

## SECTION 7

### RESPONSES TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (SLPI)

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The PAPERS in this document were initiated in April 1998 to provide responses to frequently asked questions about the SLPI. By November 1998 nine PAPERS had been written and shared with SLPI Coordinators and Team Members but they had not been compiled in one place. In December 1999 in order to help ensure the availability of our responses to questions we developed this document. By November 2012 responses to additional questions had increased the number of PAPERS to 21. In reading the PAPERS in this document, as well as other SLPI materials, it is important to keep in mind that the primary intended use of the SLPI is to support effective communication among sign language users by providing them information about their sign language communications skills and by using this information to assist them in planning appropriate sign language communication skills development opportunities; in brief, an integrated sign language communications skills assessment-development approach. (Note: SLPI Notebook documents referred to in this document are included in the SLPI website: [www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi).)

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## SLPI PAPER 1: SLPI NOTEBOOK (NB) MATERIALS

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### Introduction

This PAPER provides an overview of SLPI Notebook (NB) materials and documents for potential and current Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Team Members and an overview of documents important for people taking the SLPI. These materials and documents are included in the Evaluators' Resources part of [www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi). Since our application of the SLPI has primarily been for assessment of American Sign Language (ASL) several SLPI materials and documents specify SLPI: ASL. If the SLPI is applied for assessing a sign language other than ASL these materials and documents need to be modified to reflect this. PAPERS 3 and 4 provide further discussion of this. In addition to NB materials and documents the SLPI website includes other menu items that may be used for SLPI training and review including in the Evaluators' Resources part the following menu items: (1) Video Examples: Rating Levels, (2) Video Examples: Interviewing Examples, (3) Video Examples: ASL Grammatical Features, and (4) Interview Room Setup guidelines when one camera is used for recording SLPI interviews (for the latter see also PAPER 6 in this document).

### White and Blue Two-Sided Laminated Pages

Two-sided white laminated page with following two forms:

1. SLPI Rating Scale - Includes function and form descriptors for each SLPI Rating. See PAPER 2: *What is the SLPI Rating Scale?*
2. SLPI: Analyzing Function - This form includes function descriptors for SLPI ratings and it is designed to assist raters in analyzing function separate from form. See PAPER 3, *What Does the SLPI Assess?*, and NB Sections 1 and 5.

Two-sided blue laminated page with following two forms:

1. Analyzing Form - Provides vocabulary knowledge, production, fluency, grammar, and comprehension descriptors for each SLPI rating. In addition, "number equivalents" for a "few, some, several, and many" are provided. This form enables raters to easily compare their judgments of form to the SLPI Rating Scale.
2. Some Guidelines for Identifying and Discussing ASL Grammar - Grammatical features listed in this form are in same order as grammatical features on SLPI Rater Worksheets. In addition, references to writing guidelines and examples in NB Sections (Ss) 4A and 4B are provided.

### Section 1 (S1): Workshop (WS) Goal and SLPI Principles, Materials, and Procedures

S1, the primary document used during SLPI Training Workshops, includes workshop goals, discussion of the importance of both **function** and **form** to SLPI ratings, and the importance of raters focusing on **function** prior to considering **form**.

### Section 2 (S2): SLPI Training Workshop Schedule and In-Service Materials

S2 is the workshop schedule for training potential SLPI Team Members and materials for in-service workshops for current SLPI Team Members may be placed in S2.

### Section 3A (S3A): SLPI Scheduling and Interviewing

S3A provides guidelines for scheduling and conducting SLPI interviews. Sample pre-interview forms for SLPI candidates are included in SLPI NB S9B: *MODEL PROGRAM Staff Sign Language Communication Philosophy and Policy: Procedures for Implementation*.

### **Section 3B (S3B): SLPI Rating and Sharing Results Procedures**

There are three model S3B documents that may be adapted for use in accordance with the SLPI rating and sharing of results procedure selected: (1) the SLPI Individual Rater and Sharing of Results Procedure, (2) the SLPI Two Rater and Sharing of Results Procedure, and (3) the SLPI Three Rater Team and Sharing of Results Procedure. All three place an emphasis on follow-up meetings for providing SLPI candidates with information about their sign language communication skills. For discussion of these procedure options see PAPER 9: *Options for Conducting and Sharing Results of SLPI Ratings*. Sample forms for sharing results with SLPI candidates, including results memorandums, are included in SLPI NB S9B: *MODEL PROGRAM Staff Sign Language Communication Philosophy and Policy: Procedures for Implementation*.

### **Section 4A (S4A): SLPI Rater Worksheet Samples**

S4A provides completed SLPI Rater Worksheet samples. These samples may be used to assist SLPI Raters in developing their skills in providing general descriptors and form examples on their SLPI Rater Worksheets. There are two versions of S4A, one for the SLPI Individual Rater and Follow-Up Meeting Procedure and the other for both the SLPI Three and Two Rater Team and Follow-Up Meeting Procedures.

### **Section 4B (S4B): Guidelines for Completing SLPI Rater Worksheets**

S4B provides guidelines for completing SLPI Rater Worksheets and guidelines for SLPI Team Members and SLPI Coordinators to use when reviewing completed SLPI Rater Worksheets.

### **Section 5 (S5): Skills Important for Effective Sign Language Communication and SLPI Rating Levels**

S5 discusses the importance of **communicative functioning** and **linguistic form** to effective sign language communication and, therefore, to SLPI ratings. Included in this discussion are the concepts of formal/rhetorical language norms and communicative norms and the importance of these concepts to the assessment of ASL skills. In addition, superior/native-like signers, advanced signers, and skill level standards are discussed.

### **Section 6 (S6): American Sign Language (ASL) Grammar**

S6 provides a listing and examples of ASL grammatical features. Feature order on S6 pages 1-2 is consistent with the order of features on SLPI Rater Worksheets and on Some Guidelines for Identifying and Discussing ASL Grammar (one side of blue laminated page described on 1st page of this PAPER).

### **Section 7 (S7): Responses to Frequently Asked Questions about the SLPI**

S7 consists of PAPERS that provide responses to frequently asked questions about the SLPI.

### **Section 8 (S8): Selected Readings for the SLPI**

S8 includes readings for the SLPI that are organized under six topic areas: (1) Language Function and Form; (2) SLPI Development and Use; (3) Assessing Students' Sign Language Skills and ASL Assessment Options; (4) Observation of Sign Language in Classroom Settings [includes an article about an assessment tool, the Communication Sign Language Assessment, that is designed to assess instructors' classroom sign language communication skills and to use this information to assist instructors with their sign language communication skills development]; (5) Interpreter Evaluations and the SLPI, and (6) Language/Oral Proficiency Interview Readings (includes an article by Protase Woodford that discusses implications of foreign language testing for ASL). The information in areas (1) and (2) together with that in NB S1, S5, and S8 explain why both **function** and **form** are critical SLPI concepts.

## **Section 9 (S9): (Suggested) Documents for Development by Programs Using the SLPI**

S9 includes documents important for people taking the SLPI:

1. S9A: Staff/Employee Sign Language Communication Philosophy and Policy or Interim Plan for SLPI Use
2. S9B: Procedures for Implementing Staff/Employee Sign Language Policy  
(Note: Some programs include policy and procedures in the same document.)
3. S9C: Student Teacher and Intern Applicant Sign Language Policy and Procedures
4. S9D: Community/External Group Sign Language Services Policy and Procedures
5. S9E: Annual Sign Language Program Reports

Ss9A, B, C, and D provide persons taking the SLPI with information (a) about why they are taking the SLPI, and (b) to help prepare them for taking the SLPI.

S9E includes Two Model Annual Sign Language Program Reports for SLPI services and results. Information in these reports may be used to help determine the fairness of expected/required sign language entry skill levels, sign language standards/goals, and timelines for achieving standards/goals. Both model reports include information about SLPI services, the number and percentage of people that have and have not achieved their sign language skill level standards/goals, and participation and success of people below their standards/goals in sign language instruction. In addition Model 1 includes an explanation of how SLPI results may be used to help group people with similar sign language skill levels in ASL courses.

Ss9A, B, and C include documents from the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Alabama Department of mental Health, and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) Master of Science in Secondary Education (MSSE) Program. Section 9C also includes a model research methodology for establishing reasonable sign language skill level expectations for college students based on two studies, one conducted with Valdosta State University Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Hard of Hearing and ASL Interpreting students by William Newell, Frank Caccamise, Nancy Scheetz, and Philip Gunter, and the other study conducted with NTID MSSE students by Frank Caccamise, Gerry Bateman, Donna Gustina, and Geoff Poor.

Programs use the documents in S9 as appropriate to develop documents appropriate for their application(s) of the SLPI.

## **Section 10 (S10): Connecting American Sign Language (ASL) Instruction and the SLPI**

S10 is intended to assist programs in connecting SLPI results to ASL instruction. In addition to general suggestions S10 includes an overview of NTID ASL courses that are based on NTID faculty and staff SLPI results and an in depth description of a Pennsylvania School for the Deaf sign language course for SLPI Intermediate/Intermediate Plus signers. Also, resources for ASL instruction and Deaf culture materials are provided. Information about the current NTID Faculty and Staff Sign Language Program is provided in [www.ntid.rit.edu/aslte/](http://www.ntid.rit.edu/aslte/). The SLPI website, <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi>, includes a link to this website.

## PAPER 2: WHAT IS THE SLPI RATING SCALE?

William Newell and Frank Caccamise  
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Based on highly skilled, knowledgeable native-like signers the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Rating Scale is a standard scale for rating sign language communication skills. Since each SLPI candidate's performance is compared to this standard scale, not other candidates, the SLPI is a criterion-referenced test. Also, since skilled native-like signers are the upper anchor for the SLPI Rating Scale this Scale may be applied to all natural sign languages. (Note: For further discussion of this see PAPER 3, *What Does the SLPI Assess?*)

As discussed in Newell, Caccamise, Boardman, and Holcomb (1983) and PAPER 4, *SLPI-SCPI-SLPI History*, the SLPI was adapted from the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI), an assessment tool that is designed to assess spoken language skills in second languages. Since the L/OPI was developed by the US federal government to assess current and potential government employees' spoken language communication skills for foreign languages, the original L/OPI rating scale, the US Government Defense Language Institute (DLI) L/OPI Rating Scale, was more sensitive at higher spoken language communication skill levels than lower skill levels. Subsequent to the development and application of the L/OPI to foreign services assessment needs interest grew for applying this assessment technique within academic settings. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) secured two US Department of Education grants and, in collaboration with Educational Testing Service (ETS) of Princeton, New Jersey, developed an L/OPI scale for use in academic settings that was constructed to be more sensitive at these lower spoken language communication skill levels and less sensitive at the higher skill levels than the DLI L/OPI Rating Scale (Liskin-Gasparro, 1982). This new scale was labeled the ACTFL/ETS L/OPI Rating Scale.

Considering that the SLPI was projected to be used both with people who are native signers and with people who are learning a sign language as a second language it was determined that the SLPI Rating Scale would need to be sensitive to the full range of possible sign language communication skills from low beginning skills through native-like skills. Therefore, as shown on the next page the SLPI Rating Scale includes eleven rating skills levels that cover a wide range of sign language communication skills from No Functional Skills (low beginning skills) at the low end up to Superior Plus (native-like skills) at the top end. Each rating level has a functional communication descriptor and linguistic form descriptors. The functional descriptors describe the highest levels at which candidates are able to use sign language for communication and the form descriptors describe candidates' sign language vocabulary, production, fluency, grammar, and comprehension skills.

Based on our experiences with SPI training and application we now recommend that the Advanced Plus, Superior, and Superior Plus ratings be reported as a single rating range. The rationale for this is provided in PAPER 18: *Principles Important for Sign Language Communication Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents* (see Principles 10-through-13).

### References

- Liskin-Gasparro, J. (Ed.) (1982). *Foreign Language & Proficiency Assessment*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Newell, W., Caccamise, F., Boardman, K., & Holcomb, B. R. (1983). Adaptation of the Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) for assessing sign communicative competence. *Sign Language Studies*, 41, 311-352.

SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (SLPI) RATING SCALE<sup>a</sup>

| <u>RATINGS</u>              | <u>DESCRIPTORS<sup>b</sup></u>  |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <u>Superior Plus</u>        | <b>Able to have a fully shared and natural conversation, with in-depth elaboration for both social and work topics.</b> All aspects of signing are native-like.   |
| <u>Superior</u>             | <b>Able to have a fully shared conversation, with in-depth elaboration for both social and work topics.</b> 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.   |
| <u>Advanced Plus</u>        | <u>Exhibits</u> some superior level skills, but not <u>all</u> and not <u>consistently</u> .  |
| <u>Advanced</u>             | <b>Able to have a generally shared conversation with good, spontaneous elaboration for both social and work topics.</b> 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.  |
| <u>Intermediate Plus</u>    | <u>Exhibits</u> some advanced level skills, but not all and not consistently.   |
| <u>Intermediate</u>         | <b>Able to discuss with some confidence routine social and work topics within a conversational format with some elaboration; generally 3-to-5 sentences.</b> 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. |
| <u>Survival Plus</u>        | <u>Exhibits</u> some intermediate level skills, but not <u>all</u> and not <u>consistently</u> .  |
| <u>Survival</u>             | <b>Able to discuss basic social and work topics with responses generally 1-to-3 sentences in length.</b> 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.  |
| <u>Novice Plus</u>          | <u>Exhibits</u> some survival level skills, but not <u>all</u> and not <u>consistently</u> .  |
| <u>Novice</u>               | <b>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.</b> Vocabulary primarily related to everyday work and/or social areas such as basic work-related signs, family members, basic objects, colors, numbers, names of weekdays, and time. Production and fluency characterized by many sign production errors and by a slow rate with frequent inappropriate pauses/hesitations.   |
| <u>No Functional Skills</u> | <b>(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.</b>   |

<sup>a</sup>Adapted from US Foreign Service Institute AND ACTFL LPI Rating Scales by William Newell and Frank Caccamise

<sup>b</sup>For all SLPI rating descriptors, **first statement (in bold type) always a statement of sign language communicative functioning**, with all remaining statements (regular type) descriptors of sign language form (vocabulary, production, fluency, grammar, and comprehension).

### SLPI PAPER 3: WHAT DOES THE SLPI ASSESS?

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
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As described in PAPER 4, *SLPI-SCPI-SLPI History*, the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) has been adapted from the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI). Given that the SLPI Rating Scale is anchored at the highest level (Superior Plus) by native/native-like sign language users, similar to the L/OPI that may be used to assess a variety of spoken languages the SLPI may be used to assess a variety of sign languages. Therefore, when the SLPI is used to assess American Sign Language (ASL), the SLPI Rating Scale may be properly termed the Sign Language Proficiency Interview Rating Scale: American Sign Language (SLPI: ASL).

Our application of the SLPI has allowed for assessment of ASL from a broad perspective as it is used among skilled sign language communicators in the United States and Canada. This use includes the full range of ASL from pure, linguistic descriptions of ASL to English-like contact signing. As discussed in Notebook (NB) Section 5 (S5) natural sign language in the United States has acceptable variations, and these variations include English influenced contact signing. ASL and English have been in contact in the United States for more than 150 years and as has been documented in the sign language literature, due to this contact English has influenced ASL and English-like signing has developed to include many features of ASL. Haugen (1977) noted that, when there is an intermingling of two languages in contact, the concept of “language norm” is “highly ambiguous and slippery” and “We have to recognize that the communicative norm which grows up in a bilingual community is more elastic and less predictable than that of a monolingual community” (p. 98). Given the above, it can be expected that the communicative norm for ASL use in the United States will reflect mixtures and borrowings between the two languages in contact; that is, between ASL and English. Expanding upon this, NB Ss 1, 5, and 8 discuss and support the importance of both communicative **functioning** and linguistic **form** to the SLPI, considering in this discussion the concepts of rhetorical and communicative language norms. As stressed in NB S5 (page 1), “The rhetorical norm represents an idealized form of a language...The rhetorical norm is generally not the ‘standard’ for everyday communication of skilled language users. The communicative norm is found in the every day communication of skilled language users. Among users of a language there is generally greater variation in their use when communication (not linguistic form) is their goal.”

## SLPI PAPER 4: SLPI-SCPI-SLPI HISTORY

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
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We originally labeled our adaptation of the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI) for assessing sign language communication skills as the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI). As discussed below in 1983 this was changed to the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI). Given the history of our sign language assessment tool and the area of sign language assessment in general in 2006 we decided to return to our original title; that is, SLPI. Therefore, throughout this paper we refer to the assessment tool we have developed as the SLPI recognizing that from 1983 to 2006 it was referred to as the SCPI.

In the late 1990s questions arose about the history of the SLPI; for example, Who developed this assessment tool? and Where was it developed? What follows is the history of this assessment tool from our experiences and perspective.

As discussed in our first publication on adapting the L/OPI for assessing sign Language communication skills (Newell, Caccamise, Boardman, & Holcomb, 1983) in 1980 Protase Woodford from Educational Testing Services (ETS) presented information about the L/OPI at the Third National Symposium on Sign Language Research and Teaching in Boston (Woodford, 1982). As Woodford discussed the L/OPI, an interview format based assessment tool, was developed by the US federal government after World War II in response to a need to have an assessment tool that could be used to assess current and potential government employees' spoken communication skills for a variety of foreign languages. (See also PAPER 2, *What is the SLPI Rating Scale?*) Based on Woodford's presentation several individuals began to explore the application of interview techniques to the assessment of American Sign Language (ASL), including faculty from the College of Staten Island, Gallaudet University (then Gallaudet College), and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID).

In 1982 four NTID faculty members, Keitha Boardman, Barbara Ray Holcomb, and the two of us attended an ETS L/OPI Training Workshop in Princeton, NJ. At this workshop we observed French and Spanish L/OPI assessments and with guidance from ETS staff we practiced applying L/OPI interviewing techniques to ASL. Later that year the first training workshop for our L/OPI adaptation for assessing ASL, the SLPI, was offered at the Louisiana School for the Deaf (Caccamise, Newell, & Mitchell-Caccamise, 1983).

During 1980-82 we were aware that other people were investigating application of the L/OPI to sign language assessment and we visited Will Madsen and Catherine Moses who were conducting this work at Gallaudet College and Will Madsen visited us at NTID. We discussed the similarities and differences between our work and shared materials and procedural information. In 1983 Mary Mosleh from the College of Staten Island who was conducting similar efforts organized a meeting to bring together people who were interested in applying L/OPI techniques to assessing sign language communication skills. People attending this meeting at ETS in Princeton, NJ included Carol Lazoriak, William R. Gut, and Mary Mosleh, College of Staten Island, Will Madsen and Catherine Moses, Gallaudet College, Ted Supalla, University of Illinois, William Tomes, South Carolina Personnel Division, and Keith Boardman and the two of us, NTID. At this meeting it was agreed to rename the SLPI Rating Scale (published in Newell et al., 1983) the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI) Rating Scale, that this rating scale would be used by all as we continued our work to apply L/OPI techniques to sign language assessment, and that we would continue to share our efforts and collaborate whenever possible. For a variety of reasons, however, we were soon working independently. Therefore, although subsequent development of the SCPI (as it was labeled at that time) by Will Madsen and Catherine Moses at

Gallaudet College and by us at NTID shared a common base (the L/OPI) and a common rating scale, differences in terms of both materials and procedures developed over time. In considering this it is important to appreciate that some variations are allowable for the L/OPI. Therefore, differences between the SCPI as it evolved and was applied by Gallaudet College faculty and the sign language interview assessment that we continued to develop and apply may be accounted for by decisions as to the best L/OPI methodological variations upon which to base an adaptation for assessing sign language communication skills.

In addition to the sign language interview assessments developed at Gallaudet and by us other sign language interview assessment tools have been labeled as the ASL Proficiency Interview (ASLPI). The first ASLPI was an adaptation from the L/OPI by Mel Carter, California State University at Northridge in the 1980s. Another use of the ASLPI label during the 1990s was by Ed Rogers, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, California Department of Rehabilitation, who, in consultation with the first author of this PAPER, adapted the SLPI for use with California vocational rehabilitation personnel. The most recent use of the ASLPI label to our knowledge was announced in a May 17, 2006 memorandum from Dr. Thomas Allen, Dean, Gallaudet University Center for ASL Literacy (CASLL), in which he addressed a change from the SCPI as it evolved at Gallaudet University to the GU-ASLPI: "Recently, CASLL introduced the GU-ASLPI as the primary means for measuring ASL proficiency of individuals throughout the campus who are not faculty members....The GU-ASLPI is a refinement of the ASLPI that is in use in an increasing number of programs throughout the United States." Dr. Allen provided several reasons for this change, including: "The GU-ASLPI has a specific target language (ASL) and therefore is more appropriately modeled after the LPI administered by the US Foreign Service to credential Federal employees assigned to foreign countries. The SCPI, over the years, has BECOME a measure of ASL, so a refocusing of its name and scoring procedures is overdue."

We agree that specifying a specific target language is helpful when applying L/OPI adaptations to assessing sign language communication skills. Since across the US and in Canada the SLPI has been implemented in order to assess ASL from a broad perspective as it is used among skilled sign language communicators in the United States and Canada we now label this application of the L/OPI to assessing sign language communication skills as the SLPI: American Sign Language (SLPI: ASL) (see PAPER 3).

Naturally if the SLPI is used to assess sign languages other than ASL this should be specified similar to applications of the L/OPI for different spoken languages. For example, the SLPI has been adopted by the US Peace Corps for assessment of Kenyan Sign Language (KSL), and this application could be labeled the SLPI: Kenyan Sign Language (SLPI: KSL).

We respect the work of our colleagues and we encourage people to learn about and consider all available options for assessing sign language skills, taking into consideration their reason(s) for assessing these skills. As we stated in our first SLPI publication (Newell et al., 1983) in response to two reviews: "...application of the LPI to sign evaluation is in its infant stages, and we have much to learn about its potential strengths and limitations for assessment of sign communication....Through continued cooperative efforts, supportive critique, and sharing of experiences, the appropriate issues raised by reviewers will be addressed. What we and others must keep in perspective is that communication is what is most important."

By whom and where was the SLPI developed? For us the SLPI developed through (1) careful study of the L/OPI literature, (2) discussion with L/OPI professionals, (3) participation in a L/OPI training workshop, (4) participation in a stimulating and informative meeting with our colleagues at ETS in 1983 to discuss application of L/OPI techniques to sign language assessment, and (5) since 1982 more than 70 SLPI Training/In-Service workshop training experiences across the United States, in Canada, and in Kenya, Africa. (Note: PAPER 20, *SLPI Use*, provides additional information about SLPI workshops and use.)

For a history and perspective on the development of both the sign language instrument labeled as the SCPI as it evolved at Gallaudet University and the GU-ASLPI we encourage you to contact Gallaudet University. In addition we encourage you to learn about other sign language communication assessment tools that may serve your needs; for example, see PAPER 14, *Assessing Student's Sign Language Skills*.

#### References

- Allen, T. (2006, May). *GU-ASLPI adopted by CASLL to evaluate ASL proficiency*. Personal Correspondence, Center for American Sign Language Literacy (CASLL) Gallaudet University, Washington, DC.
- Caccamise, F., Newell, W., & Mitchell-Caccamise, M. (1983). Use of the Sign Language Proficiency Interview for assessing the sign communicative competence of Louisiana School for the Deaf dormitory counselor applicants. *Journal of the Academy of Rehabilitative Audiology, 16*, 283-304.
- Newell, W., Caccamise, F., Boardman, K., & Holcomb, B.R. (1983). Adaptation of the Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) for assessing sign communicative competence. *Sign Language Studies, 41*, 311-352 (includes comments from and authors' response to two reviewers).
- Woodford, P. (1982). Foreign language testing: Implications for ASL skills. In F. Caccamise, U. Bellugi, & M. Garretson (Eds.), *Teaching ASL as a second/foreign language* (pp. 223-231). Silver Spring, MD: National Association of the Deaf.

## SLPI PAPER 5: SLPI TRAINING WORKSHOP (WS) & FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

Frank Caccamise & William Newell

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### Introduction

This PAPER addresses SLPI WSs for training potential SLPI Team Members and In-Service WSs for current SLPI Team Members. Suggestions for local programs to provide training to add members to their SLPI Teams are provided in PAPER 11: *Adding SLPI Team Members*.

### Four-Day SLPI Training Workshops (WSs)

1. Six to Ten Participants: See PAPER 13, *Why 6 to 10 SLPI Training Workshop Participants?*
2. WS Feasibility: Determine feasibility of conducting WS considering various factors including goal(s) of SLPI use and program resources (see PAPER 17: *Factors Important for Sign Language Program Philosophy, Policy, & Procedures Documents*).
3. Pre-Workshop Services – May include assistance with (a) policies and procedures that guide SLPI use, (b) developing workshop schedule, (c) selecting WS participants, (d) equipment and room needs, (e) preparing materials and scheduling SLPI WS interviews, (f) preparing SLPI Notebooks (NBs) and other WS materials (participants receive NBs at beginning of workshops).
4. Pre-WS Services On-Site – Meeting with program SLPI Coordinator(s) and other program personnel if appropriate to check training rooms, to make a final check on workshop materials and schedule, and to discuss factors to consider in implementing and monitoring SLPI use.
5. Conduct SLPI Training Workshop over four days for 6 to 10 potential SLPI Team Members.
6. Post-Workshop Services may include (a) rating workshop participants' SLPI interviews and make recommendations for SLPI Team and (b) advisement for policies and procedures that guide SLPI use and advisement for annual Sign Language Program reports. Annual reports provide information important (a) to monitoring sign language program effectiveness; (b) to planning staff sign language communication skills development program options; (c) to planning in-service training for SLPI Team Members; and (d) to identifying program modifications that may be appropriate including skill level standards/goals, timelines for achieving standards/goals and skill levels required and preferred at job entry (hire, promotion, and transfer). For sample and model policy, procedures, and annual report documents see Policies, Procedures & Reports part in <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi>.

### SLPI Follow-Up Consulting Services

Additional consulting that may be appropriate includes:

1. Two Day In-Service Workshops for current SLPI Team Members that may include:
  - A. Feedback and refinement for SLPI interviewing skills.
  - B. Refinement and re-calibration of SLPI rating skills to support consistent and appropriate interpretation of the SLPI Rating Scale (see PAPER 19, *Monitoring SLPI Team Members' Ratings*).
  - C. Connecting SLPI to sign language communication skills development.
  - D. Discussion of policies and procedures documents that guide SLPI use and Annual Sign Language Program Reports.
  - E. Support for SLPI Coordinators to provide in-service for current SLPI Team Members and mentoring for potential SLPI Team Members.
2. Video review of SLPI Ratings
3. Video review of SLPI Interviewer Skills
4. WS for ASL Instructors: Focus on connecting SLPI results to ASL communication skills development (see NB Section 10: *Connecting ASL Instruction and the SLPI*).

## SLPI PAPER 6: ANGLES & OTHER SLPI RECORDING GUIDELINES

Frank Caccamise & William Newell

September 2015 (11<sup>th</sup> edition)

SLPI Notebook (NB) Section 3A includes guidelines for scheduling and conducting SLPI interviews. This PAPER addresses angles and other recording guidelines for SLPI interviews when one camera is used (not split screen with two cameras) in order to help ensure SLPI Raters have the view necessary to fairly rate and describe SLPI candidates' sign language communication skills.

For single camera recording the interviewer and candidate should sit facing one another with camera placed to capture side view of interviewer and nearly frontal view of candidate and angled to allow for clear view of candidate's dominant hand palm (see Diagrams below). With proper single camera placement it will appear that the camera is focused on candidate with a nearly frontal view but slightly angled for clearer view of palm side of candidate's dominant signing hand. The camera shoots over interviewer's shoulder at approximately a 45 degree angle with view of candidate as large and tight to shoulder of non-dominant sign hand as possible; that is, no open space between shoulder of non-dominant signing hand and view of candidate on monitor with minimal space above candidate's head.

### DIAGRAMS FOR RECORDING SLPI INTERVIEWS: ONE CAMERA

DIAGRAM 1  
For Right Handed Dominant Signer

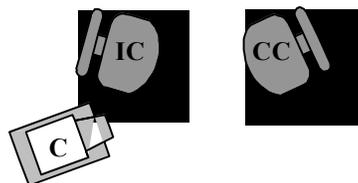
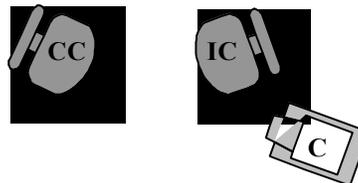


DIAGRAM 2  
For Left Handed Dominant Signer



Key: CC = Candidate's Chair IC = Interviewer's Chair C = Camera

To help ensure continued use of proper recording angles the following is recommended:

1. SLPI Coordinators periodically check SLPI recordings in order to ensure proper recorder angles are being used.
2. Interviewing room recording equipment and chair locations marked considering both right and left handed dominant signers. When locations are marked persons should be seated in both interviewer and candidate chairs and they should look at one another not the camera. Although chairs generally need to be placed in close proximity it is important to ensure proper personal signing space is maintained between candidate and interviewer. In order to allow proper use of the signing space chairs with no arms and no rollers should be used.
3. A sample recording be produced showing the proper set-up for SLPI recording rooms and SLPI Team Members and persons responsible for setting-up SLPI recordings rooms should review this periodically. It may be appropriate to review this sample recording at an annual SLPI Team meeting at the beginning of each assessment year/cycle. SLPI Team Members may not be responsible for setting-up interview recording rooms but they should be knowledgeable about proper interview room set-up and they should request adjustments in set-up when appropriate. Also, SLPI recordings that candidates have given permission to use for training may be used as samples to show proper recording angles and improper recording angles for SLPI interviews. (In NB S3A see "Permission to Use SLPI Videos for Training, Demonstration, and Research" form.)  
Note: For additional interviewing room information in <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi> see Evaluators' Resources part, Interview Room Set-Up.

## SLPI PAPER 7: FLUCTUATIONS IN SLPI RESULTS

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (13th edition)

### Introduction

This PAPER discusses why fluctuations in SLPI results may be expected.

### Reasons for Fluctuations in SLPI Results

1. Results Within Brief Time Periods: If we are discussing results obtained within a brief time period (a few days to two-to-three months) changes in one level (for example, Survival and Survival Plus) may simply be related to normal fluctuations in how people perform in general. For example a person is more or less energetic today than a few days ago, s/he has a mild illness, today is a better day emotionally than four days ago, or s/he did not sleep well the night before her/his most recent interview. Another possible reason for these brief period one level changes is related to a concept of a range for each rating level; that is, a person may be at the border between two rating levels. On her/his best day, therefore, this type of person may sign in the low Intermediate Range and on another day sign in the high Survival Plus Range. We would not expect fluctuations of more than one level for results obtained within a brief time period.

2. Results Over Long Time Periods: If we are discussing results obtained six or more months apart:

A. Persons at Advanced Plus and Above -

- 1) Should almost never show a drop in their SLPI results. The reasons for this are their sign language communication skills are very strong and broad and they are most likely people who use sign language on a daily basis and who developed sign language communication skills at a young age (especially persons in the Superior Range)..
- 2) If a drop does occur it should be no more than one level. Possible reasons are the same as those listed above for “results obtained within a brief time period.”  
Also, see #3 and #4 on the next page.

B. Persons at the Advanced level may drop one level to Intermediate Plus but generally should not drop more than one level -

- 1) The reasons for this are their skills are strong and broad and they generally use sign language on a regular basis (especially on the job).
- 2) A drop may occur when an Advanced level person does not continue use of sign language on a regular basis and s/he is on the border between Intermediate Plus and Advanced rating levels. See #1 above and #3 and #4 on the next page.

C. Persons up through the Intermediate Plus level are more likely than Advanced and above signers to drop one level and may even drop more than one level, because -

- 1) Their sign language communication skills are not strong and broad.
- 2) People at these skill levels are often in jobs that do not involve extensive daily use of sign language.
- 3) The lower a person’s skill in this range the more likely a drop in skills may occur over time.
- 4) Also see #3 and #4 on the next page.

NOTE: Intermediate Plus signers should generally not drop below Intermediate.

3. Interview Influence: The interview may influence both results obtained within a brief time period and results obtained over a long time period; that is, it is possible that a previously conducted interview elicited more of an individual's sign language communication skills than the individual's most recent interview. As discussed in SLPI rating materials if raters believe an interview did not provide a candidate with the opportunity to show her/his best sign language communication skills they should recommend the person be given the opportunity to take another interview. Also, if a candidate believes an interview did not provide her/him with the opportunity to show her/his best sign language communication skills s/he may request another interview with the first interview not being rated.

4. Rater Consistency: Consistency across raters (reliability) may also influence both results obtained within a brief time period and results obtained over a long time period. SLPI Coordinators should check ratings by each rater and provide in-service training as appropriate to help ensure consistency of ratings across SLPI Team Members. If after follow-up meetings candidates believe their ratings are not accurate they may request re-ratings; re-ratings are conducted by SLPI Team Members not conducting previous ratings. Also, similar to the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI), the basis for the SLPI, re-calibration of SLPI Raters via in-service training should be considered every 2-to-3 years. (See PAPER 5, *SLPI Workshops and Follow-Up Service*, & PAPER 19, *Monitoring the Consistency SLPI Team Members' Ratings*.)

### **Conclusion**

Downward SLPI rating fluctuations, especially in the lower skills levels, may occur for the reasons discussed above. When guidelines for sign language communication skill level standards/goals and the schedule for (re)taking the SLPI were developed these expected and reasonable fluctuations in SLPI results were considered. (Note: See PAPER 17, *Factors Important for Sign Language Program Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*, and PAPER 18, *Principles Important for Sign Language Program Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*).

## **SLPI PAPER 8: MAY ASL TEACHERS SERVE AS SLPI INTERVIEWERS & RATERS FOR PEOPLE THEY HAVE TAUGHT?**

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (10th edition)

This PAPER addresses the question “May ASL Teachers serve as SLPI Interviewers and Raters for people they have taught?”

This question stems from the concern that if I have taught this person sign language I may not be able to be objective when s/he takes the SLPI. Therefore, this may influence my SLPI interview with this person and regardless of what skills this person demonstrates during his/her SLPI interview I may tend to give a high rating if this person received a high grade in my class and to give a low rating if this person received a low grade in my class.

While we do consider this a legitimate concern we believe ASL teachers may conduct SLPI ratings with persons they are teaching or have taught for the following reasons:

1. There is more than one rater for each SLPI candidate.
2. For most applications of the SLPI candidates may request re-interviews and re-ratings.
3. Sign language teachers are professionals who routinely evaluate the sign language skills of students for whom they serve as teachers.
4. Sign language teachers should be expected to exhibit the same professionalism during SLPI ratings that they exhibit as sign language teachers.
5. Names of raters for SLPI candidates are confidential; that is, raters’ names are not shared with persons taking the SLPI.

We understand and appreciate that SLPI Team Members may be uncomfortable conducting SLPI interviews with people they are currently teaching or have recently taught. This is one reason we recommend that if interviewers are uncomfortable interviewing certain persons, regardless of the reason(s), they should not interview these persons. This same right is given to persons scheduled to take the SLPI; that is, persons taking the SLPI may request another interviewer (though we do not recommend people be allowed to choose their interviewers).

In many applications it may be impossible to setup an SLPI assessment process for which both interviewers and raters do not know persons taking the SLPI. The major reasons for this are that the SLPI process generally involves local interviewers and raters who are skilled in, knowledgeable about, and accepting of the local/program sign language dialect and the fact that the SLPI process works best when SLPI Follow-Up Meetings are conducted in a timely manner by persons who are able to connect SLPI results to local opportunities for sign language communication skills development.

Therefore, although our answer is ‘yes’ to the question may ASL teachers serve as SLPI interviewers and raters for people they are teaching or have taught there are exceptions. Therefore, if an SLPI Team Member is uncomfortable interviewing and rating someone s/he should not serve as an interviewer and rater for this person. In order to assure that persons taking the SLPI do have the opportunity to show and be rated on their best sign language communication skills it is important that candidates, interviewers, and raters all are as comfortable as possible within the context of the SLPI process.

## **SLPI PAPER 9: OPTIONS FOR CONDUCTING & SHARING RESULTS OF SLPI RATINGS**

Frank Caccamise, & William Newell  
September 2015 (15th edition)

### **Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI) Rating Options**

The Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI), the spoken communication skills test from which the SLPI is adapted, allows for rating procedure variations. A frequently used L/OPI rating procedure involves live ratings conducted during and immediately following interviews with the interviewer and an observer making independent ratings, comparing notes, and reaching an official rating consensus. Other L/OPI rating procedures include audio recording interviews and subsequently conducting independent ratings by one or more raters. In many college-level language programs foreign language professors conduct L/OPI interviews and ratings with results used for student placement in classes and for awarding foreign language credit by examination. L/OPI rating procedures are influenced by the seriousness of the application for which the L/OPI is being used with two or three raters used when the application is ‘more serious’; for example, when results may influence personnel decisions.

#### **Traditional SLPI Procedure for Conducting and Sharing SLPI Ratings: SLPI Three Rater Team, In-Depth Written Report, and Optional Follow-Up Meeting**

Given that application of the SLPI most often has involved relating SLPI results to sign language communication skill levels expectations for educational faculty/staff and vocational rehabilitation staff from our first training workshop in 1982 through 1998 we offered one standard SLPI rating procedure that involves three raters meeting together, rating, and providing an in-depth written report that includes an official rating, a description of the candidate’s sign language communication skills, and suggestions for improving these skills if appropriate. SLPI Follow-Up Meetings with candidates to review their SLPI videos, to discuss their sign language communication skills, and to discuss suggestions and opportunities for improving their skills is optional. This traditional SLPI rating and report writing procedure typically requires three raters approximately two hours to complete.

#### **Alternative Procedure #1: SLPI Individual Rater Rating and Sharing of Results Procedure**

In 1998, given our 16 years of experience since conducting our first SLPI Training Workshop and given the improvements we had made in both SLPI training materials and materials used in conducting the SLPI, we were comfortable suggesting another procedure for conducting SLPI ratings and sharing SLPI results with candidates, the SLPI Individual Rater Rating and Sharing of Results Procedure. This procedure places emphasis on SLPI Follow-Up Meetings as the means for sharing SLPI results with no in-depth written SLPI reports. During follow-up meetings candidates are able to see themselves signing by reviewing their SLPI interview videos with persons knowledgeable about the SLPI who can provide them feedback on their sign language communication skill strengths, skills suggested for improvement, and opportunities for improving these skills. The individual rater procedure, therefore, re-allocates a portion of the time that was spent by three raters to discuss and write in-depth SLPI results reports to time spent by one SLPI Team member in preparation for and conducting follow-up meetings with candidates. For candidates achieving up to the Advanced SLPI Rating follow-up meetings are part of the normal SLPI procedure the first time the SLPI is taken with follow-up meetings optional for all subsequent SLPIs. For candidates achieving in the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range follow-up meetings are always optional. In depth information for this procedure is provided in SLPI Notebook Section 3B: SLPI Individual Rater Rating and Sharing of Results Procedure. In addition to streamlining the rating procedure, reducing scheduling problems for conducting ratings, and reducing the total amount of time required conducting ratings, this procedure has additional benefits including (a) inter-rater reliability (consistency of raters with one another) can be more easily monitored using a system where raters are not together and discussing the rating, and (b) follow-up meetings are more personal and can be a more positive learning experience for individuals taking the SLPI than are in-depth written reports. Potential drawbacks to this procedure include (a) loss of control over SLPI recordings and potential breaches to confidentiality, (b) loss of support for raters in making

their final and official rating decisions since raters act independently and determine their final independent ratings without benefit of discussion with other raters, (c) loss of a sense of “team”, and (d) loss of on going learning from other SLPI Team Members since rater discussion minimized.

### **Alternative Procedures #2 and #3: SLPI Three and Two Rater Team Rating and Sharing of Results Procedures**

Two additional options for conducting and sharing SLPI ratings combine parts of the SLPI Three Rater Team Individual Rater Procedures. These two options consist of ratings being conducted by Three or Two Member Rater Teams and follow-up meetings which are part of normal SLPI procedures the first time candidates take the SLPI and optional for subsequent times the SLPI is taken. Similar to the Individual Rater Procedure for candidates achieving in the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range follow-up meetings are always optional.

### **Summary of Procedures for Conducting and Sharing Results of SLPI Ratings**

A summary of the four procedure options discussed in this paper is provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Summary of Procedures for Conducting Sharing SLPI Ratings.

| OPTIONS                | RATING                 | SHARING RESULTS |                 |   |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---|
|                        |                        | Memo            | Written Report  | SLPI Follow-Up Meeting <sup>a, b, c</sup>                   |
| Traditional            | 3 Raters Together      | Yes             | Yes             | Optional  |
| Alternative #1         | 2 Raters Separately    | Yes             | No <sup>a</sup> | Yes First Time SLPI Is Taken, Then Optional <sup>b, c</sup> |
| Alternatives #2 and #3 | 2 or 3 Raters Together | Yes             | No <sup>a</sup> | Yes First Time SLPI Is Taken, Then Optional <sup>b, c</sup> |

<sup>a</sup>SLPI Team members conducting follow-up meetings may provide written feedback and suggestions for candidates to improve their sign language skills.

<sup>b</sup>Always optional persons achieving SLPI Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Skill Level Range ratings.

<sup>c</sup>May make SLPI Follow-Up Meetings optional for all candidates the first time the SLPI is taken.

For all rating procedure options outlined in Table 1 it is essential that SLPI Team Members have the benefit of periodic in-service training to maintain interviewing and rating skills. In-depth discussion of this is provided in PAPER 19: *Monitoring SLPI Team Members' Ratings*.

### Conclusion

Three options to the traditional SLPI Procedure for Conducting and Sharing the Results of SLPI Ratings have been discussed. Feedback from SLPI Team Members and SLPI candidates supports that SLPI Follow-Up Meetings are more beneficial than in-depth written reports for both understanding one's sign language skills and planning skills development.

**SLPI PAPER 10:  
SHOULD SLPI RESULTS FROM OTHER PROGRAMS BE ACCEPTED?**

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (9th ed.)

As use of the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) spread a question that arose was “Should our program accept SLPI results from other programs?” After several in-depth discussions with SLPI Coordinators we came to the conclusion that this decision should be an either all or none decision; that is, either SLPI results from all other programs should be accepted or SLPI results from all other programs should not be accepted.

We recommend that SLPI results from all programs be accepted, with official documentation of results for each individual required. Below we provide a rationale for this. We recognize that a decision to not accept results from other programs must be considered based on local circumstances.

The primary goal of SLPI use for us is to contribute to effective communication among sign language users. We believe this can be accomplished best when respect is shown for our colleagues both locally and nationally. The SLPI process is based on respect for local, highly skilled sign language communicators; that is, generally it is local people who are trained to conduct SLPI interviews, ratings, and sharing of results and it is local people who implement and monitor SLPI use. Given this and given the efforts we have observed by our colleagues across the United States and Canada to conscientiously implement and monitor their SLPI use we believe all programs using the SLPI are contributing to improved and effective communication among sign language users. By accepting SLPI results from other programs we are showing respect for the efforts of our colleagues and, as stated above, this too will contribute to our goal of effective communication among sign language users.

Naturally this leads to the question, “But how can I be sure that ratings across programs are equivalent?” The simple answer is “You cannot be sure”. To guarantee equivalent results a nationally based procedure would need to be implemented. We recognize the importance and benefits of nationally based testing systems but we believe implementing SLPI use on a local basis has several important benefits. These benefits include (1) involving local/community people in SLPI application; (2) providing local control that allows the SLPI to be implemented and adapted in a manner consistent with local resources and needs; (3) sensitivity and respect for local sign language dialectical variations within the assessment procedure; (4) opportunities for people to review and discuss their assessment results with people knowledgeable about both the SLPI and local options for developing and refining sign language communication skills; (5) opportunities for programs to take into consideration assessment results when planning courses, workshops, and other options to support sign language communication skills development; and (6) providing assessment and follow-up services in a timely and cost effective manner for people taking the SLPI. [For an informative discussion that provides a comparison of nationally based assessment procedures and locally based assessment procedures readers are referred to an article by Julie Moore in the July, 1997, *Journal of Interpreting*, pages 9-22, *Looking at RID and NAD Interpreter Evaluations Through an Intercultural Lens*; this is Reading 19 in SLPI Notebook Section 8. Also, see PAPER 12, *Support for Local SLPI Teams and Team Training*.]

## **SLPI PAPER 11: ADDING SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (SLPI) TEAM MEMBERS**

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (12th edition)

### **Introduction**

Based on discussions with several SLPI Teams the information in this PAPER is intended to assist local SLPI Coordinators in planning and conducting training for adding SLPI Team Members.

### **Some Guidelines for Adding SLPI Team Members**

1. We recommend that you have a minimum of two years experience with the SLPI prior to considering adding members to your SLPI Team.
2. Review and selection of SLPI trainees:
  - A. The SLPI Coordinator, with input from SLPI Team members as appropriate, should provide input to administration on potential trainees taking into consideration criteria established by her/his program for SLPI training and team membership.
  - B. Based on input from the SLPI Coordinator and availability of potential trainees to participate in SLPI training and to serve as SLPI Team members administration selects persons to participate in SLPI training.
  - C. People selected are invited by administration to participate in training to become an SLPI Team member; invitations include statement that participation in SLPI training is a prerequisite but not a guarantee for becoming an SLPI Team member.
3. Additional SLPI Team Members may be added via:
  - A. Mentor-Trainee Program - A sample mentor-trainee program is provided in the **Attachment** to this PAPER.
  - B. Group training planned and conducted by current SLPI Team Members - This training may be conducted within one week or extend over several weeks in accordance with the resources, schedules, and other relevant factors for persons conducting and participating in training.
  - C. SLPI Four-Day Training Workshop - If six or more people are to be added to an SLPI Team a four-day training workshop with national SLPI Trainers may be appropriate. Local SLPI Coordinators are key persons in planning and providing this training and they may work with one or two national trainers to plan and conduct training.
4. Persons providing SLPI training should:
  - A. Be experienced local SLPI Team Members or national SLPI Trainers.
  - B. Have thorough knowledge of the policies and procedures that guide local SLPI use.
  - C. Have an appreciation and understanding of SLPI training goals.
  - D. Have an understanding of the principles that guide SLPI training and use.
  - E. Have a thorough knowledge of SLPI materials.

### **Videos for Training Current and Potential SLPI Team Members**

To ensure videos needed for in-service training for current SLPI Team Members as well as for training potential SLPI Team Members are available programs using the SLPI should request permission to use SLPI videos for training purposes. Permission forms should be sent or given with SLPI results to persons taking the SLPI. Sample forms for requesting this permission are included in procedure documents in the Policies, Procedures, and Reports part of [www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi).

## Attachment

### Sample Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Mentor-Trainee Program

- I. Factors to Consider in Selecting SLPI Trainees
  - A. Potential trainees should have achieved the approved PROGRAM criteria for SLPI Team training (SLPI rating, RID Certification, ASLTA Certification, etc.).
  - B. Ability to function in a professional manner as an SLPI Team Member including maintenance of confidentiality relative to SLPI results.
  - C. Supportive of program policy and procedures that guide SLPI use.
  - D. Commitment to concept of SLPI Team Members as a “Team”.
  
- II. Selection Procedures for SLPI Interviewer-Rater Trainees
  - A. In consultation with other SLPI Team Members SLPI Coordinator(s) make recommendations to appropriate PROGRAM administrators for SLPI trainees.  
 Note: Since trainees are potential SLPI Team Members consensus among current SLPI Team Members is an important consideration in recommending and selecting persons to be trainees.
  - B. SLPI Coordinator(s) and administrators discuss recommendations and make decisions relative to persons to be invited to be SLPI Team trainees.
  - C. SLPI Coordinator(s) and appropriate administrators invite persons identified to become SLPI trainees.
  
- III. Mentors: Each trainee is assigned an SLPI Team member as a mentor by the SLPI Coordinator(s).
  
- IV. Sharing Training Materials
  - A. At their first meetings mentors provide trainees (1) with a copy of the SLPI Notebook (NB) and an overview of the information in this NB, & (2) an overview of the SLPI website ([www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi)).
  - B. Throughout their training trainees are provided additional training materials, and review and discussion of training materials, by their mentors as may be appropriate.
  
- V. Mentor-Trainee Information Meeting Goals
  - A. To discuss general information about the SLPI and policies and procedures for SLPI use.
  - B. To discuss interview structure, techniques, and strategies using two or more SLPI interviews as examples.
  - C. To discuss SLPI Rating Scale using a selection of SLPI interviews at each SLPI rating level.
  - D. To discuss principles and procedures for conducting SLPI Follow-Up Meetings.  
 Note: PROGRAMS should add to and modify these goals as appropriate.
  
- VI. Training for Rating Skills
  - A. Trainees read PROGRAM SLPI NB Section 3B (S3B) and S9B.
  - B. Trainees and mentors review and discuss (1) S3B & (2) Video Rating Examples & Grammar Features Examples in SLPI website.
  - C. Trainees and mentors review and discuss previously rated SLPI interviews.
  - D. Trainees attend SLPI rating meetings in which their mentors are raters.
  - E. Trainees fill out rater forms but these are not part of the official rating procedures and are not shared with SLPI Rating Team during rater meeting.  
 Note: Trainees do not participate in rater meeting discussions.
  - F. Following rating meetings trainees share their rating forms with their mentors and trainees and mentors discuss rating meeting experiences.

- G. Mentors monitor progress of trainees toward making accurate, independent ratings and providing appropriate general functional descriptors and examples for each form category on SLPI Rater Worksheet. SLPI NB S4A, S4B, S5, and S6 are used as may be appropriate to help with this process.
- H. If an SLPI Rater Discussion Worksheet is used mentors work with trainees in developing skills in completing this worksheet.

#### VII. Training for Interviewing Skills

- A. Trainees read SLPI NB S3A and S9B scheduling and interviewing information.
- B. Trainees and mentors review and discuss (1) S3A and S9B scheduling and interviewing information and (2) Video Interviewing Examples in SLPI website.
- C. Trainees and mentors review and discuss previous SLPI interviews.
- D. Trainees interview two to three volunteer candidates (should include minimum of one candidate Intermediate or below and one candidate above Intermediate).
- E. Mentors and trainees review and discuss volunteer interviews conducted by trainees.

#### VIII. Training for Conducting SLPI Follow-Up Meetings

- A. Trainees read SLPI NB S3B SLPI Follow-Up Meeting information and related information in S9B.
- B. Trainees and mentors review and discuss S3B and S9B SLPI Follow-Up Meeting information and follow-up meetings conducted by mentors.
- C. Trainees and mentors review and discuss previous SLPI interviews.
- D. With candidate permission trainees observe two or three follow-up meetings conducted by their mentors (may be done live or recorded).
- E. Mentors and trainees review and discuss follow-up meetings conducted by mentors.
- F. With permission of candidates, trainees conduct two or three follow-up meetings that are observed by their mentors and/or recorded.
- G. Trainees and mentors review and discuss follow-up meetings conducted by trainees.

Note: All SLPI Team Members are not required to conduct SLPI Follow-Up Meetings but knowledge about follow-up meetings is important for all SLPI Team Members.

#### IX. Selecting SLPI Team Members

- A. As appropriate mentors provide trainees and SLPI Coordinator(s) with feedback on the progress of trainees.
- B. Following completion of specified training activities mentors meet with the SLPI Coordinator(s) and discuss recommendations for trainees relative to membership on the PROGRAM SLPI Team.
- C. Recommendation for each trainee may be one or more of following:
  1. Become an SLPI Team member as an interviewer, rater, or both.
  2. As an SLPI Team member conduct SLPI Follow-Up Meetings; generally a team member must also be a rater to conduct follow-up meetings.
  3. Participate in additional training for interviewing, rating, or conducting follow-up meetings.
  4. Not recommended for SLPI Team
- D. SLPI Coordinator(s) and mentors meet with trainees to inform and discuss with trainees decisions for them serving as SLPI Team Members; decisions may also be shared in writing with trainees and administrators.

## SLPI PAPER 12: SUPPORT FOR LOCAL SLPI TEAMS & TEAM TRAINING

Frank Caccamise. & William Newell  
September 2015 (13th edition)

### Introduction

In this PAPER we discuss why we support local people providing sign language communication skills assessment and why we support training for SLPI Teams on a local basis. In providing this information we wish to stress that there are good reasons for conducting training and assessments on a national or centralized basis as well, and depending on many factors (especially goals/purposes for conducting assessments) training, and conducting of assessments on a national or centralized basis may be appropriate. Given what we have learned about SLPI use and considering developments in technology we now also support options for providing SLPI training and services on a non-local basis. For information about SLPI non-local remote services interested readers are referred to the SLPI website ([www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi)) Home page, Remote SLPI: ASL Services Via Videophone menu item.

### Support for Local SLPI Team Members and SLPI Training

Our primary goal for SLPI use is to support effective sign language communication among sign language users by providing information on how well people are able to use sign language for their communication needs and by supporting people in development of their sign language communication skills. We believe that this goal can be best accomplished via integrated sign language communication skills assessment and development programs that are conducted on a local basis. Reasons we support locally trained SLPI Teams providing sign language assessment services include the following:

1. Allows sign language communication skills assessment-development programs to be implemented and adapted in a manner that is consistent with and sensitive to local resources and needs.
2. Allows assessment and follow-up services to occur in a timely and cost effective manner.
3. Allows sensitivity and respect for local sign language dialectical variations. This is especially important for languages such as American Sign Language (ASL) that have developed and are used in bilingual communities. (See PAPER 3, *What Does the SLPI Assess?*, and SLPI Notebook Section 5 for discussion of this.) This supports the training of highly skilled local ASL signers to conduct SLPI services in order to help ensure the assessment procedures is respectful of and sensitive to the local communicative norm for ASL communicators.
4. Allows opportunities for people to review and discuss their assessment results with people knowledgeable about both the assessment tool and local options for developing and refining sign language communication skills. A follow-up meeting to review and discuss assessment results and suggestions for improving skills if appropriate is an important part of an integrated sign language skills assessment-development program.
5. Allows programs to take into consideration assessment results when planning courses, workshops, and other options to support sign language communication skills development, thus allowing for assessment and opportunities for skills development to be closely linked.
6. Reliable use of the SLPI Rating Scale requires that raters have shared perspectives on applying SLPI ratings to sign language communication and given what is discussed in #3 above that raters have shared perspectives on interpreting SLPI ratings as they apply to local sign language communication. We believe this can be best accomplished by training local SLPI Team Members together. Further, since the SLPI is a criterion based assessment with the anchor or highest criterion point of the SLPI Rating Scale being highly skilled native/native-like signers it is important that this training involve rating of local signers, including highly skilled local native/native-like signers.

### Conclusion

Our primary goal for SLPI use is to support effective sign language communication among sign language users. In this PAPER we have shared reasons why we believe local SLPI training and implementation supports this goal. We recognize that there are good reasons for training and conducting assessments on a national or centralized basis as well and we support all efforts that contribute to the effectiveness of sign language communication.

## SLPI PAPER 13: WHY SIX TO TEN SLPI TRAINING WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS?

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (10th edition)

The reason for a minimum number of six participants is to help ensure the benefits of the “team” concept. These benefits include local SLPI Teams having a sufficient number of members to provide SLPI services (interviews, ratings, and follow-up meetings). These services include conducting re-ratings when there is rater disagreement, when there are re-rating requests by persons taking the SLPI, and when there are re-rating requests by SLPI Coordinators. In addition, having a minimum of six team members helps to ensure continuity of SLPI Team Membership when members leave a team and additional persons need to be trained to become team members. Another important benefit is that discussion among potential SLPI Team Members and SLPI Trainers during training enables team members to reach consensus as to what is acceptable signing to local highly skilled sign language communicators. The importance of this to successful and appropriate use of the SLPI is discussed in PAPER #3, *What Does the SLPI Assess?* and in SLPI Notebook Section 5, *Skills Important for Sign Language Communication and Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Rating*.

Now onto the (more) frequently asked question about the maximum number of 10 participants. This number was arrived at after many SLPI Training Workshop experiences. It is truly amazing how increasing the number above 10 workshop participants influences workshop dynamics and achieving the above. A basic reason for the maximum number of 10 is the importance of clear visual access for all participants to both viewing SLPI videos and to the discussion among all participants and SLPI Trainers. Another most important reason is the need for all participants to have the opportunity to express their views and to reach consensus on what is acceptable sign to local highly skilled sign language communicators. This discussion is also critical to participants achieving consistency in interpreting the SLPI Rating Scale and, therefore, achieving consistency in their SLPI ratings.

In the past in an attempt to circumvent this maximum of 10 we have allowed previously trained SLPI Team Members, including SLPI Coordinators, to attend SLPI Training Workshop as observers. However, this has never been successful. The interactive nature of SLPI Training Workshops does not lend itself to “passive” observation. The exception to this is for persons who are serving or will serve as SLPI Administrative Coordinators, and this is only successful for persons who serve strictly in administrative roles; that is, they do not conduct SLPI interviews, ratings, and follow-up meeting services. We encourage SLPI Administrative Coordinators to attend those parts of SLPI Training Workshops that are beneficial to their performing their administrative responsibilities.

Given the above it is critical that SLPI Coordinators (with the exception noted in the paragraph above for SLPI Administrative Coordinators) are always included among the six to ten workshop participants.

Programs may wish to add members to their SLPI Teams in order to increase the number of individuals their SLPI Teams can serve and to replace SLPI Team Members who have left SLPI Teams. Rather than increase the number of workshop participants above 10, therefore, we recommend that SLPI Coordinators apply the guidelines in PAPER 11, *Adding SLPI Team Members*, to help ensure that they have the number of SLPI Team Members their program needs to provide quality SLPI services on an on-going basis.

## SLPI PAPER 14: ASSESSING STUDENTS' SIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS

Frank Caccamise  
September 2015 (18th edition)

### Introduction

In March 2000 Sarah MacDonald, Graduate Assistant, National Center on Deafness California State University Northridge wrote to me explaining that she was working on a project called "MENUS", Meeting the Educational Needs of Underserved Students. Sarah stated that MENUS, a three-year federal grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education that commenced on October 1, 1999, serves as a national model to develop and distribute in-service training activities and products, with the primary goal being to increase knowledge of personal working in schools, state departments of education and support agencies with an emphasis on those responsible for implementing, overseeing and consulting on services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing from infancy through age 21. She concluded her email with "I am currently looking for information related to the assessment of student sign skills. I would appreciate any help you can offer in this area to assist us in this project." My reply to Sarah's request included the information provided in the next part of this PAPER.

### Assessing Students' Sign Language Skills

In 1999 an excellent article by Susan J. Maller, Jenny L. Singleton, Samuel J. Supalla, and Tina Wix was published in the *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education (JDSE)* (4, 4, 249-269), "The Development and Psychometric Properties of the American Sign Language Proficiency Assessment (ASL-PA)". This article includes excellent reviews of the sign language assessment literature and the ASL acquisition by children literature. Also, this publication includes a discussion of three language solicitation procedures for use with young students: (1) an interview with an adult signer, (2) peer interaction, and (3) story retelling. Another excellent article authored by Brenda Schick was published in *JDSE* (1997, 2, 4, 234-251), "The effects of discourse genre on English language complexity in school-age deaf students". In the discussion section of this publication Brenda states: "The results show that language produced by deaf students using the LPI interview technique is generally more complex than that produced during a more informal spontaneous interview or elicited using a complex picture story" (page 246).

As of 2012 the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) used both the Language/Communication Background Questionnaire (L/CBQ) and an adaptation of the SLPI, called the Sign Instruction Placement Interview (SIPI), to assess students' sign language skills (see Appendixes A & B). Although these were developed for use with college age students they may also be used with high school age students and possibly further adapting could be done (such as the use of pictures and objects) to make use of interview techniques appropriate for use with younger children. As stated above Maller et al. discuss three language solicitation procedures for use with young students including an interview technique.

In addition, two places that may be contacted for information about sign language assessment for students are:

1. Center for Childhood Deafness, Language, and Learning, Boys Town National Research Hospital Boystown Institute, 555 North 30th Street, Omaha, NB 68131 - Boystown has a long history of conducting language assessments with children who are deaf, including assessment of sign language skills.
2. Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Network and Clearinghouse, KDES PAS-6, Gallaudet University, Kendall Green, 800 Florida Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002-3695, 1-202-651-5340 (V/TTY) ([www.gallaudet.pcnmp.edu](http://www.gallaudet.pcnmp.edu)).

## Adaptation of the SLPI for Use with Elementary School Students

From the Summer of 2009 through the Fall of 2012 I had the opportunity to collaborate with the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) on a project to adapt the SLPI for assessing the ASL skills of FSDB elementary school students. FSDB staff contributions to this project were provided under the leadership of the Director of Interpreter Services, Barbara Curtis, with significant support and contributions from FSDB Staff Interpreter Katie Bechtold and FSDB Interpreter Services Office Staff Assistant Christine Price and with financial support from a grant obtained by Tracie Snow, FSDB Curriculum and Staff Development Director. During the 2009-10 Academic Year (AY09-10) FSDB kindergarten (K) through third grade students' ASL skills were assessed using assessment (interview and evaluation) materials and procedures adapted from the SLPI. Based on what we learned from these student ASL assessments during AY09-10 assessment materials and procedures were refined and administered to AY10-11 K through fifth grade students. Based on AY10-11 and AY11-12 results additional refinements were made. A major goal of this refinement process was to provide more consistency in this assessment process with a focus on how results and recommendations are recorded and reported. Appendix C of this PAPER provides a MODEL document for adapting the SLPI for use with elementary school age students based on what was learned from this project. This MODEL document includes guidelines and suggested questions for student ASL interviews and it includes procedures and forms for evaluating the ASL skills that student demonstrate during these interviews. In reviewing Appendix C you will note that the focus of student ASL assessments is on describing students' ASL **function** and **form** skills (no **rating**) and on providing recommendations that are intended to help instructors plan activities to support development of their students' ASL skills.

### Conclusion

Assessing students' sign language communication skills, especially younger students, requires: (1) flexibility, (2) a willingness to learn from your colleagues, (3) a willingness to experiment and be creative, and (4) most importantly a willingness to modify what we do in order to provide students (and others) with the fairest and most accurate assessment procedures possible given our current knowledge. Given the time since I responded to Sarah I have updated this PAPER to include only information that I know is currently available and I encourage readers to seek additional information about assessment of students' sign language skills that may currently be available. For example, in April 2012 Barbara Curtis, FSDB, shared with me an announcement from Gallaudet University for a study to develop a visual communication and sign language assessment tool for deaf and hard-of-hearing children from birth to 5 years of age and Barbara shared that the contact email address for this study is <mailto:v12@gallaudet.edu>.

## Appendix A

### Language/Communication Background Questionnaire (L/CBQ)<sup>a</sup>

January  
2010

*Please complete this questionnaire online at [www.rit.edu/ntid/lcbq](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/lcbq). Your responses are needed to plan access services and housing assignments. If you are unable to complete this questionnaire online, complete this paper copy and return it in the envelope provided within ten (10) days. Thank you.*

#### or (for on-line version)

*Your responses to this questionnaire are needed to plan access services and housing assignments. Please complete this questionnaire within ten (10) days. Thank you.*

INSERT LABEL WITH STUDENT'S LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, & RIT UNIVERSITY ID.

Type or Print your Email Address:

1. **How do you express yourself to others most of the time:**

a. **To deaf and hard-of-hearing people? Select one.**

Sign Language Alone  
Speech Alone  
Speech and Sign Together  
(Simultaneous Communication)  
Writing/Text

b. **To hearing people? Select one.**

Sign Language Alone  
Speech Alone  
Speech and Sign Together (Simultaneous Communication)  
Writing/Text

c. **To immediate family members? Select one.**

Sign Language Alone  
Speech Alone  
Speech and Sign Together  
(Simultaneous Communication)  
Writing/Text

2. **How do you best receive information from others? Select one.**

Sign Language Alone  
Speech Alone  
Speech and Sign Together  
(Simultaneous Communication)  
Writing/Text

3. **How well do you think most hearing people understand your speech? Select one. They understand:**

Everything I say  
Almost everything  
About half  
Only a few words  
Nothing

4. **How well do you understand speech when you both speechread and/or use your hearing? Select one. I understand:**

Everything people say  
Almost everything  
About half  
Only a few words  
Nothing

5. **How well do you understand people when they use simultaneous communication (sign and speech together)? Select one. I understand:**

Everything people say  
Almost everything  
About half  
Only a few words  
Nothing

<sup>a</sup> The L/CBQ was adapted from the Language Background Questionnaire (Hatfield, Caccamise, and Siple, 1978) and the Communication Background Questionnaire by F. Caccamise and J. Wallber, Jan. 1996. Revisions since this original L/CBQ have been made by F. Caccamise, J. Wallber, and E. Rosenfield, Jan. 2000, F. Caccamise, Feb. 2002, F. Caccamise and J. Wallber, Feb. 2003, July 2003, and July 2004, F. Caccamise, L. Bryant, S. Nelson, L. Scott, and A. Smith, March 2007, F. Caccamise, L. Bryant, S. Nelson, and L. Scott, May 2008 and January 2009, and F. Caccamise, L. Bryant, S. Nelson, L. Scott, and J. MacLeod, January 2010. In addition, up until 2010, James Wilson provided invaluable support for how to best format the L/CBQ, and how to best code L/CBQ student responses, as well as providing suggestions for the wording of L/CBQ items.

6. Please rate your sign language skills. Select one.

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent<br><input type="checkbox"/> Good<br><input type="checkbox"/> Fair<br><input type="checkbox"/> Basic<br><input type="checkbox"/> I don't know sign language |
|---|

7. How old were you when you learned sign language? Select one.

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Since birth<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____ years old<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unknown<br><input type="checkbox"/> I don't know sign language |
|---|

8. Do you use a hearing aid? Select one.

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> All of the time<br><input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time<br><input type="checkbox"/> About half of the time<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not often<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
|---|

9. Have you ever had cochlear implant surgery? Select one.

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at what age: _____ |
|---|

10. Do you currently use a cochlear implant? Select one.

|   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
|---|

11. Do you use an FM system in classroom situations? Select one.

|  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never<br><input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes<br><input type="checkbox"/> Always/Most of the Time |
|--|

12. What kind of communication access services were provided to you in your last school? Select all that apply.

|  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sign Language Interpreting<br><input type="checkbox"/> Real Time Captioning (CART or C-Print)<br><input type="checkbox"/> FM System<br><input type="checkbox"/> Notetaking<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
|--|

13. Do you benefit from sign language interpreting in any of the following situations? Select all that apply.

|  |
|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In classroom situations<br><input type="checkbox"/> In small group meetings<br><input type="checkbox"/> In one-on-one meetings<br><input type="checkbox"/> I do not benefit from interpreting |
|--|

14. Do you have communication access needs related to your vision (for example, close vision or tactile interpreting and large print)?

15. Please provide any additional comments you wish that may help us determine your communication needs and be better prepared for your arrival on campus.

## LANGUAGE/COMMUNICATION BACKGROUND QUESTIONNAIRE (L/CBQ) CODING SHEET

Frank Caccamise,, Linda Bryant, Steve Nelson, Larry Scott, & James Wilson  
January 2010

First five fields/cells/columns in database should be: Last Name, First Name, Email Address, Program Code, and University ID.

Note: For L/CBQ items that students do not provide responses, record as 99 in the database.

| Coding for Language/Communication Background Questionnaire (L/CBQ) |  |                       |   |                       |
|--|--|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Item   |  | Heading on Data Sheet | Possible Responses  | Coding for Responses  |
| #  | Descriptor   |                       |   |                       |
| 1a.  | How do you express yourself most of the time to deaf and hard-of-hearing people?                       | QSTO1A                | Sign Language Alone<br>Speech Alone<br>Speech and Sign together<br>(Simultaneous Communication)<br>Writing/Text<br>If more than one checked | 1<br>2<br>3<br>4<br>5 |
| 1b.  | How do you express yourself most of the time to hearing people?  | QSTO1B                | Same as #1a   | Same as #1a           |
| 1c.  | How do you express yourself most of the time to immediate family members?                              | QSTO1C                | Same as #1a   | Same as #1a           |
| 2.   | How do you best receive information from others?   | QSTO2                 | Same as #1a   | Same as #1a           |
| 3.   | How well do you think most hearing people understand your speech?                                      | QSTO3                 | Everything<br>Almost everything<br>About half<br>Only a few<br>Nothing  | 5<br>4<br>3<br>2<br>1 |
| 4.   | How well do you understand speech when you both speechread and/or use your hearing?                    | QSTO4                 | same as #3  | same as #3            |
| 5.   | How well do you understand people when they use simultaneous communication (sign and speech together)? | QSTO5                 | same as #3  | same as #3            |
| 6.   | Please rate your sign language skills.   | QSTO6                 | Excellent<br>Good<br>Fair<br>Basic<br>I don't know sign language  | 5<br>4<br>3<br>2<br>1 |

| Coding for Language/Communication Background Questionnaire (L/CBQ) (continued) |  |                       |  |  |
|--|--|-----------------------|--|--|
| Item   |  | Heading on Data Sheet | Possible Responses   | Coding for Responses <sup>a</sup>  |
| #  | Descriptor                                   |                       |  |  |
| 7.   | age began to learn sign language             | QST07                 | since birth<br>less than 1 yr or 1 yr<br>2-98<br>if between years<br>unknown<br>I don't know sign language | 0<br>1<br>2-98<br>next yr's code<br>77<br>88   |
| 8.   | hearing aid                                  | QST08                 | All of the time<br>Most of the time<br>About half the time<br>Not often<br>No                              | 1<br>5<br>4<br>3<br>2  |
| 9  | Cochlear implant surgery                     | QST09<br>QST09Age     | No<br>Yes<br>Age of CI Surgery   | 2<br>1<br>Age<br>(99 if No Response)   |
| 10   | Use cochlear implant currently               | QST10                 | No<br>Yes  | 2<br>1   |
| 11   | Use an FM System in Classrooms               | QST 11                | Always<br>Never<br>Sometimes   | 1<br>2<br>3  |
| 12   | communication access services in last school | QST12                 | A. sign language interpreting<br>B. real time captioning<br>C. FM system<br>D. Notetaking<br>E. other      | For A, B, C, & D code as 1 if checked & code as 2 if not checked; For E insert text or code as 1 if checked with no text inserted and code as 2 if not checked |
| 13   | benefit from sign language interpreting      | QST13                 | A. in classroom<br>B. in small group meetings<br>C. in one-to-one meetings<br>D. do not benefit            | For all code as 1 if checked, 2 if not checked   |
| 14   | communication access needs related to vision | QST14                 | if responds<br>if no response  | Text<br>99   |
| 15   | additional comments for communication needs  | QST15                 | if responds<br>if no response  | Text<br>99   |

## Appendix B

## Sign Instruction Placement Interview (SIPI) Materials &amp; Procedures with NTID Students

Frank Caccamise, Geoff Poor, & Barbara Ray Holcomb<sup>a, b</sup>  
September 2011 (4th ed.)

## Instructions for SIPI Interviewers

1. When student arrives for an SIPI greet the student using ASL and give the student a copy of SIPI Information for Students (Attachment 1).
2. Begin and continue the interview with ASL until sufficient information about the student's ASL skills has been obtained.
3. If the student is unable to understand questions signed in ASL use the following strategies as appropriate:
  - A. Restate question "verbatim" in ASL
  - B. Rephrase in ASL
  - C. Fingerspell
  - D. Go back to a topic/question you know student can understand.
  - E. Add lip movement for speech
  - F. Add voice for speech

Note: Be sure to allow students sufficient time to think and initiate a response before using above strategies.

4. Begin with general questions about the student's background; for example, where the student is from, where s/he went to school, if s/he has deaf parents and/or deaf brothers and sisters, and/or the student's preferred means for communicating.
5. Discuss other topics based on the responses/interest of the student; for example, hobbies, subjects studied in high school, major at NTID, experiences with interpreters, and Summer Vestibule Program and/or other experiences at NTID/RIT.

Note: A sample of appropriate questions for inclusion in an SIPI is provided in Attachment 2.

6. When you are comfortable assign the student an SIPI rating (see Attachment 3 for the SIPI Rating Scale) and discuss student's interest in taking Sign Language Program (SLP) courses including all potentially appropriate SLP courses to be offered during the upcoming quarter. Record SIPI rating, recommended courses, and other appropriate information on the SVP Students' SIPI Results and Recommendations Form (Attachment 4).
7. Try to maintain comfort throughout SIPI by:
  - A. Using pleasant facial expression/body language.
  - B. Maintaining a pleasant, comfortable room set-up (eliminate "noise," including extraneous auditory noise, glare, light source behind you, and clutter in room).
  - C. Not "dragging out" interviews; try to keep interviews to a maximum of 15-to-20 minutes with interviews of 5-to-10 minutes for students having minimal sign language skills.
8. End interview session with one or two questions the student can easily answer and thank the student for coming to the interview.

<sup>a</sup>Acknowledgment is extended to Torrie Armour and Donna Burfield for their contributions to the initial development and write-up of the SIPI in 1984-87 and to Bill Newell for his suggestions relative to this description of the SIPI.

<sup>b</sup>See Attachment 5 for an SIPI referral form.

## Attachment 1

## SIGN INSTRUCTION PLACEMENT INTERVIEW (SIPI) INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

1. We will have a conversation. I will ask you questions and you may ask me questions.
2. We want to get the best sample of your sign language skills. Generally I will use only sign language when I ask you questions. This is to help us know how well you understand sign language alone when there is no speech. However, sometimes I may use signing with lip movement or signing with voice.
3. We want you to demonstrate your best sign language communication skills.
4. Our conversation will help us identify the best sign language courses for you.
5. Please answer my questions as completely as possible.

## Attachment 2

## SIGN INSTRUCTION PLACEMENT INTERVIEW (SIPI) SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

YES/NO QUESTIONS

Examples: Are you enjoying SVP?  
 Do you have any deaf brothers and sisters? Have you selected a major?  
 Did you attend a residential school?  
 Did you have interpreters in your classes?

CHOICE QUESTIONS

Examples: Are your parents deaf or hearing?  
 Did you attend a residential school or a public school?

POLITE REQUESTS/DESCRIPTIONS

Examples: Please tell me about the high school you attended.  
 Please tell me how you prefer to communicate with deaf/hearing friends.

INFORMATION QUESTIONS

Examples: Who is your career counselor?  
 When did you become deaf?  
 Where did you go to high school? What is your major?

REPHRASABLE QUESTIONS

Example: Can you describe your favorite subject in high school and why you liked it so much? Rephrased: What was your favorite subject in high school (and why)?

HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS

Examples: If you could live anywhere in the United States where would you live and why?  
 If you could change anything about SVP what would you change?

DESCRIPTIVE PRELUDES

Example: Choosing a college to attend is very difficult sometimes. Some people believe deaf students should attend Gallaudet or NTID while other people believe local colleges are better. Please tell me what things you considered when choosing to come to NTID.

SUPPORTED OPINION QUESTIONS

Examples: Why did you decide to attend NTID?  
 Why do you want to major in accounting?

## Attachment 3

## SIGN INSTRUCTION PLACEMENT INTERVIEW (SIPI) RATING SCALE

Table 1. The Sign Instruction Placement Interview (SIPI) Five Point Rating Scale for Assisting NTID Students' Selection of Sign Language Education Program Courses.<sup>a</sup>

| <u>Ratings</u> | <u>Descriptors - Appropriate Sign Language Education Program Courses<sup>b</sup></u>   |
|----------------|--|
| 5              | Bilingual in ASL/Sign English: Highly skilled in both American Sign Language (ASL) and meaning based signing in English word order - Understanding American Sign Language as a Language, Linguistics of Sign Communication, Signing Basic English Idioms, Signing Idiomatic English, Sign Language Interpreting: Consumer Awareness, Introduction to Sign Language Teaching, <sup>c</sup> Public Presentations |
| 4              | Advanced Sign Language Skills: Highly skilled in meaning based signing in English word order - American Sign Language for Sign English Users, Linguistics of Sign Communication, Signing Basic English Idioms, Signing Idiomatic English, Sign Language Interpreting: Consumer Awareness, Introduction to Sign Language Teaching, <sup>c</sup> Public Presentations  |
| 3              | Intermediate Sign Language Skills: Has good control of basic sign vocabulary and appropriately uses some sign grammatical features - Sign Language III or American Sign Language for Sign English Users, Sign Language Interpreting: Consumer Awareness, Public Presentations  |
| 2              | Basic Sign Language Skills: Able to express and receive simple utterances using everyday sign vocabulary - Sign Language II  |
| 1              | No or Minimal/Survival Sign Language Skills: No sign skills or able to produce some basic signs and/or fingerspelling - Sign Language I  |

<sup>a</sup>Independent Study is designed on an individual basis for students with special needs that are not served by Sign Language Education Program courses included in this table.

<sup>b</sup>Appropriate for this table is based on sign language skills only. "Recommended" courses depend on several other factors including student interests/motivation and other communication and language skills and needs.

<sup>c</sup>Students successfully completing "Introduction to Sign Language Teaching" may enroll in "Teaching Sign Language Practicum".

## Attachment 4

## Sign Instruction Placement Interview (SIPI) Results and Recommendations Form

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

SLPI Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Career Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Language/Communication Background Questionnaire Results:

Sign Language Self-Rating: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Communication Mode: \_\_\_\_\_

SIPI Rating: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Recommendations(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ (101) Sign Language I

\_\_\_\_\_ (103) Sign Language II

\_\_\_\_\_ (105) Sign Language III

\_\_\_\_\_ (111) ASL for Sign English (SE) Users

\_\_\_\_\_ (131) Signing Basic English Idioms

\_\_\_\_\_ (133) Signing Idiomatic English

\_\_\_\_\_ (135) Public Presentations

\_\_\_\_\_ (141) Understanding ASL as a Language (SIPI 5)

\_\_\_\_\_ (145) Linguistics of Sign Communication

\_\_\_\_\_ (151) Sign Language Interpreting: Consumer Awareness

\_\_\_\_\_ (161) Introduction to Sign Language Teaching (SIPI 4 or 5)

\_\_\_\_\_ (163) Practicum in Teaching Sign Language

\_\_\_\_\_ (399-01) Independent Study - Sign Communication

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ No Sign Language Education Program Course recommended at this time.

L/CBQ Responses and SIPI Appointment Information Agree: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If No, please explain:

Other comments:

## Attachment 5

## Sign Instruction Placement Interview (SIPI) Referral Form

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_, Communication Seminar Instructor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Language/Communication Background Questionnaire (L/CBQ) sign language self-rating is

\_\_\_\_\_

I recommend that you take the Sign Instructor Placement Interview (SIPI) because (check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_\_ (A) You may have better sign language skills than indicated by your L/CBQ sign language self-rating.

\_\_\_\_\_ (B) You want to take a Sign Language Education Program course.

\_\_\_\_\_ (C) I wasn't able to answer all of your questions about sign language instruction at NTID.

\_\_\_\_\_ (D) You may have special needs for sign language instruction (please explain).

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(E) Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

To take an SIPI, go to one of the rooms identified below and sign up on the SIPI schedule on the door:

A. SIPI Interviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates for SIPIs: \_\_\_\_\_

LBJ Room #: \_\_\_\_\_

B. SIPI Interviewer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates for SIPIs: \_\_\_\_\_

LBJ Room #: \_\_\_\_\_

Please take this form to your interview with you and give it to your SIPI interviewer.

Note: Original of this form should be given to refer student and a copy should be sent to **NAME**, SVP Sign Language Program Coordinator, BLDG., ROOM NUMBER.

**Appendix C: MODEL DOCUMENT FOR ADAPTING THE SLPI FOR ASSESSING  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ASL SKILLS**

Frank Caccamise & Barbara Curtis

November 2012

This MODEL document includes the following sections:

1. Attachment 1 – PROGRAM Student ASL Interview Guidelines
2. Attachment 2 – PROGRAM Student ASL Evaluation Procedures & Reference Materials
3. Attachment 3 – PROGRAM Student ASL Evaluation Forms Packet

**Attachment 1: PROGRAM STUDENT ASL INTERVIEW GUIDELINES**

(Note: No printed instructions are used.)

1. In general, use the interview procedures described in *Section 3A (S3A)* of your SLPI materials, *PROGRAM SLPI: ASL Scheduling and Interviewing Procedures* with the exceptions as noted below.
2. Begin by explaining to students in ASL that you will be asking her/him some questions and that she/he should feel free to ask you questions. Also, encourage students to answer questions as fully as possible and to add anything they believe is appropriate. If students do not understand, use the strategies outlined in *S3A*.
3. Ask the student questions for three topics: (a) background/family, (b) school, and (c) interests/hobbies.
4. Similar to SLPI staff interviews topics may be discussed in any order and you should discuss each in depth.
5. One difference from SLPI staff interviews is that a set of five specific questions for each interview topic has been developed (see below). You will be provided a laminated copy of these questions that you may refer to during interviews. You should ask as many of these questions as possible and appropriate during interviews.
6. Interviews should be conversational and natural – not rigid. Therefore, the attached list of questions should be asked when appropriate within the overall context of your interviews.
7. Expand on the list of questions attached as appropriate. Include follow-up and other questions as appropriate, including the request, “Please tell me more about that”.

**PROGRAM STUDENT ASL INTERVIEW SUGGESTED QUESTIONS**

**BACKGROUND/FAMILY**

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where were you born?
4. Where is your home?
5. Please tell me about your family.
6. Please describe what your home looks like.

**SCHOOL**

1. What grade are you in?
2. Who is your teacher?
3. How do you get from your home to school?
4. What subject do you enjoy the most? Why?
5. Please describe your classroom. OR
6. Please describe your dormitory room.

**INTERESTS/HOBBIES**

1. What do you like to eat?
2. What do you like to do at recess time?
3. When you are home what do you like to do?
4. Please tell me about a good friend.
5. Please describe your favorite animal.

## Attachment 2: PROGRAM ASL EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND REFERENCE FORMS

### PROCEDURES (All Forms are in Attachment 3)

1. Using FORM 1 type in student's name, interview date, evaluation date, your name, and name of your co-evaluator. The Interpreter Services Office will insert remaining information at top of form.
2. Your evaluation partner and you may view interview video together and reach agreement on information to be included on FORMS 1 to 5 recording your agreed to information on a single copy of each form **OR** you may view interview video and complete FORMS 1 to 5 separately and then meet together to review video, discuss, reach agreement, and record your agreed to information on a single copy of each form. If you do this you may wish to use your co-evaluator's or your completed evaluator forms as a base for your agreed to completed forms, changing these forms as needed to reach agreement.
3. Using FORM 1 watch the interview with your focus on ASL **function** only until you are comfortable inserting **Xs** for function descriptors that best describe student.
4. Rewind interview video and on FORM 2 analyze and record ASL **form** examples and on FORM 3 insert **Xs** for **form** descriptors that best describe student. You may use the form examples on pages 2-3 of this document to assist you in identifying and recording **form** examples. If no examples identified for a form category item please leave blank or insert "None Noted". Be sure that your examples on Form 2 are consistent with the format of the examples on the next two pages of this Attachment. You may wish to first focus on vocabulary knowledge and production and fluency **form** categories, and when these are completed to rewind interview recording and focus on grammar and comprehension **form** categories. Remember, you may watch the interview as many times as you wish.
5. On FORM 4 insert **Xs** for three or four priority recommendations for student to improve her/his ASL skills. These recommendations need to be supported by **function** and **form** descriptors and examples on FORMS 1, 2, and 3. You should always include at least one "grammar" recommendation unless student is highly skilled and you have no recommendations for improving ASL skills. Improving or developing skills in use of "Indexing, space, body shifts and eye gaze to locate & refer to people, places, & objects present & not present" (see grammar item #1) should be included in reports for all lower skill level students. Your recommendations should be consistent with those on the last three pages of this attachment
6. Complete FORM 5: If not already done on FORM 5 insert student's name, interview date, and evaluation date. Insert your **FORM 4** selected recommendations on FORM 5 and add comments to make your recommendations more specific. As shown in both the sample recommendations on the last two pages of this Attachment and in Student ASL Evaluation Sample Reports, insert recommendations as separate items and include the language for items checked on FORM 4. Sample recommendations with comments in this document may assist you with the wording for your comments. However, examples that you include in your comments need to be based on the content of each student's interview. For example, if a student discusses the locations of various campus building one recommendation you may make is "ASL Grammar #1 - Indexing, space, body shifts, and eye gaze to locate and refer to people, places, and objects not present: NAME should improve use of this grammatical feature when discussing location of campus buildings."
7. Please check your forms to ensure that you have completed the information as outlined above and compare your report to Student Sample Reports to ensure your format is consistent with these samples.
8. Send FORMS that your partner and you complete together as an email attachment to the ASL Interpreter Services Office and deliver the interview video to this Office. If your partner and you completed evaluation forms separately these forms should be deleted or shredded to help maintain confidentiality.

## ASL FORM EXAMPLES

### A. STUDENT'S VOCABULARY AND FINGERSPELLING KNOWLEDGE

**Signs knows:** ENGLAND, LONDON, SWEETHEART, COURT, REFRIGERATOR, CHAMPION, PARANOID, SPICY, STRANGER, family members, math terms, school subjects

**Fingerspelling:** Demonstrated knowledge of the manual alphabet by fingerspelling several words

**Sign selection errors based on meaning:** HAVE (possessive) + TO for HAVE-TO, NO for NONE, SOME + TIME for SOMETIMES, SOME + ONE for SOMEONE, FUN for FUNNY

**Overuse of initialized signs:** SHE, HE, IS, ARE, FUTURE, STREET, RIVER

**Fingerspelled words with standard signs:** None Noted

### B. STUDENT'S PRODUCTION & FLUENCY/RATE

**Sign and fingerspelling production errors:** STUDENT, COMPUTER, SCHEDULE, INTERPRETER, numbers, & fingerspelled letters F, G, H, & Q.

**Signing Space:** Elbows held close to body restricting use of the signing space.

**Other comments:** Sometimes moves letters forward when fingerspelling & stiff/rigid movement when signing.

### C. STUDENT'S ASL GRAMMAR EXAMPLES

**1) Indexing, space, body shifts and eye gaze -**

**for comparison/contrast:** HOME MY BIG-rt., MY DOG HIS HOUSE SMALL-lt.

**to locate & refer to people, places, & objects present & not present:** LIBRARY THERE-rt., DORM THERE-lt.; indexing and space to show location of Florida cities (mapping skills), BROTHER lt., MOTHER-ctr. SISTER-rt.

**for role-play:** ME COACH BAKETBALL-lt., PLAN FOR GAME-lt., TEAM-rt. PRACTICE-rt.

**2) Sign verb movement directionality for -**

**location:** ST.-AUGUSTINE-rt. TAMPA-lt. DRIVE-rt.-lt.; DORM-rt., CLASSROOM-lt. WALK-rt.-lt.

**location & pronoun incorporation:** me-TELL-you; TEACHER-lt. STUDENTS-rt., he-TELL-them-lt.-rt.

**3) Facial expression (includes clenched teeth, oo, pah, cha, mm, cs, puffed cheeks, ee, & th) and sign movement modification for -**

**degree:** RAINING-very hard/clenched teeth, COLD-very/oo, HOT-very/oo, LOVE-IT-really/pah, SNOW-very thick/cha, BASKETBALL PLAYER-very tall/cha, ENJOY-really/mm, CLOSE-TO-very/cs

**size:** SMALL-really/oo, RUG-very-thin/oo, LARGE-very/puffed cheeks, DEER-many/puffed cheeks

**manner:** STUDY-intensely/clenched teeth, WORK-quickly/clenched teeth, READ-carefully/ee, DRIVE-casually/mm, DRIVE-very-carefully/ee, DRIVE-carelessly/th

**temporal aspect/time:** STUDY-for-a-long-time/puffed cheeks, AFTERNOON-all/puffed cheeks, RECENTLY-very/cs

**4) Repetition of sign verb movement for repeated action:** STUDY+++ , PRACTICE+++

**5a) Repetition of sign noun movement for plurals:** BOOK+++ , WEEK+++

**5b) Vertical sweep for plurals:** FLOOR-sweep, SHELF-sweep, FRIDAY-sweep

**5c) Horizontal sweep for plurals:** MORNING-sweep, CAR CL:3-sweep

**6) Number incorporation for -**

**people:** TWO-OF-US, THREE-OF-THEM

**age:** AGE-3, AGE-6

**time (may include use of timeline):** FOUR-HOURS, THREE-MONTHS-AGO, TWO-YEARS-IN-FUTURE

**7a) Listing on non-dominant hand, body shifts, and pauses for -**

**connecting ideas:** listing for family members, listing for courses taking

**separating ideas:** body shifts for separating activities at school and home

**sequencing of events:** FIRST WAKE-UP, SECOND DRESS, THIRD GO-TO BREKFAST

**7b) FINISH, body shifts, and pauses for -**

**connecting ideas:** WAKE-UP-rt., DRESS-ctr., FINISH,-ctr., GO-TO-ctr.-lt. BREAKFAST-lt.

**separating ideas:** discussed school day then signed FINISH and shifted to lt. to discuss after school activities

**sequencing of events:** STUDY-rt. FINISH-rt., WATCH TV-ctr. FINISH-ctr.. GO-TO-ctr.-lt. BED-lt.

**8a) Sign word order for -**

**rhetorical (rh) question:** ME LIKE FOOTBALL, WHY? BECAUSE.....

**topic-comment:** TEACHER MY, EXCELLENT

**conditional:** TOMMOROW WATER CALM, WATER SKI ME.

**object-subject-verb:** ICE-CREAM ME ATE, YESTERDAY FSDB FOOTBALL GAME WE WENT-TO.

**8b) Noun followed by descriptor:** HOUSE WHITE, FLOWER BEAUTIFUL, GRASS TALL**8c) Following signs at end of comments -**

**FINISH:** HOMEWORK TWO-HOURS FINISH

**MUST:** STUDY FOR MATH TEST MUST

**CAN, YES:** GO-TO MOVIE SATURDAY CAN

**NOT, CANNOT, NO:** MYSELF DRIVE NO

**9) Classifiers following nouns for -**

**description:** CL:G for narrow walkway between desks, CL:C for a thick wrestling mat

**location and relationship of people, animals, things, & places:** CL:11 for two people facing each other, CL:BB to show location of pictures on walls

**actions of people, animals, & objects:** CL:33 for two cars racing, CL:F for picking-up pencil

**how something is used or functions:** CL:S for leading a horse

**10) Non-manual signals for -**

**negation:** SAW THAT MOVIE-neg.

**affirmation:** ME BASEBALL LIKE-aff.

**yes-no?:** YOU LIKE BASEBALL?

**wh-?:** YOUR FAVORITE SPORT WHAT?

**11) Other:** Good turn taking skills, able to hold floor while considering reply, able to appropriately request clarification when did not understand a question

**D. STUDENT'S COMPREHENSION/RECEPTIVE SKILL**

Misunderstood some questions including where did he grow-up and what was his favorite subject; he was able to understand when question was repeated at a slower rate or when question was rephrased.

Did not understand a few questions about her job and hobbies but she was able to appropriately request clarification when she did not understand questions.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

Inappropriately broke eye contact when he was signing and when interviewer was signing.

## SAMPLE ASL RECOMMENDATIONS WITH COMMENTS

**Function - Elaboration:** NAME generally responds in 1 to 3 sentences. Work on increasing her length of responses in order to provide more detail when appropriate.

**Function - Requesting Clarification:** NAME should develop skills for requesting clarification when he does not understand questions; for example, “Please repeat”, or “Again please”, if he does not understand what is signed.

**Function - Maintain Eye Contact:** NAME should work on maintaining eye contact as appropriate when receiving and expressing sign language communication; if NAME needs to consider his reply before signing, prior to breaking eye contact he should learn to hold his hand up in a gesture of ‘please wait while I think about that.’

**Function - Turn Taking:** NAME should improve turn taking skills by not interrupting others when they are signing and by keeping his hands up in the signing space until he has completed his replies.

**Sign Vocabulary & Fingerspelling Knowledge - Family and School:** NAME should continue to develop his ASL vocabulary knowledge with a focus on family members and school-related signs, including signs important for classroom and dormitory communication.

**Sign Vocabulary & Fingerspelling Knowledge - Fingerspelling:** NAME should learn the manual alphabet.

**Sign Vocabulary Knowledge - Sign Meaning:** NAME should continue her development of sign language vocabulary with a focus on using signs that communicate correct meaning; for example, RIGHT/CORRECT versus RIGHT (direction), LEFT (past tense LEAVE) versus LEFT (direction), and SOME TIME versus SOMETIMES.

**Production and Fluency/Rate - Sign Production:** NAME should continue to work on improving his sign production with a focus on correcting his production of the following signs: SCHEDULE, ORGANIZE, PREPARE, LIST, RESPONSIBILITIES, BACKGROUND, MISUNDERSTAND, REMEMBER, FORGET, BECAUSE.

**Production and Fluency/Rate - Fingerspelling Production:** NAME needs to improve the clarity of her fingerspelling, to ensure letters at the end of words are included, and to correct production of E, F, G, H, K, and P handshapes.

**Production and Fluency/Rate - Fingerspelling Production:** NAME tends to move his hand forward when fingerspelling. He should work on keeping his hand in a set position near his shoulder when fingerspelling, moving his hand only when appropriate; for example, moving his hand to the side for double letters.

**Production and Fluency/Rate - Signing Rate:** NAME needs to improve his sign production and fluency by signing at a more moderate-to-normal rate with appropriate pausing between ideas.

**Production and Fluency/Rate – Signing Space:** NAME should work on moving her hand down so her signing is in the normal signing space and she should extend her elbows as appropriate to make better use of the full normal signing space.

**Production and Fluency/Rate – Other:** NAME needs to consistently use the right or left hand as the dominant hand for signing and fingerspelling.

**ASL Grammar #1 - Indexing, space, body shifts, and eye gaze to locate and refer to people, places, and objects not present:** NAME should improve use of this grammatical feature; for example, when discussing the dormitory she lives in she could sign GALLAUDET HALL-index rt. and when telling who was at the meeting she could sign TEACHER NAME THERE-lt., STUDENT NAME-THERE-ctr., MOTHER NAME THERE-rt.

**ASL Grammar #2 - Sign verb movement directionality for location:** NAME should develop skills in using this grammatical feature; for example, when he explains his move to CA he could sign LIVE NEW-YORK in space to his rt. and then produce MOVE with a rt.-lt. movement, shifting his body from rt.-lt. and signing CA to his lt.

**ASL Grammar #2 - Sign verb movement directionality for pronoun incorporation:** NAME should develop this skill; for example, in discussing how he got his name sig he could sign NAME SIGN ME MY FATHER THERE-rt. GAVE-TO-me/rt.-ctr.

**ASL Grammar #3 - Facial expression and sign movement modification for size:** NAME should improve his use of this grammatical feature; for example, when he talks about size of town that he grew up in he could sign HOMETOWN SMALL-very, with “very” communicated via facial expression and movement modification for SMALL.

**ASL Grammar #3 - Facial Expression and sign movement modification for temporal aspect:** NAME should develop his skills in using this grammatical feature; for example, when he explains that he has lived in CA for 10 years he could sign “SINCE-for-a-long-time TEN YEARS LIVE CA” with “for-a-long-time” communicated via clenched teeth and slow sign movement; also, he could use clenched teeth and slow sign movement with SINCE to communicate SINCE-for-a-long-time.

**ASL Grammar #3 - Non-manual signals for adjectives and adverbs (puffed cheeks, pursed lips/o-o, mm, pah, cs, th and clenched teeth:** NAME needs to improve use of non-manual signals; for example, he can use puffed cheeks or clenched teeth to emphasize the point that there was an incredibly large number of people at the fair and he can use the “th” non-manual signal to emphasize he was not paying attention when he fell while walking.

**ASL Grammar #4 - Repetition of sign verb movement for repeated action:** NAME should develop skills in using this grammatical feature; for example, rather than signing MOVIE I WATCHED MANY TIMES he could communicate “many times” by repeating sign movement for WATCHED with “puffed cheeks” non-manual signal.

**ASL Grammar #5a - Repetition of sign movement for plurals:** NAME needs to improve use of this grammatical feature; for example, rather than sign THAT ROOM HAS MANY CHAIR NAME she could communicate “many” by producing CHAIR several times in different locations in space.

**ASL Grammar #5b - Vertical sweep for plurals:** NAME should develop skills in use of this grammatical feature; for example, he could sign FRIDAY-vertical sweep for FRIDAYS, IN CLOSET TOWELS-vertical sweep to indicate there are many towels in the closet, and BOOKS-vertical-sweep with “puffed cheeks” non-manual signal to indicate many books piled-up.

**ASL Grammar #5c - Horizontal sweep for plurals:** NAME should develop skills in use of this grammatical feature; for example, she could sign MORNING-horizontal sweep for MORNINGS/EVERY-MORNING, EVENING-horizontal sweep for EVENINGS/EVERY-EVENING, and SHELF BOOKS-horizontal sweep to indicate many books on the shelf.

**ASL Grammar #6 - Number incorporation for age and time (may include timeline):** NAME should develop skills in using this grammatical feature; for example, instead of signing 6 YEARS OLD, sign AGE-6, and instead of signing TWO YEARS AGO he could use number incorporation and the timeline to sign TWO-YEARS-AGO.

**ASL Grammar #7a - Listing on non-dominant hand, body shifts, and pauses for connecting ideas and sequencing events:** NAME should develop skills in using this grammatical feature for discussing family members from oldest to youngest, school subjects, and the sequence of events during the school day; this will help her reduce overuse of AND and THEN.

**ASL Grammar #8a - Sign word order for rhetorical question:** NAME should develop skills in using rhetorical questions; for example, he could use a rhetorical question when talking about why he is on the baseball team (ME JOINED BASEBALL TEAM WHY? I LOVE BASEBALL).

**ASL Grammar 8a – Sign word order for topic-comment:** NAME should develop skill in first identifying the topic he wishes to discuss and then proceeding with comments about this stated topic.

**ASL Grammar #8b – Noun followed by descriptor:** NAME should develop skill in stating nouns first followed by descriptors; for example, TEACHER NICE, FOOTBALL TEAM GOOD-very, BROTHER SMART.

**ASL Grammar #8c - Signs at end of comments – FINISH, MUST, CAN/YES, NOT/CANNOT/NO:** NAME needs to develop skills in consistent use of placing FINISH, MUST, CAN, and NOT at end of comments for emphasis; for example, STUDY FOR TEST MUST, HOMEWORK FINISH, I PLAY

OUTSIDE CAN, and SATURDAY MOVIES GO-TO CANNOT. **ASL Grammar #9 - Classifiers following nouns for description and actions of people:** NAME should develop skills in using this grammatical feature; for example, he could use classifiers to describe his classroom (CL:B for doors, CL:C for tables, CL:bent-V for student's seats, CL:BB for windows, etc.) and to show a person riding a bike (CL:3 for bicycle with CL:inverted-V to show a person riding the bicycle).

**ASL Grammar #9 – Classifiers following nouns for location and relationship of places:** NAME should develop skills in using this grammatical feature; for example, she could use space, indexing, and the CL:claw to show FDSDB campus locations in relationship to one another.

**ASL Grammar #10 - Non-manual signals for negation and affirmation:** NAME should do more consistent pairing of negative and affirmative non-manual signals with her signing; for example, DON'T-KNOW-neg. and LIKE SCHOOL-aff.

**ASL Grammar #10 - Non-manual signals for yes-no and wh-?s:** For yes-no questions NAME needs to improve use of raised eyebrows, tilting the head slightly forward, and holding the last sign a bit longer than normal and for wh- questions she needs to improve use of squinting eyebrows together, tilting the head slightly forward, and holding last sign a bit longer than normal.

**Comprehension/Receptive Skill:** NAME should improve comprehension for signing produced at a moderate-to-normal rate and develop skills in requesting clarification when he does not understand questions.

**Additional:** NAME should learn when it is appropriate to maintain eye contact and when it is okay to break eye contact during ASL communication.

## Attachment 3

## PROGRAM STUDENT ASL EVALUATION REPORT FORMS PACKET

## FORM 1: PROGRAM Student Identifying Information and ASL Function Descriptors

Frank Caccamise, William Newell, Barbara Curtis, & Christine Price  
November 2012

Student

Age

Grade

Interview Date

PROGRAM Entry Date

Residential/Day

Evaluation Date

Evaluators

## ASL FUNCTION DESCRIPTORS

| ELABORATION/LENGTH OF RESPONSES  | SENSE OF SHAREDNESS/ SPONTANEITY  |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In-depth elaboration with excellent detail  | <input type="checkbox"/> Fully acceptable, comfortable, shared/spontaneous; crosstalk, back channel feedback; fully natural                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full elaboration with good to excellent detail                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to fully acceptable and close to fully comfortable, shared/spontaneous   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generally complete answer with good detail/elaboration                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Generally acceptable and generally shared/spontaneous, fairly comfortable  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes elaborated answer, but generally 3-5 sentences                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Looks like a conversation, fairly shared with some question/answer; sometimes spontaneous with some confidence                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generally 1-to-3 sentences  | <input type="checkbox"/> Does not feel/look like a conversation; not shared with many questions by interviewer  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generally 1 sentence, phrase, single sign responses                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Many questions, rephrasing, slow, simplified signing   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some or a few short phrase, single sign and/or fingerspelled responses to questions | <input type="checkbox"/> Even basic questions signed slowly with extensive repetition and/or rephrasing often misunderstood; interviewer may resort to gestures |

## FORM 2: ANALYZING STUDENT'S ASL FORM

Frank Caccamise,, William Newell, Barbara Curtis, Katie Bechtold, Christine Price, & Carrie Cobb  
November 2012

### A. STUDENT'S VOCABULARY AND FINGERSPELLING KNOWLEDGE

Signs knows:

Fingerspelling:

Sign selection errors based on meaning:

Overuse of initialized signs:

Fingerspelled words with standard signs:

### B. STUDENT'S PRODUCTION & FLUENCY/RATE

Signing and fingerspelling production errors:

Signing Space:

Other comments:

### C. STUDENT'S ASL GRAMMAR EXAMPLES

1) Indexing, space, body shifts and eye gaze -

for comparison/contrast:

to locate and refer to people, places, & objects present & not present:

for role-play:

2) Sign verb movement directionality for -

location:

pronoun incorporation:

location & pronoun incorporation:

3) Facial expression (includes puffed cheeks, pursed lips/o-o, mm, pah, cs, th & clenched teeth) and sign movement modification for -

degree:

size:

manner:

temporal aspect/time:

4) Repetition of sign verb movement for repeated action:

5a) Repetition of sign noun movement for plurals:

5b) Vertical sweep for plurals:

5c) Horizontal sweep for plurals:

6) Number incorporation for -

people:

age:

time (may include use of timeline):

7a) Listing on non-dominant hand, body shifts, and pauses for -  
connecting ideas:

separating ideas:

sequencing of events:

7b) FINISH, body shifts, and pauses for -  
 connecting ideas:  
 separating ideas:  
 sequencing of events:

8a) Sign word order for -  
 rhetorical (rh) question:  
 topic-comment:  
 conditional:  
 object-subject-verb:

8b) Noun followed by descriptor:

8c) Following signs at end of comments -  
 FINISH:  
 MUST:  
 CAN, YES:  
 NOT, CANNOT, NO:

9) Classifiers following nouns for -  
 description:  
 location and relationship of people, animals, things, & places:  
 actions of people, animals, & objects:  
 how something is used or functions:

10) Non-manual signals for -  
 negation:  
 affirmation:  
 yes-no?:  
 wh-?:

11) Other:

**D. STUDENT'S COMPREHENSION/RECEPTIVE SKILL**

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

**FORM 3: ASL FORM DESCRIPTORS**

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November 2012

| <b>Vocabulary Knowledge</b>   | <b>Production<sup>a</sup></b>  | <b>Fluency/Rate</b>                                 | <b>Grammar<sup>a, b</sup></b>                        | <b>Comprehension/ Receptive Skill</b>   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> native-like  | <input type="checkbox"/> native-like   | <input type="checkbox"/> native-like                | <input type="checkbox"/> native-like                 | <input type="checkbox"/> native-like  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> very broad   | <input type="checkbox"/> near native-like  | <input type="checkbox"/> near native-like           | <input type="checkbox"/> excellent use of many       | <input type="checkbox"/> excellent for normal rate  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> broad  | <input type="checkbox"/> very clear  | <input type="checkbox"/> normal to near native-like | <input type="checkbox"/> good use of many            | <input type="checkbox"/> good for normal rate   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fairly broad   | <input type="checkbox"/> clear, a few minor misproductions   | <input type="checkbox"/> normal                     | <input type="checkbox"/> fairly good use of many     | <input type="checkbox"/> fairly good for a normal rate with a few repetitions and rephrasing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good for basic   | <input type="checkbox"/> clear, some minor misproductions  | <input type="checkbox"/> near-normal to normal      | <input type="checkbox"/> fairly good use of several  | <input type="checkbox"/> fair for moderate to normal rate with a few to some repetitions and rephrasing                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fairly good for basic  | <input type="checkbox"/> fairly clear; some misproductions   | <input type="checkbox"/> moderate to normal         | <input type="checkbox"/> fairly good use of some     | <input type="checkbox"/> fair for moderate rate with some repetitions and rephrasing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair for basic   | <input type="checkbox"/> fairly clear; several misproductions  | <input type="checkbox"/> moderate                   | <input type="checkbox"/> fair use of many            | <input type="checkbox"/> fair for slow-to-moderate rate with some repetitions and rephrasing  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> several basic  | <input type="checkbox"/> some understandable responses; several misproductions   | <input type="checkbox"/> slow to moderate           | <input type="checkbox"/> fair use of several or some | <input type="checkbox"/> fair for slow rate with some to several repetitions and rephrasing   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> some basic signs with fingerspelling for several basic signs                             | <input type="checkbox"/> some understandable responses; many misproductions  | <input type="checkbox"/> slow                       | <input type="checkbox"/> basic use of some or a few  | <input type="checkbox"/> able to understand with frequent repetition and rephrasing   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a few basic signs with fingerspelling for a few to many basic signs or no fingerspelling | <input type="checkbox"/> a few understandable responses; may misproduce some or few signs knows and fingerspelling may not be clear or may be absent | <input type="checkbox"/> very slow                  | <input type="checkbox"/> no use                      | <input type="checkbox"/> able to understand a few or some questions with extensive repetition and rephrasing and/or use of mime-like gestures |

<sup>a</sup> In general, use few for 2-to-3, some for 4-to-6, several for 7-to-9, and many for 10 or more.

<sup>b</sup> Conversational strategies such as appropriately requesting clarification, fingerspelling to clarify signs, breaking eye contact/gaze to maintain floor, and correcting one's own errors may be included with "other" (#11) under grammatical features.

### FORM 4: ASL PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS CHECKLIST

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Katie Bechtold, Jennifer Sims, & Angela Johnson  
November 2012

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b><u>FUNCTION</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Elaboration</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Requesting Clarification</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Staying on Topic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Maintain Eye Contact</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Turn Taking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Replying to Wh-??</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Replying to Why?? and How??</p> <p><b><u>SIGN VOCABULARY &amp; FINGERSPELLING KNOWLEDGE</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Background/Family</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Interests/Hobbies</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fingerspelling</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sign Meaning</p> <p><b><u>PRODUCTION &amp; FLUENCY/RATE</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sign Production</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fingerspelling Production</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Signing Rate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fingerspelling Rate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Signing Space</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pausing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p><b><u>ASL GRAMMAR</u></b></p> <p>1. <b>Indexing, space, body shifts, and eye gaze:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> for comparison/contrast</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> to locate &amp; refer to people, places, objects present &amp; not present</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> for role-play</p> <p>2. <b>Sign verb movement directionality for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> location</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> pronoun incorporation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> location and pronoun incorporation</p> <p>3. <b>Facial expression and sign movement modification for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> degree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> size</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> manner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> temporal aspect/time</p> <p>4. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Repetition of sign verb movement for repeated action</b></p> <p>5a. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Repetition of sign noun movement for plurals</b></p> <p>5b. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Vertical sweep for plurals</b></p> <p>5c. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Horizontal sweep for plurals</b></p> | <p>6. <b>Number incorporation for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> people</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> age</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> time (may include timeline)</p> <p>7a. <b>Listing on non-dominant hand, body shifts, and pauses for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> connecting ideas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> separating ideas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sequencing events</p> <p>7b. <b>FINISH, body shifts, and pauses for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> connecting ideas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> separating ideas</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> sequencing events</p> <p>8a. <b>Sign word order for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> rhetorical (rh) question</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> topic-comment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> conditional</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> object-subject-verb</p> <p>8b. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Noun followed by descriptor</b></p> <p>8c. <b>Signs at end of comments:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> FINISH</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> MUST</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CAN, YES</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NOT, CANNOT, NO</p> <p>9. <b>Classifiers following nouns for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> description</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> location and relationship of people, animals, things, &amp; places</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> actions of people, animals, &amp; objects</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> how something is used or functions</p> <p>10. <b>Non-manual signals for:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> negation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> affirmation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> yes-no?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> wh-?</p> <p>11. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other (insert specifics here):</b></p> <p>12. <b>Comprehension/Receptive Skill</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> moderate rate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> moderate-to-normal rate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> normal rate</p> <p>13. <b>Additional:</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
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**FORM 5**

**PROGRAM STUDENT AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL) SKILLS DEVELOPMENT  
PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS WITH COMMENTS**

Frank Caccamise & Barbara Curtis  
November 2012

**Student:**

**Interview Date:**

**Evaluation Date:**

**Priority Recommendations with Comments:**

**SLPI PAPER 15:  
MONITORING SIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Frank Caccamise  
September 2015 (10<sup>th</sup> ed.)

**Introduction**

This PAPER provides suggestions for monitoring the sign language communication skills development of individuals and their good faith efforts to develop these skills. This PAPER was originally written in September 2000 in response to a request from Cinnie MacDougall, South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) SLPI Coordinator, and it was updated in June 2003 in response to an inquiry from Janice Knauth, American School for the Deaf (ASD) SLPI Coordinator. In considering the inquiries from Cinnie and Janice and my response it is important to recognize that the SLPI is only one of several options that may and should be used to monitor sign language skills development. In addition workshops, courses, and other activities that address techniques and strategies for effective use of sign language, simultaneous communication, spoken communication, print and graphics, how to effectively work with interpreters, use of distance communication devices and relay services, and knowledge about ASL, Deaf Culture, and the Deaf Community should be considered as part of a total program for supporting individuals in their efforts to improve their communication effectiveness.

**Requests from Cinnie MacDougall & Janice Knauth**

E-Mail Request from Cinnie MacDougall, South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB)

To: Dr. Frank Caccamise, Ph.D., SLPI Consultant  
 From: Cinnie MacDougall, SCSDB SLPI Coordinator  
 Date: September 6, 2000  
 Subject: Response to an urgent question  
 C: SCSDB - Dr. Sheila Breitweiser, President, Carol Mabry, Vice-President, Mary Washko, Department of Sign Language Communication Director, Claire Bailey, Sign Language Instructor

Carol, Claire, and I had a meeting with the Office of Human Resources (OHR) people and ADEPT Coordinator today. We discussed how to write up goals in the Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) for new employees who have not met their sign language communication skills level standards. Since EPMS is written up annually we face a dilemma of how to benchmark an employee's sign language skills during the three-year timeline for achieving standards. For example, if an employee's rating is Intermediate Range and Advanced is the standard this employee has a three-year timeline. He/she re-takes the SLPI after a year or two and rating is still in Intermediate Range even though he/she has improved in some areas of sign language communication skills. How do we show progress for this employee who has not yet met his/her standard at the Advanced level? It is not a problem for employees with no sign language communication skills at job entry that have a standard of Intermediate since we can use rating of Novice for the first year, Survival for the second year, and Intermediate for the third year. EPMS has to be written in a way to show whether the employee is or is not improving his/her sign language communication skills every year. I hope I am making myself clear.

Your thoughts on this? How do other schools deal with the similar issue if any? We have a deadline to come up with a way of writing the measurement so a prompt response from you would be greatly appreciated. Thank you very much.

E-Mail Request from Janice Knauth, American School for the Deaf (ASD)  
 To: Dr. Frank Caccamise, Ph.D., SLPI Consultant  
 From: Janice Knauth, ASD SLPI Coordinator Date: June 20, 2003  
 Subject: Documenting Progress and SLPI Ratings

We are still working on our SLPI policy, and someday it will be done!

One of the issues we have relates to not using the SLPI "Plus" ratings. Upon hire there is a preferred/standard and entry skill level requirement. Scenario; an applicant hired for a job with a preferred entry skill of Survival Range and a standard of Intermediate Range has a Survival Range rating at time of job entry. There is a 3-year plan to develop the skills with timelines for improvement at 6 months, 1 year, and 3 years. How would progress be shown without using the Survival Plus other than having some sort of narrative report being done that would document progress? How do other schools handle this? How do you recommend handling this? Some people here at ASD say we need the Plus ratings to show progress before the employee makes it to the next range. I'm looking for some words of wisdom. Please refer to page #s with this one. Thanks for your help. I hope you all are enjoying better weather than Connecticut is! Will summer ever arrive?

### Responses to Cinnie and Janice

In my response to Cinnie I refer to SCSDB documents. These documents are included in the Policies, Procedures & Reports part of the SLPI website, [www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi/](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi/).

To: Janice Knauth, ASD SLPI Coordinator  
 From: Dr. Frank Caccamise, Ph.D., SLPI Consultant Date: June 20, 2003  
 Subject: Documenting Progress and SLPI Ratings

It took me some time to locate the information below, which was originally written in September 2000 to Cinnie MacDougall, South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) SLPI Coordinator at the time. As noted I have made some edits to hopefully make this more meaningful and clear to you all at ASD. I do hope that my edited reply to Cinnie is helpful and please contact me if I may be of further assistance.

To: Cinnie MacDougall, SCSDB SLPI Coordinator  
 From: Dr. Frank Caccamise, Ph.D., SLPI Consultant  
 Date: Sept 7, 2000 (edits made in June & July 2003, as noted above, & May 2007)  
 Subject: Response to an Urgent Question  
 C: SCSDB - Dr. Sheila Breitweiser, President, Carol Mabry, Vice-President, Mary Washko, Department of Sign Language Communication Director, Claire Bailey, Sign Language Instructor

Cinnie, you are very clear. I think it is helpful to begin by noting and reviewing pages and sections in your SCSDB employee sign language philosophy, policy, and procedures documents that contain information important to your question:

1. In Philosophy and Policy document the following statement near the top of page 4 is critical: "...employees must participate in the SLPI procedures on a regular basis until they have achieved their skill level standards and their expectations for taking the SLPI on a regular basis."
2. In Procedures document, see, sub-sections II, III-A and B, VIII, and IX. Sub-section VIII, "Skill Levels Standards and Schedule for (Re) Taking SLPI", contains Bill Newell's and my best thinking on how to ensure maintenance of skills without placing undue burden on either persons taking the SLPI or on program resources. On page 8 see the four principles at the beginning of sub-section VIII and the following key statement on page 9, "Employees with sign language communication skill level standards must take the SLPI within two year time frames until they achieve their standard.

3. Taking into consideration what is stated in your staff sign language policy and procedures documents, my experiences with and knowledge of other programs, and my experiences as a student and instructor of ASL, I recommend that you use sub-section VIII and your Employee Performance Management System (EPMS) (see sub-section IX of your procedures document) for monitoring efforts and progress of staff toward achieving their standards. In addition to SLPI results, as indicated in sub-sections VIII and IX, these efforts and progress may include successful completion of sign language courses, workshops, and other sign language communication learning and development experiences.
4. One of your examples is an employee who is in the Intermediate Range and may show no change in their SLPI rating for two years yet they may be improving. Options for documenting this improvement include successful completion of sign language courses and workshops and you could request sign language instructors to write brief statements describing improvements. For example, "During September- December, 2000, Bill Jones attended all 14 class sessions for ASL II. During this course Bill has expanded his knowledge of basic and work related sign language vocabulary, showed improved use of space and indexing for comparison and contrast, developed basic to fair use of several classifiers, and improved his receptive skills for sign language produced at a moderate-to-normal rate."
5. Considering your other example it is true that for an employee with no skills you could "benchmark" Novice for the first year, Survival for the second year, and Intermediate for the third. However, I do not recommend this. Your current procedures address this situation in sub-section V-A, #1b (page 5); that is, new employees having no sign language skills sign a form that includes a statement that they will enroll in an introductory sign language course and take the SLPI within 15 months of their job entry dates. At this point your EPMS can be used to plan what is appropriate for "each" employee. Trying to "benchmark" progress by use of the SLPI only, including one level rating differences, would place a tremendous strain on your SLPI resources. In addition it is important to remember that each SLPI rating has a range; for example, an employee could be a low or high Survival, a low or high Intermediate, or a low or high Advanced level signer.
6. For employees below their standards written suggestions for improving sign language communication skills may be provided during SLPI Follow-Up Meetings. Employees could then share these recommendations to assist in selection of appropriate courses and workshops for them, and their instructors could use these recommendations as a base for their statements as discussed in #4 above.

The above is consistent with Bill Newell's and my preference that the focus is on an integrated employee/staff sign language communication skills assessment-development program and not the SLPI only. In brief, the focus is on use of SLPI results to assist employees/staff members in planning sign language communication skill development opportunities that are appropriate for each of them. True, if skills development up to the standard skill level is not achieved SLPI results may influence job continuance. Initial focus, however, is and should be on use of SLPI results to assist with planning skills development with each employee/staff member. Putting it another way, with or without the SLPI there would still be a need for a SCSDB Staff Sign Language Communication Skills Assessment-Development Program.

Cinnie, I hope the above is clear and please contact me if any questions and/or you wish to discuss.

## SLPI PAPER 16: OPTIONS FOR REPORTING SLPI RATINGS

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (12th edition)

### Introduction

As shown in PAPER 2 the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Rating Scale has 11 rating levels:

1. Superior Plus
2. Superior
3. Advanced Plus
4. Advanced
5. Intermediate Plus
6. Intermediate
7. Survival Plus
8. Survival
9. Novice Plus
10. Novice
11. No Functional Skills

This PAPER discusses options for reporting some SLPI results as rating ranges and factors to consider in selecting the SLPI “specific” ratings and “rating ranges” to be reported. However, although a rating range may be reported to persons taking the SLPI, individual raters should provide specific ratings when resources allow this. There are several reasons for this including: (1) this helps SLPI raters to maintain their skills in rating across the entire SLPI Rating Scale, (2) this helps to identify if raters are able to distinguish between all ratings across the SLPI Rating Scale, and (3) this provides SLPI Coordinators with information that may inform planning for SLPI Team member individual and group in-service training.

### SLPI Advanced Plus-Superior Plus and No Functional Skills-Novice Rating Ranges Option

After several years of experience we began recommending that the Advanced Plus, Superior, and Superior Plus ratings be reported as a single rating range. The rationale for this is provided in PAPER 18: *Principles Important for Sign Language Communication Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*, Principles 10 through 13:

10. **ADVANCED PLUS OR ABOVE SKILLS AS A STANDARD:** The highest standard you should establish for a job is Advanced Plus. Advanced Plus should be a standard only for persons in job positions such as sign language teachers, interpreters (though interpreter certification is preferred for interpreters) and possibly job positions requiring direct communication within critical one-to-one and small group communication situations (for example, mental health and drug counselors).

11. **ADVANCED PLUS and SUPERIOR RANGE SIGNERS EXCELLENT COMMUNICATORS:** Persons with SLPI ratings of Advanced Plus and persons with SLPI ratings in the Superior Range are all excellent sign language communicators. The primary difference between these two groups is “form”; that is, Superior Range signers consistently show native-like/near native-like form while Advanced Plus level signers (sometimes) show minor form differences that are consistent with adult learners of sign languages. These differences are similar to persons’ accents in second/adult learned spoken languages with these accents resulting from the influence of their native spoken languages on pronunciation/production of the second/adult learned languages. The important point is that Advanced Plus and Superior Range signers are excellent

communicators and very good to excellent sign language models. Therefore, considering the above, the difficult time consuming and resource consuming task of distinguishing among Advanced Plus, Superior, and Superior Plus signers, and PRINCIPLES 10, 12, and 13, we recommend that when conducting ratings and establishing standards the Advanced Plus, Superior, and Superior Plus ratings be combined and reported as a single rating range; that is, *Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Skill Level Range*.

12. SKILL LEVELS OF SKILLED, EXPERIENCED INTERPRETERS AND SIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS WHO ARE ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS: Our experience with the SLPI has shown that skilled, experienced interpreters and ASL teachers who are adult sign language learners most often achieve ratings of Advanced Plus and sometimes achieve ratings of Superior. This supports that Superior Plus is a very exclusive rating that is generally achieved only by native signers. It also supports that Advanced Plus is a skill level that a select number of adult sign language learners will achieve and that Superior is a skill level that a very select number of adult sign language learners will achieve.

13. PRIMARY USE OF THE SLPI IS WITH ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS: Like the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI), the assessment tool that the SLPI is based on, the primary SLPI use is for assessment of adult language learners with the highest rating scale level range (Superior/Superior Plus) based on knowledgeable native/native-like language users. This range is what adult language learners look to as their model but they generally do not achieve, and are not expected to achieve. In brief the Superior Rating Range for both the L/OPI and the SLPI is basically a theoretical construct that provides the “upper” anchor for both the L/OPI and SLPI Rating Scales.

In addition we now suggest that programs may wish to report No Functional Skills (NFS) and Novice be reported as a range; that is NFS-Novice Range. The rationale for this is that whether a person receives a rating of NFS or Novice the recommendation for sign language skills development will be the same; that is, enroll in a basic sign language course.

For programs adopting the above SLPI official ratings are reported as follows:

1. Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range
2. Advanced
3. Intermediate Plus
4. Intermediate
5. Survival Plus
6. Survival
7. Novice Plus
8. No Functional Skills-Novice Range

#### **Another Option for Reporting SLPI Ratings Considering the Concept of Plus Level Ratings**

Given the variety of reasons for SLPI use and given the introduction of the SLPI Individual Rater and Sharing Results Procedure (see SLPI PAPER 9, *Options for Conducting and Sharing Results of SLPI Ratings*), we have considered other options for reporting SLPI results.

One of these options is the following:

1. Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range
2. Intermediate Plus–Advanced Range
3. Survival Plus–Intermediate Range
4. Novice Plus–Survival Range
5. No Functional Skills (NFS)-Novice Range

The above option may be appropriate for programs that use SLPI ratings primarily to help determine ASL course placement. For example, (a) people with No Sign Skills to Novice Level Rating may be enrolled in ASL 1, (b) people with Novice Plus and Survival Ratings in ASL 2, (c) people with Survival Plus and Intermediate Ratings in ASL 3, and (d) people with Intermediate Plus and Advanced Ratings in ASL 4.

In addition to what was discussed earlier about the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Rating Range and the NFS-Novice Rating Range the option immediately above is based on what is meant by plus ratings their importance to effective use of sign language for communication. By definition plus ratings are related to the next higher rating level; that is, candidates' exhibit some of the skills of the next higher rating level but not all and not consistently.' Therefore, generally candidates rated Survival Plus are more like candidates rated Intermediate than candidates rated Survival, and generally candidates who are rated Intermediate Plus are more like candidates rated Advanced than candidates rated Intermediate. In addition, results of a study by Long, Stinson, Kelly, and Liu (1999) showed that NTID students' perceptions of "ease of communication in the classroom" were highest for instructors with SLPI ratings in the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Rating Range, followed by instructors in the Intermediate Plus-Advanced Range with instructors in the Survival Plus-Intermediate Range receiving the lowest ratings for communication ease. For the two ratings "within" each of these three SLPI rating ranges students did not make distinctions for ease of communication. Based on the construct of the SLPI students in the Long et al. study probably were viewing the functional communication of instructors within these three ranges as nearly the same and not counting as heavily the "form" distinctions which are made in SLPI ratings.

Additional support for reporting ranges of Survival Plus-Intermediate and Intermediate Plus-Advanced comes from the rating construct associated with the SLPI; that is, functional communication is always the first criterion in a rating decision with analysis of form either supporting or pulling the rating down. Therefore, it is often the case that candidates receiving Survival Plus ratings are functioning at the Intermediate level with their form not quite supporting an Intermediate rating. The same is true for the rating range Intermediate Plus-Advanced. This rating construct is reflected in the following two principles from PAPER 18: *Principles Important for Sign Language Communication Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*:

2. JOB ENTRY SKILL LEVELS, STANDARDS, AND JOB COMMUNICATION NEEDS:

- A. Types and frequency of job communication situations in which sign language is used should be considered when establishing job entry skill levels and standards.
- B. All established skill levels (entry, standards, additional goals, incentive levels, etc.) should -
  - 1) Be of benefit to work and social communication needs and goals within the environment for which the skill levels are established.
  - 2) Consider appropriate use of program assessment and skill development resources.

14. INTERMEDIATE OR SURVIVAL PLUS LOWEST SKILL LEVEL STANDARD RECOMMENDED

- A. The lowest skill level standard we recommend is Intermediate or Survival Plus. The reasons for this are:
  - 1) Intermediate is the first SLPI rating level at which a person has the sign language skills needed to participate in a conversation with some confidence.
  - 2) Survival level signers and below require on-going support to maintain their skills thus placing undue stress both on resources available for developing and maintaining sign language communication skills and on assessment services.
  - 3) Because communication function is always the first criterion in a rating decision with analysis of "form" either supporting or pulling the rating down it is often the case that candidates receiving Survival Plus ratings are functioning at the Intermediate level with their form not quite supporting an Intermediate rating.

- B. Rather than establish the Survival skill level (or below) as a standard we recommend that staff participate in professional development activities such as those listed below with participation in SLPI procedures optional:
- 1) Workshops on techniques/strategies for communicating effectively with Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing people; for example, use of environmental cues, natural gestures, writing, distance communication devices, and relay services.
  - 2) Workshops that provide and discuss information and strategies for effectively working with interpreters.
  - 3) Workshops on Deaf culture and community.
  - 4) Successful completion of an approved program sign language communication skills development experience (generally two sign language courses) or achieving an Intermediate or Survival Plus SLPI rating.

The plus range reporting option may be useful when establishing standards for job positions where a “Survival” or “Intermediate” rating is considered not to be adequate to perform the job but the Survival Plus-Intermediate Range or the Intermediate Plus-Advanced Range is considered acceptable. To illustrate, suppose a program wishes to use a range reporting system to conserve resources devoted to the overall SLPI procedures. Further, suppose that in setting the standard for houseparent staff a person with an Intermediate Rating would not be considered sufficiently skilled to perform the job. However, if an Intermediate Plus Rating would be considered satisfactory, the rating range of “Intermediate Plus–Advanced” would satisfy this circumstance.

When both the Intermediate Plus and Advanced skill levels are established as standards SLPI results may appropriately be reported as follows:

1. Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range
2. Advanced
3. Intermediate Plus
4. Survival Plus–Intermediate Range
5. Novice Plus–Survival Range
6. No Functional Skills-Novice Range

### **Two Rating Range Option for Reporting Ratings When SLPI Used as a Screening Tool**

Another option when the SLPI is being used as a screening tool is to set two rating ranges; that is, “at or above the screening level” or “below the screening level”. For example, if the screening level is Intermediate Plus results for an individual would be reported as “Intermediate Plus or Above Skill Level Range” or “Below the Intermediate Plus Skill Level”. Although this option involves reporting results to individuals as one of two ranges, consistent with what is stated earlier in this PAPER, individual raters should provide “specific” ratings if resources allow this.

### **Conclusion**

There are many factors to consider in reaching a decision for reporting SLPI results in terms of rating ranges and specific ratings. We encourage programs to carefully consider their sign language program goals, sign language communication entry skill level expectations and standards, resources, and other factors important to their use of the SLPI in making this decision. Whatever reporting option is selected when resources allow raters should provide specific ratings.

### **Reference**

Long, G., Stinson, M., Kelly, R., & Liu, Y. The relationship between teacher sign skills and student evaluations of teacher capability. *American Annals of the Deaf*, 144 (5), 354-364.

**SLPI PAPER 17: FACTORS IMPORTANT FOR SIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAM  
PHILOSOPHY, POLICY, & PROCEDURES DOCUMENTS**

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (10th edition)

**Introduction**

This PAPER provides a list of factors important for development and refinement of sign language program philosophy, policy, and procedures documents. A set of principles to assist in decision making for these factors are discussed in PAPER 18, *Principles Important for Sign Language Program Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*. References to these principles are provided with the factors in this PAPER. These factors and principles should be considered, applied, modified, and added to within the context of “other” program factors that may influence SLPI use. Additional information and model documents to assist in the development of sign language program philosophy, policy, and procedures documents are provided in the Policies, Procedures & Reports part of the SLPI website, [www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi/](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi/).

**Factors**

1. Reasons and goals for sign language program philosophy, policy, and procedures.
2. Influence of job entry date and date policy approved (see PRINCIPLE 1).
3. Amount and type of communication (teaching, counseling, etc.) with people who are Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (students, community, other staff, parents, etc.), communication situations, and communication content (see PRINCIPLE 2).
4. Required or expected and preferred sign language communication job entry skill levels (see PRINCIPLES 3 & 4).
5. Timeline(s) for achieving sign language communication skill level standards (see PRINCIPLES 1, 5, 6, & 7).
6. Influence of job position on entry sign language communication skill levels and standards (see PRINCIPLES 8, 9, & 10).
7. Highest and lowest sign language communication skill level standards to be established (see PRINCIPLES 10-to-14).
8. Options for staff not having sign language communication skill level standards (see PRINCIPLE 14B).
9. Consider a “team concept” if a diverse population of students and/or clients is being provided SLPI services (see PRINCIPLE 15).
10. Sign language communication skill level standards, skill levels achieved, and expectations for (re)taking the SLPI (see PRINCIPLE 16).
11. Options if individual does not achieve sign language communication skill level standards (see PRINCIPLES 1, 17, & 18).
12. Resources (instructors, materials, time, etc.) available for conducting sign language assessment services and providing support for sign language communication skills development. If faculty/staff/employee sign language communication skills are being assessed it is strongly recommended that this be accomplished within the context of an integrated Sign Language Communication Skills Assessment and Development Program.
13. Procedures for determining fairness of job entry skill levels and standards (see PRINCIPLES 7, 19, & 10).
14. Community/External Group Assessment Services: If SLPI services are to be provided for Community/External Groups a policy and procedures document (or documents) should be developed.
15. See all PAPERS for additional information that may be helpful to your development of sign language communication philosophy, policy, and procedures documents.

**SLPI PAPER 18: PRINCIPLES IMPORTANT FOR SIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAM  
PHILOSOPHY, POLICY, & PROCEDURES DOCUMENTS**

Frank Caccamise & William Newell  
September 2015 (12th edition)

**Introduction**

This PAPER provides principles important for development and refinement of sign language program philosophy, policy, and procedures documents. These principles are intended to assist programs in making decisions for the factors that are discussed in PAPER 17, *Factors Important to Sign Language Program Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*. The principles in this PAPER are written from the perspective that sign language communication entry skill levels and standards are being considered for job positions. We are aware that the SLPI is being used for other purposes including as a screening for entrance into interpreter training programs, as a screening for student teacher and intern applicants, college Deaf Education majors, and state teacher licensure. Many of the principles below relate to these latter uses as well; for example, see PRINCIPLES 3A & 4A.

**Principles**

1. POLICY, ENTRY SKILL LEVELS, SKILL LEVEL STANDARDS OR GOALS & JOB ENTRY DATES:
  - A. For faculty/staff/employees with job entry dates prior to policy approved a pure professional development model should be used with faculty/staff/employees encouraged and supported to participate in sign language assessment and skills development opportunities as appropriate.
  - B. For faculty/staff/employees entering job positions with standards or goals after policy Approved -
    - 1) If job positions have entry skill levels these levels should be stated as expected with a waiver procedures necessary if persons hired do not satisfy expected entry skill levels.
    - 2) Standards/goals should be stated as expected within a specified timeline (generally three or four years).
    - 3) Participation in sign language communications skills development opportunities should be required on an annual basis until standards/goals are achieved.
    - 4) They should take the SLPI on a regular basis until they achieve their standards (see PRINCIPLE 16).
  - C. Other options for staff entering job positions before and after policy approved include different skill level standards/goals and different timelines.
  - D. If changes in sign language communication skill level expectations are included in a revised policy faculty/staff/employees in job positions at time of policy change should never have required skill levels increased.
  
2. JOB ENTRY SKILL LEVELS, STANDARDS/GOALS & JOB COMMUNICATION NEEDS:
  - A. Types and frequency of job communication situations in which sign language is used should be considered when establishing job entry skill levels and standards.
  - B. All established skill levels (job entry, standards/goals, incentive levels, etc.) should -
    - 1) Be of benefit to work and social communication needs and goals within the environment for which the skill levels are established.
    - 2) Consider appropriate use of program assessment and skill development resources. See PRINCIPLES 6, 9, 10 to 14, & 19.

3. REQUIRED OR EXPECTED AND PREFERRED SKILL LEVELS AT JOB ENTRY:
  - A. It is sometimes appropriate to establish both required or expected skill levels at time of job entry and preferred skill levels at time of job entry (see PRINCIPLE 4A).
  - B. The preferred skill level at time of job entry and the skill level standard/goal for a job position should be the same.
  - C. Policies guiding SLPI use should include a statement that required/expected sign language skills at time of hire may be waived if there are no qualified applicants who satisfy requirement/expectations. If this does occur the timeline for achieving standards/goals may need to be adjusted and a short-term contract may be offered (see PRINCIPLE 17B).
  - D. Job announcements and hire letters should include statements of job entry required or expected sign language skill levels, job entry preferred skill levels, and skill level standards/goals.
  
4. PROVISIONAL & PERMANENT LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION SKILL LEVEL STANDARDS:
  - A. When used for licensure/certification consideration should be given to establishing both a provisional licensure/certification skill level standard and a permanent licensure/certification skill level standard.
  - B. Similar to the concept of a job entry skill level at time of hire the provisional skill level should be viewed as an entry skill level for persons who are beginning their professional careers with the permanent skill level standard similar to the preferred skill level; that is, like the preferred skill level the skill level for permanent licensure/certification should be the standard (see PRINCIPLE 3).
  - C. If a single licensure/certification standard is established and this is an “entry level standard” then this standard should be considered a minimal skill level standard, not a preferred skill level standard.
  
5. SKILL LEVEL EXPECTATIONS AT JOB ENTRY & STANDARDS: In addition to types and frequency of job communication situations for which sign language is used job entry skill level expectations influence:
  - A. Skill level standards/goals and incentive skill levels that may be reasonably established.
  - B. The timelines within which attainment of these skill levels may be reasonably expected.

See PRINCIPLES 6 & 17.
  
6. STANDARDS/GOALS, SKILL LEVELS AT TIME OF JOB ENTRY, & TIMELINES:
  - A. If the skill level standard/goal is Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Skill Level Range this level should be required at time of job entry. One exception based on SLPI results is interpreters. These preliminary results have shown that interpreters who are Advanced at the time of job entry are able to achieve Advanced Plus within two years. While it is true that the SLPI assesses one skill important for persons providing interpreting services having high-level sign language skills does not mean a person will be able to provide quality-interpreting services. For interpreter positions, therefore, interpreter certification, rather than an SLPI skill level, is preferred at time of job entry. If this is not possible interpreter certification should be required within a specified time from job entry date (see PRINCIPLES 10, 11, & 12).
  - B. If the skill level standard/goal is Advanced the minimal skill level at time of hire should be Intermediate.
  - C. If the skill level standard/goal is Intermediate or below skill level at time of job entry may be optional depending on the immediate communication requirements of the job.

See PRINCIPLE 9.

- D. If a person has no sign language communication skills at time of job entry the timelines for achieving SLPI rating levels should be consistent with the following: (1) Survival - 2 years, (2) Intermediate – 3 years, (3) Advanced - 4-to-5 years.  
 Note 1: Programs generally establish a single timeline of three or four years to achieve all standards/goals not required/expected at job entry.  
 Note 2: Shorter timelines may be appropriate when program resources allow intensive sign language instruction to be provided for new faculty/staff/employees  
 See PRINCIPLE 17.
7. REASONABLE STANDARDS/GOALS & TIMELINES: For each job position the skill level standard/goal and the timeline within which to achieve this standard/goal should be reasonably attainable by a significant percentage of persons in and/or applying for the position; minimum of 80% generally (see PRINCIPLES 19 & 20).
  8. GENERAL STANDARD/GOAL FOR TEACHERS: If primary job responsibility is teaching students who are Deaf the recommended skill level standard/goal is Advanced.
  9. STANDARDS/GOALS FOR ADMINISTRATORS/SUPERVISORS AT JOB ENTRY:
    - A. Administrators/supervisors should be at their skill level standards/goals at time of job entry. This principle is based on the following: (1) administrators/supervisors should serve as model communicators, (2) they should have been successful in developing the skills needed to perform effectively in job positions held prior to becoming an administrator/supervisor, (3) they should be able to communicate directly with faculty/staff/employees who are Deaf, and (4) their job responsibilities generally allow for minimum time to be devoted to development of sign language communication skills.
    - B. Professional academic administrators/supervisors generally should have a skill level standard/goal of Advanced at job entry.
    - C. General staff administrators/supervisors generally should have a skill level standard/goal of Intermediate at job entry.
  10. ADVANCED PLUS OR ABOVE SKILLS AS A STANDARD/GOAL: The highest standard/goal you should establish for a job is Advanced Plus. Advanced Plus should be a standard/goal only for persons in job positions such as sign language teachers, interpreters (though interpreter certification is preferred for interpreters) and possibly job positions requiring direct communication within critical one-to-one and small group communication situations; for example, mental health and drug counselors (see PRINCIPLES 6A, 11, & 12).
  11. ADVANCED PLUS & SUPERIOR RANGE SIGNERS EXCELLENT COMMUNICATORS: Persons with SLPI ratings of Advanced Plus and persons with SLPI ratings in the Superior Range are all excellent sign language communicators. The primary difference between these two groups is “form”; that is, Superior Range signers consistently show native-like/near native-like form while Advanced Plus level signers (sometimes) show minor form differences that are consistent with adult learners of sign languages. These differences are similar to persons’ accents in second/adult learned spoken languages with these accents resulting from the influence of second/adult learners’ native spoken languages on pronunciation/production of the second/adult-learned languages. The important point is that Advanced Plus and Superior Range signers are excellent communicators and very good to excellent sign language models. Therefore, considering the above, the difficult and time/resource consuming task of distinguishing among Advanced Plus, Superior, and Superior Plus signers, and PRINCIPLES 10 and 12 we recommend that when conducting ratings and establishing standards/goals the Advanced Plus, Superior, and Superior Plus ratings be combined and reported as a single rating range; that is, *Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Skill Level Range*.

12. **SKILL LEVELS OF SKILLED, EXPERIENCED INTERPRETERS AND SIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS WHO ARE ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS:** Our experience with the SLPI has shown that skilled, experienced interpreters and ASL teachers who are adult sign language learners most often achieve ratings of Advanced Plus and sometimes achieve ratings of Superior. This supports that Superior Plus is a very exclusive rating that is generally achieved only by native signers. It also supports that Advanced Plus is a skill level that a select number of adult sign language learners will achieve and that Superior is a skill level that a very select number of adult sign language learners will achieve.
13. **PRIMARY USE OF THE SLPI IS WITH ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS:** Like the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview (L/OPI), the assessment tool that the SLPI is based on, primary SLPI use is for assessment of adult language learners with the highest rating scale level range (Superior/Superior Plus) based on knowledgeable native/native-like language users. This range is what adult language learners look to as their model but they generally do not achieve and are not expected to achieve this highest skill level range. In brief, the Superior Rating Range for both the L/OPI and the SLPI is basically a theoretical construct that provides the “upper” anchor for both the L/OPI and SLPI Rating Scales.
14. **INTERMEDIATE OR SURVIVAL PLUS LOWEST SKILL LEVEL STANDARD/ GOAL RECOMMENDED**
- A. The lowest skill level standard/goal we recommend is Intermediate or Survival Plus. The reasons for this are:
- 1) Intermediate is the first SLPI rating level at which a person has the sign language skills needed to participate in a conversation with some confidence.
  - 2) Survival level signers and below require on-going support to maintain their skills thus placing undue stress both on resources available for developing and maintaining sign language communication skill and on assessment services.
  - 3) Because functional communication is always the first criterion in a rating decision with analysis of form either supporting or pulling the rating down it is often the case that candidates receiving Survival Plus ratings are functioning at the Intermediate level, with their form not supporting an Intermediate rating.
- B. Rather than establish the Survival skill level (or below) as a standard/goal we recommend that staff participate in professional development activities such as those listed below with participation in the SLPI procedures optional:
- 1) Workshops on techniques/strategies for communicating effectively with Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing people (for example, use of environmental cues, natural gestures, writing, distance communication, and relay services).
  - 2) Workshops that provide and discuss information and strategies for effectively working with interpreters.
  - 3) Workshops on Deaf culture and community.
  - 4) Successful completion of an approved program sign language communication skills development experience (generally two sign language courses) OR achieving an Intermediate SLPI rating.
- Note: See PRINCIPLE 2.
15. **TEAM CONCEPT:** Programs that serve a diverse population require a diverse group of employees working as a team. Such programs should consider this diversity and the concept of TEAM when establishing standards. For example, for two administrative positions:
- A. One position could have a standard/goal and a preferred or required entry skill level of Advanced and the other position a standard/goal of Intermediate with no entry skill level required.
- B. One position could have a standard/goal and preferred or required entry skill level of Advanced and the other position no skill level standard/goal.

16. SKILL LEVEL STANDARDS/GOALS, SKILL LEVELS ACHIEVED, & EXPECTATIONS FOR (RE)TAKING THE SLPI:

- A. Faculty/Staff/Employees with skill level standards/goals should take the SLPI within every two years (or “three years” if program resources do not allow two year time frame) until they achieve their standards/goals.
- B. Faculty/Staff/Employees achieving a rating in the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Skill Level Range and those achieving Advanced should be exempt from taking the SLPI again on a regular basis.
- C. If program resources allow faculty/staff/employees with sign language communication skill level standards/goals of Intermediate Plus or below who do not achieve an Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Skill Level Range rating or an Advanced rating should be expected to achieve their standards/goals twice in succession on SLPIs administered two or three years apart prior to becoming exempt from taking the SLPI on a regular basis.
- D. Unless there are extenuating circumstances candidates should have a minimum of six months between SLPI interviews. The primary reason for this is that moving from one SLPI Rating Scale to the next rating skill level generally requires a minimum of six months with this time frame increasing as one proceeds up the SLPI Rating Scale rating skill levels.

17. ACHIEVING SKILL LEVEL STANDARDS/GOALS & TIME EXTENSION REVIEW GUIDELINES:

- A. If dismissal from job is a possibility for staff members/employees not achieving their skill level standards/goals policy and procedures guiding use of these standards/goals should include a review procedures that considers possible extension of the timelines for achieving standards/goals.
- B. Timeline-Extension Guidelines: If there are no qualified applicants having the required or expected entry skill level at time of job entry guidelines for considering timeline extensions are as follows -
  - 1) If entry skill level and standard/goal are both Advanced Plus—
    - a. If applicant has Advanced skills at hire s/he has two years to achieve Advanced Plus or Above skills.
    - b. If applicant has Intermediate range skills at hire s/he has three years to achieve Advanced Plus or Above skills.
    - c. No applicant with below Intermediate range skills should be considered for hire.
  - 2) If entry skill level and standard/goal are both Advanced—
    - a. If applicant has Intermediate range skills at hire s/he has two years to achieve Advanced or Above skills.
    - b. If applicant has Survival range skills at hire s/he has three years to achieve Advanced or Above skills.
    - c. If applicant has Below Survival range skills at hire s/he has four years to achieve Advanced or Above skills.
  - 3) If entry skill level is Intermediate and standard/goal skill level is Advanced—
    - a. If applicant has Survival range skills at hire s/he has three years to achieve Advanced or Above skills.
    - b. If applicant has below Survival range skills at hire s/he has four years to achieve Advanced or Above skills.
  - 4) If entry skill level and standard/goal are both Intermediate—
    - a. If applicant has Survival range skills at hire s/he has two years to achieve Intermediate or Above skills.
    - b. If applicant has below Survival range skills s/he has three years to achieve Intermediate or Above skills.

Note: As stated earlier programs generally establish a single timeline of three or four years to achieve all standards/goals not required/expected at job entry (see PRINCIPLE 6).

18. **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS:** Policies and procedures should also include statements that address principles and procedures for reasonable accommodation requests.
19. **ETHICAL VALIDITY:** It is important in the application of all assessment tools to job skill level standards/goals that issues of ethical validity are taken into consideration. In brief, ethical validity refers to how assessment tools are applied within social contexts. Is the application fair? What “good” is achieved by the application of the assessment tool? What potential harm can be done to persons affected by the application? Do persons who can perform a particular job/task achieve the standard/goal?
20. **IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL REPORTS FOR MONITORING AND ADJUSTING, IF APPROPRIATE, ENTRY SKILL LEVELS and STANDARDS/GOALS:** For each program implementing SLPI use SLPI results need to be monitored in order to help determine if results support or do not support program sign language entry skill levels and standards/goals. Programs vary in their ability and resources: (a) to provide follow-up meetings for people taking the SLPI, (b) to provide SLPI interviewing-rating services within specified time frames, (c) to hire people who already possess sign language communication skills (especially at job skill level standards), and (d) to provide sign language communication skills development opportunities. An annual sign language program report, therefore, that includes SLPI results should be used to inform policy decisions for establishing, maintaining, and/or changing entry skill levels and standards/goals, and for making other policy and programmatic changes. One reason for an annual report is to check group results in order to help determine if standards/goals and timelines are appropriate. For example, if a job position standard/goal is Advanced and results show that 90 to 95% of staff in this job position achieve this standard/goal within the expected timeline this would support maintaining Advanced as the standard/goal. On the other hand if only 30% achieve the standard/goal for a given position within the expected timeline the fairness of the standard/goal and timeline may be questioned and programmatic changes should be considered in order to address this. These changes may include: (a) extending the timeline, (b) improving and expanding sign language communication skill development opportunities available to staff, (c) raising skill level expectations at time of job entry, and (d) changing the standard/goal.

Note 1: In addition to the above possible changes it may be appropriate to provide in-service training for SLPI Team Members in order to help ensure they are interpreting and applying the SLPI Rating Scale in a consistent manner. See PAPER 19.

Note 2: See PRINCIPLE 7.

### **Conclusion**

The establishment of sign language communication job entry skill levels and standard/goals is a major step in improving communication and services in academic, vocational, and other professional environments. At the same time it is critical to recognize that establishment of job entry skill levels, standards/goals, and timelines for achieving standards/goals, requires on-going efforts to ensure fairness. This responsibility can only be satisfied through on-going monitoring of SLPI results and openness to making changes as appropriate to entry skill levels, standards/goals, timelines for achieving standards/goals, and other policy and programmatic changes in order to help ensure we are acting in a fair and ethical manner. An annual staff/employee sign language program report is an important part of this monitoring procedure. For sample annual sign language program reports see documents in the Policies, Procedures & Reports part of [www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi](http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi).

**SLPI PAPER 19:  
MONITORING THE CONSISTENCY SLPI TEAM MEMBERS' RATINGS**

Frank Caccamise  
September 2015 (14th edition)

**Introduction**

Monitoring the consistency of SLPI Team members ratings is important to help ensure fairness to candidates taking the SLPI and to assist in planning and providing in-service training as appropriate for SLPI Team Members.

The use of more than one rater with each rater providing independent ratings prior to rater team discussion helps to provide an on-going check on the consistency of raters within standard SLPI rating procedures. In addition, SLPI candidates, raters, and coordinators may request re-ratings and re-interviews if they believe rating results or interviews do not accurately reflect candidates' true skills. It is the SLPI process as a whole, therefore, that helps to ensure candidates have the opportunity to show their best sign language communication skills and to have these skills rated in a fair, consistent manner.

The second reason for monitoring consistency of raters' ratings, to assist in planning and providing SLPI Team Members with appropriate in-service training, is important to ensure SLPI Team Members are interpreting the SLPI Rating Scale in a correct and consistent manner. For example, if Rater A provides ratings that are consistently different from the ratings of other SLPI Team Members her/his SLPI Coordinator should consider conducting one-on-one in-service training with Rater A. Also, if two raters rate an interview as Advanced and another rater rates this same interview as Intermediate their SLPI Coordinator should consider meeting one-on-one with this latter rater or bringing all three raters together to discuss the appropriate rating for the candidate. In addition to one-to-one and small group in-service training it is important to periodically bring all SLPI Team Members together for rating practice and discussion. The literature for the Language/Oral Proficiency Interview), the spoken language assessment tool upon which the SLPI is based, recommends this type of "re-calibration" every two-to- three years.

**Encouragement for Monitoring the Rating Consistency of SLPI Teams on a Local Basis**

A complex research study does not need to be planned and conducted in order to monitor the consistency of ratings by SLPI Teams. The following questions may be answered by recording and reviewing SLPI ratings obtained via standard SLPI rating procedures:

1. How often are raters' independent first ratings the same or within one rating level of one another?
2. When raters' first independent ratings are not the same or within one level of one another how often do second independent ratings result in ratings that are the same or within one level of one another?
3. For re-rating requests (a) How often are ratings of second rating teams in agreement with the ratings of first rating teams?, and (b) When ratings of first and second rating teams are not in agreement how do ratings of third rating teams compare to the ratings of first and second ratings teams?

**Three Rater Team Procedure Study Results**

Rater Consistency Within SLPI Rating Teams and in Interpreting the SLPI Rating Scale

In a 1999 pilot study report Caccamise and Newell provided analyses of 191 SLPIs conducted at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) from 1993 to 1996 using the Three Rater Team Procedure. Analysis showed that for first independent ratings all three rating team members were within one level of one another 136 times (72.2%) and by second independent ratings all were within one level of one another 181 times (94.8%). Relative to consistency of raters in interpreting

the SLPI Rating Scale results showed that: (1) of 573 first independent ratings, 546 (95.3%) were within one level of official ratings, and (2) of 168 second independent ratings, 164 (97.6%) were within one level of official ratings. These results supported that ratings within NTID SLPI Rating Teams of three are consistent and that raters are able to consistently interpret the SLPI Rating Scale. In addition when all three raters' first independent ratings are not within one level of one another second independent ratings significantly improve consistency among raters prior to rater discussion.

During the 2001-02 and 2002-03 academic years (AY01-02 and AY02-03) NTID used the SLPI Individual Rater Procedure and then in AY03-04 NTID re-implemented the SLPI Three Rater Team Procedure. With this re-implementation of the SLPI Three Rater Team Procedure a study was initiated to investigate the reliability and validity of the SLPI Three Rater Team Procedure as conducted at NTID. Based on an analysis of 160 SLPIs conducted at NTID from the AY03-04 through AY05-06 the following was reported:

The results of the reliability analyses show that for first independent ratings greater than 86% of raters produced ratings that were within one rating level of the other members of their rating teams. When all three rating team members' first independent ratings were not within one rating level of one another, adding a second independent rating prior to discussion boosted the reliability of ratings within one rating level to greater than 96%. These results confirm that the reliability for NTID SLPI raters' independent ratings prior to negotiated discussion, review, and determination of candidates' official ratings, was very high.

The results of the validity analysis for this study indicate relatively strong validity for raters' pre-negotiated independent ratings. Only 2.5% of first independent ratings fell outside one level of the official ratings. Adding a second independent rating prior to rater team discussion when the first independent ratings of the three raters were not all within one level of one another reduced this percentage to 0.6%. These results suggest that the influence of idiosyncratic construct-irrelevant variance on construct validity prior to negotiation is minor, and that the negotiation process is effective in reducing the impact of this variance on SLPI validity in the majority of rater-disagreement cases.

The SLPI evaluation protocol was designed to converge toward increasingly reliable and valid official ratings through the use of multiple stages of independent ratings and negotiated discussion and review of candidates' interviews in relation to a standardized scaled linguistic performance profile grounded in a theory of language use and learning. The NTID reliability and validity data reported in this paper provide clear evidence that the SLPI evaluation protocol successfully accomplishes that goal....

[Caccamise, F., & Samar, V. (2009). Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) pre-negotiation inter-rater reliability and rater validity. *Contemporary Issues in Communication Science and Disorders*, 36, 36-47.]

### Consistency Across SLPI Rating Teams of Three

In 1998 Caccamise and Newell provided a progress report for a study that was designed to investigate reliability of SLPI results across SLPI Rating Teams of three raters. Results showed that of five SLPI interviews rated by three NTID SLPI Three Rater Teams all three teams had the same ratings for four interviews with two teams having the same rating and one team a rating one level lower for the fifth interview. In addition, of four interviews that were rated by two teams both teams had the same ratings for three interviews with two teams differing by one level for the fourth interview. These tentative (due to small number) results supported that SLPI results across NTID SLPI Rating Teams of three are consistent. Unfortunately priorities for use of SLPI resources did not allow continuance of this study.

## **SLPI Individual Rater Procedure Results**

In addition to the traditional SLPI Three Rater Team Procedure in 1998 we began to offer training for an SLPI Individual Rater Procedure and in 2003 we began offering training for an SLPI Two Rater Team Procedure. A brief description of these procedures is provided in PAPER 9, *Options for Conducting and Sharing Results of SLPI Ratings*

Several programs use or have used the Individual Rater Procedure, and three of these programs, Florida, South Carolina, and Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB, SCSDb, and USDB), in consultation with the author of this paper have monitored consistency of SLPI Team Members' ratings during the past several years. Also, as stated earlier, use of the SLPI Individual Rater Procedures was initiated at NTID in the Fall of 2001.

Barbara Curtis, FSDB SLPI Coordinator, and Claire Bailey, SCSDb SLPI Coordinator, reported satisfaction with the consistency of ratings obtained via the SLPI Individual Rater Procedures. Both Barbara and Claire, however, stated that they had become dissatisfied with the support for ratings provided on SLPI Individual Rater Worksheets. Therefore, during AY05-06 both FSDB and SCSDb changed to the SLPI Two Rater Team Procedure and both have indicated this has resulted in improved support for interview ratings on rater worksheets.

NTID, however, had a different experience. As reported in the *NTID Faculty/Staff Communication Research Group (F/SCRG) Final Report* (F. Caccamise, 2005) by Schley and Caccamise, during AY02-03 an analysis of SLPI research ratings for 11 candidates with official ratings of Intermediate, Intermediate Plus, and Advanced supported that ratings obtained via the SLPI Individual Rater Procedure were inconsistent across NTID SLPI raters. Considering this analysis of results for the SLPI Individual Rater Procedure, the importance of the Intermediate-to-Advanced SLPI rating range for NTID faculty/staff, and the results of the SLPI Three Rater Team Procedure reliability study for 1993-through-1996 NTID SLPI ratings, it was recommended that NTID return to use of the SLPI Three Rater Team Procedures. As stated earlier during AY03-04 the SLPI Three Rater Team Procedure was re-implemented at NTID.

Jean Thomas, the USDB SLPI Coordinator, like Barbara and Claire, has reported satisfaction with the consistency of ratings obtained via the SLPI Individual Rater Procedure. In addition, Jean reported satisfaction with the support for ratings provided on SLPI Individual Rater Worksheets. In discussing this with Jean it was learned that USDB schedules raters to come to a single location at the same time to conduct their ratings. Following their independent ratings this allows raters to discuss both ratings they agree on and ratings they disagree on and to have immediate discussions to assist in resolving rating differences. Also, as appropriate the SLPI Coordinator discusses ratings and support for ratings with raters. According to Jean this procedure serves to maintain a sense of team among USDB SLPI Team Members and serves as an on-going form of SLPI Team member in-service training. The SLPI Individual Rater Procedure as implemented at USDB may well explain why USDB has experienced success with this procedure. In addition, the SLPI Individual Rater Procedure may be expected to work most successfully when all or most ratings are reported as ranges rather than specific ratings (see PAPER 16: *Options for Reporting SLPI Ratings*).

### **Conclusion**

Monitoring the consistency of SLPI Team Members' ratings is important to helping ensure the fairness of the SLPI process for persons taking the SLPI and for planning and conducting appropriate in-service training for SLPI Team Members. Hopefully the information in this PAPER is helpful to programs in ensuring the fairness of ratings conducted by their SLPI Teams and helpful to planning SLPI Team Member in-service training on an individual and group basis.

## SLPI PAPER 20: SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (SLPI) USE

Frank Caccamise, & William Newell  
September 2015 (5th ed.)

As discussed in PAPER 4 our SLPI was originally developed and piloted at NTID for evaluating the sign language communication skills of NTID faculty and staff (Newell, Caccamise, Boardman, & Holcomb, 1983). As listed on the next page SLPI Training Workshops and implementation have occurred at more than 50 academic and vocational rehabilitation programs across the USA and in Canada, Kenya, and Ghana. Articles have been published that describe SLPI implementation and use with Louisiana School for the Deaf staff (Caccamise, Newell, & Mitchell-Caccamise, 1983), Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf staff (Newell, Caccamise, Tebo, & McAdam, 1988; Newell, Caccamise, & Tebo, 1989), Michigan School for the Deaf staff (Caccamise, Updegraff, & Newell, 1990), and Georgia Division of Rehabilitation Services and New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff (Caccamise, Newell, Fennell, & Carr, 1988). In addition, SLPI use has been implemented: (1) with Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (ADMHMR) employees and potential employees, New Jersey Vocational Rehabilitation staff, and the NYC Police Department; (2) for Minnesota teacher of the deaf/hard-of-hearing state licensure procedures; (3) for satisfaction of sign language graduation expectations for students in the NTID Masters of Science and Secondary Education Program, the Canisius College Department of Deaf Education, the Georgia State University Department of Deaf Education, and the Valdosta State University Teacher of the Deaf and Interpreting Education Programs; (4) for selection of South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind student intern applicants (Student Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Counselor Interns, Speech/Language Interns, Audiological Interns, Interpreter Interns, and ASL Instructor Interns); (5) as a screening tool with Georgia Perimeter College Sign Language Interpreting Program applicants and with Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA) Educational Interpreting Performance Assessment applicants; (6) for assessing sign language skills and identifying sign language skills development needs for APSEA, Michigan School for the Deaf, and Florida School for the Deaf & the Blind students (with some modifications such as use of pictures, with younger students); and (7) for assessing community based Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (ADMHMR) community based clients' sign language skills, as a marker for changes in their language competencies, and to assist them in language development.

SLPI use is generally implemented within the context of integrated sign language communication skills assessment-development programs. This requires the development of policy and procedures documents for persons who will be taking the SLPI. For discussion of factors and principles for the development of sign language assessment-skills development program policy and procedures documents readers are referred to PAPER 17, *Factors Important to Development of Sign Language Communication Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*, and PAPER 18, *Principles for Development and Refinement of Sign Language Communication Philosophy, Policy, and Procedures Documents*. Model and sample sign language program policy and procedures documents are included in the Policies, Procedures & Reports part of <http://www.rit.edu/ntid/slpi>.

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Table 1. Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Training Workshops and Use (Up Through September 2011)

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|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.  | Louisiana School for the Deaf (LSD)   |
| 2.  | Michigan School for the Deaf (MSD)  |
| 3.  | Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD)   |
| 4.  | South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind (SCSDB)  |
| 5.  | Willie Ross School for the Deaf (WRSD)  |
| 6.  | Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (AIDB)   |
| 7.  | Alaska State School for the Deaf (ASSD)   |
| 8.  | Center on Deafness, College of Education, the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK)  |
| 9.  | Georgia (GA) Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)  |
| 10. | New York State Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)                                  |
| 11. | Arkansas Office for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (ODHI), Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)                                     |
| 12. | CA State Dept of Rehabilitation, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services  |
| 13. | New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NJDVRS)  |
| 14. | Lexington Center, Vocational Services, Jackson Heights, NY  |
| 15. | Rochester School for the Deaf (RSD)   |
| 16. | Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (PSD)  |
| 17. | Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority, Nova Scotia   |
| 18. | Tripod and Burbank, CA School District  |
| 19. | MN Resource Center: Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing/MN State Teacher (Re) Licensure  |
| 20. | National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)  |
| 21. | Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD)  |
| 22. | Florida School for the Deaf and Blind (FSDB)  |
| 23. | Communication Service for the Deaf, SD Association of the Deaf  |
| 24. | Ohio School for the Deaf (OSD)  |
| 25. | Oklahoma School for the Deaf (OSD)  |
| 26. | Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD)  |
| 27. | Georgia School for the Deaf (GSD)   |
| 28. | Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf (WPSD)   |
| 29. | North Carolina Schools for the Deaf (NCSD)  |
| 30. | St. Francis Desales School for the Deaf   |
| 31. | Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind (CSDB)   |
| 32. | Texas School for the Deaf (TSD)   |
| 33. | Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD)  |
| 34. | South Dakota School for the Deaf (SDSD)   |
| 35. | Atlanta Area School for the Deaf (AASD)   |
| 36. | Arkansas School for the Deaf (ASD)  |
| 37. | New Mexico School for the Deaf (NMSD)   |
| 38. | Department of Corrections, NYS Civil Service  |
| 39. | Deaf Education Graduate Students, Canisius College  |
| 40. | Utah School for the Deaf and Blind (USDB)   |
| 41. | American School for the Deaf (ASD)  |
| 42. | Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf (MNMSD)   |
| 43. | Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind  |
| 44. | Kenya, US Peace Corp  |
| 45. | Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)  |
| 46. | Valdosta State University, GA   |
| 47. | Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing   |
| 48. | Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults  |
| 49. | St. Mary's School for the Deaf, NY  |
| 50. | VA School for the Deaf, Blind, and Multi-Disabled   |
| 51. | NJ School for the Deaf, Katzenbach Campus   |
| 52. | Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation  |
| 53. | Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ACDHH)/ Phoenix College Interpreter Preparation Program 54<br>Ghana, US Peace Corp |
| 55. | Northern Virginia Community College   |
| 56. | J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (Richmond, VA)   |

**SLPI PAPER 21: SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (SLPI) RATING &  
FOLLOW-UP MEETING PACKET**

Frank Caccamise, Barbara Curtis, & Bill Newell  
September 2015 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)

When first written this PAPER was a packet that could be used by SLPI Team Members when conducting ratings and follow-up meetings. Most of this packet is now included in SLPI Notebook (NB) Section 3B (S3B) documents as follows:

1. SLPI Rating Procedure Steps to Help You Provide Support for Your Ratings and to Help with Your Rater Discussions -
  - A. In Three and Two Rater Team document - pages 19-20
  - B. In Individual Rater document – pages 16-17
2. SLPI Rating Forms –
  - A. In Three and Two Rater Team document - pages 8-17
  - B. In Individual Rater document – pages 5-14
3. SLPI Follow-Up Meeting Principles and Guidelines –
  - A. In Three and Two Rater Team document - page 18
  - B. In Individual Rater document – page 15

The packet also included two additional forms that are attached to this updated edition of PAPER 21 with minor edits:

1. Rating Procedure Option for Candidates in the SLPI Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Function Range (see below).
2. Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Follow-Up Meeting Feedback (see next page) – This form may be used if candidates are provided written feedback for their sign language communication skills including suggestions for improving these skills.

**RATING PROCEDURE OPTION FOR CANDIDATES IN THE  
SLPI ADVANCED PLUS-SUPERIOR PLUS FUNCTION RANGE**

1. For staff judged to have function in the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range raters complete selection of descriptors for all form categories.
2. For form descriptors:
  - A. If all form category descriptors are in the Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range raters insert Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Rating as official rating. This completes rating process. No form examples are needed. (Note: This is consistent with “Advanced Plus” sample report in SLPI NB Section 4A.)
  - B. If one or more descriptors are at the Advanced Rating Level raters provide form examples. Go to #3 below.
3. If form examples support (see Notes below):
  - A. A rating of Advanced Plus official rating is Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range. This completes rating process.
  - B. A rating of Advanced official rating is Advanced. This completes rating process.

Notes:

1. If grammar descriptor is Advanced Plus and all but one of the other three form descriptor selected by evaluators is Advanced Plus, then it is possible for rating to be Advanced Plus-Superior Plus Range.
2. If more than one form descriptor selected by evaluators is Advanced then the rating should be Advanced.
3. Given the importance of grammar, if grammar descriptor selected by evaluators is Advanced the rating should be Advanced.

SIGN LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW (SLPI)  
FOLLOW-UP MEETING FEEDBACK

Name of Staff Member:

Follow-up Meeting Date:

SLPI Team Member Conducting Meeting:

Priority Sign Language Communication Skills Recommended for Development: