any dictionary. Even though these terms could be related to the effects of drug usage, their meanings are not obscure. Below are a few that fall in this category, together with the Spanish equivalent term(s) as they appear in this dictionary:

- **acne** (n) acné, enfermedad de la piel con granos y asperezas
- **beer** (n) cerveza
- **cancer** (n) cáncer, existen muchos tipos de cáncer
- **drowsiness** (n) somnolencia, modorra, sopor
- **music** (n) música
- **pain** (n) dolor // vb estar adolorido o dolorido, sentir dolor
- **purify** (vb) purificar, purificado
- **sun** (n) sol

There are words that you might think are fillers when given a cursory look, but you will soon discover the drug-related variations if you keep reading. Here is an example where one word can have different drug-related meanings:

- **rush**: (n) prisa, apuro // vb correr, darse prisa, apurarse
- **rush/flash**: (n) euforia o volada de gran alegria (con drogas) // (adj) (Spanglish) cargado, subido a mil // vb irrorar, volar, subir, estar a mil
- **rush**: (street name for amyl nitrite/nitrate and for butyl nitrite)

The Spanish-English glossary of street and common drug names is very thorough. For example, there are several street names for marijuana that seem, to me, less common than those universally known, including sinse, Santa Marta, and vaciladora.

There is a 22-page appendix, in English, which explores drug screening and testing. The appendix will help an interpreter be better informed of all the screening and testing processes that occur in most cases before having a first encounter with the defendant. At the end of the appendix there is an English-Spanish glossary. The glossary includes valuable terminology for those who deal with drug cases, but again, I found a fair number of filler words that are easily found in a regular dictionary. For example:

- **analysis**: (n) análisis
- **blood**: (n) sangre
- **coil**: (n) espiral
- **detector**: (n) detector
- **filter**: (n) filtro
• lungs: (n) pulmones
• oven: (n) horno

The page that mentions the sources the authors consulted when developing this dictionary shows many valuable links to websites that can provide even more terminology. The authors also include suggestions on how to find terms in Spanish if they cannot be found in this dictionary. There is also information about a downloadable United Nations dictionary on drugs and crime.

Overall Evaluation

Overall, I consider the dictionary and glossary sections very useful. If the prosecution or defense makes material available to the interpreter before he or she becomes fully involved in the case, the dictionary could be very helpful when preparing for the trial. The dictionary could also be very useful to a transcriptionist when encountering obscure street drug terminology.

I do question the need, when interpreting, for all of the detailed drug information in English at the beginning of the book. Even though it is a very informative section, the dictionary and glossary should suffice if there is enough information provided by the legal system before the interpreter gets fully involved. If the interpreter is in the dark about the details of the case before the trial, the assistance of a partner in looking up terms will be invaluable. Also, being able to look up terms in this dictionary onsite and consulting with a legal partner, when allowed by the court, would also be priceless. The information provided in this dictionary will be very enlightening for someone who is fairly new to court interpreting, and for interpreters with somewhat more experience. It opens up an unknown world. However, I believe that the introductory section could be more useful for transcriptionists and translators since, unfortunately, more often than not, interpreters do not receive all of the information required ahead of time to prepare for trials or interviews properly.