What is SLPI:ASL?
Sign Language Proficiency
Interview: ASL

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What is SLPI?

The Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI:ASL) involves a one-to-one conversation in sign language between an interviewer and candidate/interviewee. Interview content varies according to the background, job responsibilities, schooling, and other interests of each SLPI:ASL candidate/interviewee.
History

The SLPI:ASL was adapted by Bill Newell and Frank Caccamise from the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI), an interview technique for assessing spoken language communication skills. Just as the L/OPI may be used to assess a variety of spoken languages the SLPI:ASL may be used to assess a variety of sign languages; for example, it is used in Kenya as SLPI:KSL, in South Africa as SLPI:SASL, and in New Zealand as SLPI:NZSL.
### Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Rating Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATINGS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTORS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superior Plus</td>
<td>Able to have a fully shared and natural conversation, with in-depth elaboration for both social and work topics. All aspects of signing are native-like.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>Able to have a fully shared conversation, with in-depth elaboration for both social and work topics. Very broad sign language vocabulary, near native-like production and fluency, excellent use of sign language grammatical features, and excellent comprehension for normal signing rate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Plus</td>
<td>Exhibits some superior level skills, but not all and not consistently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Able to have a generally shared conversation with good, spontaneous elaboration for both social and work topics. Broad sign language vocabulary knowledge and clear, accurate production of signs and fingerspelling at a normal/near-normal rate; occasional misproductions do not detract from conversational flow. Good use of many sign language grammatical features and comprehension good for normal signing rate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate Plus</td>
<td>Exhibits some advanced level skills, but not all and not consistently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>Able to discuss with some confidence routine social and work topics within a conversational format with some elaboration; generally 3-to-5 sentences. Good knowledge and control of everyday/basic sign language vocabulary with some sign vocabulary errors. Fairly clear signing at a moderate signing rate with some sign misproductions. Fair use of some sign language grammatical features and fairly good comprehension for a moderate-to-normal signing rate; a few repetitions and rephrasing of questions may be needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survival Plus</td>
<td>Exhibits some intermediate level skills, but not all and not consistently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survival</td>
<td>Able to discuss basic social and work topics with responses generally 1-to-3 sentences in length. Some knowledge of basic sign language vocabulary with many sign vocabulary and/or sign production errors. Slow-to-moderate signing rate. Basic use of a few sign language grammatical features. Fair comprehension for signing produced at a slow-to-moderate rate with some repetition and rephrasing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Novice Plus</td>
<td>Exhibits some survival level skills, but not all and not consistently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Able to provide single sign and some short phrase/sentence responses to basic questions signed at a slow-to-moderate rate with frequent repetition and rephrasing. Vocabulary primarily related to everyday work and/or social areas such as basic work-related signs, family members, basic objects, names of weeks, days, and time. Production and fluency characterized by many sign production errors and by a slow rate with frequent inappropriate pauses/hesitations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Functional Skills</td>
<td>(May be) Able to provide short single sign and “primarily” fingerspelled responses to some basic questions signed at a slow rate with extensive repetition and rephrasing.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from US Foreign Service Institute & ACTFL LPI Rating Scales by William Newell & Frank Caccamise

*For all SCPI rating descriptors, first statement (in bold type) always a statement of ASL communicative functioning, with all remaining statements (regular type) descriptors of ASL form (vocabulary, production, fluency, grammar, and comprehension).

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Interview

1. work
2. Family
3. Hobby/Leisure
Function

1. Elaboration / Length of Responses

2. Sense of Sharedness / Spontaneity
Form

- A. Candidate’s Vocabulary Knowledge
- B. & C. Candidate’s Production & Fluency
- D. Candidate’s Use of Grammatical Features
- E. Candidate’s Comprehension
Grammar

1. Indexing/space/body shift and eye gaze
2. Directionality
3. Facial Expression and Sign modification
4. Repetition of sign verb movement
5. Repetition of sign noun movement and vertical/horizontal sweep
6. Number incorporation
7. Listing non-dominant hand, FINISH, body shift
8. Sign Word Order
9. Classifiers
10. Non-manual signals
Indexing/space/body shift and eye gaze

**Indexing:** used to indicate location of rooms, things in a room, persons present or not present.

**Space:** used to help with visualization, indicating how things, places or people are arranged.

**Body shifts:** usually happens when more than one person is talking, involves role play or going from one step to the next, for contrasting ideas and comparing things.

**Eye gaze:** when narrating, the signer looks or glances at locations or people in space.
Directionality

- **Sign verb movement directionality** for location (HOME GO-It and pronoun incorporation (TELL-me, me-HELP-them).
  - TEACH-me
  - SHOW-them
  - SHE-GIVE-HIM
  - HELP-me
Facial Expression and Sign modification

Facial expression and sign movement modification for degree, size, manner, and temporal/time aspect;

*Degree – BEAUTIFUL-very
*Size – CAR-tiny, BUILDING-tall
*Manner – READ-leisurely, SEW-fast
*Temporal/time aspect – WORK-all-day-long, DANCE-continuously
Repetition of sign verb movement for repeated action;

- GO+++,
- LEARN+++.
Repetition of sign noun movement and vertical/horizontal sweep

- Repetition of sign noun movement and vertical and horizontal sweep for plurals;
  - BOOK+++
  - MONDAY-sweep
  - MORNING-sweep.
Number incorporation

- Number incorporation (may include use of timeline):
- AGE-5,
- 2-MONTH,
- 3-WEEK-AGO,
- TWO-of-US.
Listing non-dominant hand, FINISH, body shift

- **Listing on non-dominant hand, FINISH, body shifts, and pauses** for connecting ideas, separating ideas, and sequencing of events.
Sign Word Order

Examples:

*Rhetorical (rh-q) question – I LEAVE NOW MUST WHY? TRAFFIC++

*Topic-comment – GIRL THERE, BLACK HAIR, LONG, MY DAUGHTER

*MUST, CAN, NOT at end of comments – STUDY MUST

*Conditional – SUPPOSE ME FORGET, YOU REMIND-me

*Object-subject-verb (OSV) – CL: C (2h)-log, DOG JUMP
Classifiers

a) description – Example: BOOK CL:B-flat
b) location and relationship of people, animals, things and places – Example: TENT TWO CL-A-side-by-side
c) actions of people, animal, and objects – Example: MOUSE CL:1-climb-up-chair
d) how something is used or functions – Example: SCISSORS CL:V-cut-straight
Non-manual signals

Non-manual signals (neg. & aff. head movements, yes-no?, wh-?, puffed cheeks, pursed lips/o-o, mm, pah, cs, th, clenched teeth):

Use of head, face and lips that function as adverbs/adjectives to modify the meaning of verbs and nouns;

Examples:

*th-careless,
*mm-complacent
*puffed cheeks-swollen
*pursed lips-intense
Practice?

➤ Practice? Discuss
Suggestion

- 1. Be friend with Deaf people
- 2. Lunch with Deaf people
- 3. Do things with Deaf people

The more you practice, your skills will improve!
Questions

» Discussion