

Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) Rating Scale^a

DESCRIPTORS^b

RATINGS

Superior Plus

Able to have a fully shared and natural conversation with in-depth elaboration for both social and work topics. All aspects of signing are native-like with use of native-like prosody.

Superior

Able to have a fully shared conversation with in-depth elaboration for both social and work topics. Very broad sign language vocabulary, near native-like production, fluency and prosody and excellent use of sign language grammatical features. Excellent comprehension for normal signing rate.

Advanced Plus

Exhibits some superior level skills, but not all and not consistently.

Advanced

Able to have a generally shared conversation with good, spontaneous elaboration for both social and work topics. Broad sign language vocabulary knowledge and clear, accurate production of signs and fingerspelling at a normal/near-normal rate; occasional misproductions do not detract from conversational flow. Good use of many sign language grammatical features and comprehension good for normal signing rate.

Intermediate Plus

Exhibits some advanced level skills, but not all and not consistently.

Intermediate

Able to discuss with some confidence routine social and work topics within a conversational format with some elaboration; generally 3-to-5 sentences. Good knowledge and control of everyday/basic sign language vocabulary with some sign vocabulary errors. Fairly clear signing at a moderate signing rate with some sign misproductions. Fair use of some sign language grammatical features and fairly good comprehension for a moderate-to-normal signing rate; a few repetitions and rephrasing of questions may be needed.

Survival Plus

Exhibits some intermediate level skills, but not all and not consistently.

Survival

Able to discuss basic social and work topics with responses generally 1-to-3 sentences in length. Some knowledge of basic sign language vocabulary with many sign vocabulary and/or sign production errors. Slow-to-moderate signing rate. Basic use of a few sign language grammatical features. Fair comprehension for signing produced at a slow-to-moderate rate with some repetition and rephrasing.

Novice Plus

Exhibits some survival level skills, but not all and not consistently.

Novice

Able to provide single sign and some short phrase/sentence responses to basic questions signed at a slow-to-moderate rate with frequent repetition and rephrasing. Vocabulary primarily related to everyday work and/or social areas such as basic work-related signs, family members, basic objects, 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.

No Functional Skills

(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.

^aAdapted from US Foreign Service Institute & ACTFL LPI Rating Scales by William Newell & Frank Caccamise

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

SLPI: ANALYZING FUNCTION

SLPI RATING	ELABORATION/LENGTH OF RESPONSES	SENSE OF SHAREDNESS/ SPONTANEITY
SUPERIOR PLUS/ SUPERIOR	In-depth elaboration, Excellent detail.	Fully acceptable, comfortable Shared/spontaneous; crosstalk, back channel feedback, native- like prosody.
ADVANCED PLUS	Full elaboration. Good to excellent detail.	Close to fully acceptable and close to fully comfortable, shared/spontaneous, excellent prosody.
ADVANCED	Generally complete answer with good detail/elaboration; may have some use of THEN and/or AND.	Generally acceptable and generally shared/spontaneous, fairly comfortable, generally good use of prosody
INTERMEDIATE PLUS		
INTERMEDIATE	Sometimes elaborated answer, generally 3-to-5 sentences, frequent use of THEN and/or AND; surface answer good enough but not much detail	but Looks like a conversation; fairly shared with some question/answer; PLUS sometime spontaneous with some confidence
SURVIVAL PLUS		
SURVIVAL	Generally 1-to-3 sentences; hands often go to lap after short responses.	Does not feel/look like a conversation; not shared, with many questions by interviewer
NOVICE PLUS		
NOVICE	Generally 1 sentence, phrase, single sign responses; may fingerspell some very basic signs	many questions, rephrasing, slow, simplified signing
NO FUNCTIONAL SKILLS	(MAY have) Some short phrase, single sign responses to a few questions; fingerspelling for even very basic signs	even basic questions signed slowly with repetition and/or rephrasing often misunderstood