

Opinion | Readers critique The Post: Why did Grammys’ Spanish captioning fail?

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Every week, The Post runs a collection of letters of readers’ grievances — pointing out grammatical mistakes, missing coverage and inconsistencies. These letters tell us what we did wrong and, occasionally, offer praise. Here, we present this week’s Free for All letters.

I was disappointed in The Post’s coverage of the brouhaha that ensued over the lack of captioning of Spanish speakers during the Grammys [[“CBS chided over caption omissions for Grammys,”](#) Style, Feb. 11]. It would have been helpful to educate readers exactly how programming gets captioned, as in there is no magic button that gets pressed to create captioning.

A live person, often one with proper training in court reporting, provides these captioning services to vendors. They generally work remotely, usually at a home captioning station, while listening and translating English speakers in real time. Of these captioners, how many offer translation of Spanish? What was the arrangement CBS made with its captioning vendor? Was the vendor required to only supply a captioner capable of translating the live feed in English? If so, how can someone trained in translating English also be expected to translate in Spanish?

I am a retired federal court reporter. If a party or witness was to be speaking in a language other than English, it was the party’s responsibility to provide an interpreter so that the record could be captured in its entirety. Otherwise, when and if English speakers would throw in the occasional non-English words or phrases, the record would simply indicate “speaking in non-English.”

Variety [reported](#) that George Cheeks, chief executive of CBS, was initiating an inquiry as to how its vendor failed to uphold the agreement to caption Spanish speakers. Rather than just throwing the vendor under the bus, if that is the case, I would appreciate CBS — or The Post — providing answers to the questions above.

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