Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)

Goals, Materials, & Procedures

Frank Caccamise, June Reeves, Geoff Poor, & Joan Carr
National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)
Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)
Rochester, NY 14623-5604
fccncr@rit.edu

October 2006 (10th edition)
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. CSLA Goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CSLA History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CSLA Materials</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CSLA Registration and Request for Classroom Information &amp; Materials</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CSLA Videotaping Guidelines</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. CSLA Videotape Copies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. CSLA Observation Process</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Sharing CSLA Results: Reports &amp; Follow-Up Meetings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Erasure of CSLA Videotapes</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix: CSLA Forms</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)
Goals, Materials, & Procedures

I. CSLA Goals

A. To assess instructors’ classroom sign language communication skills and to use this information to assist instructors with their sign language communication skills development.

B. To provide National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) faculty with information about their sign language communication skills that they may include in their annual appraisals and in their tenure and promotion documentation.

II. CSLA History

A. The CSLA is based on the Sign Language Skills Classroom Observation (SLSCO) (Reeves, Newell, Holcomb, & Stinson, 2000). The SLSCO was developed through a 3-year study and piloting process with NTID students and faculty. First, sign language features used by skilled communicators when teaching deaf students were identified and descriptors of effective sign language and simultaneous communication were collected via a literature review. Next, NTID students and faculty provided input via interviews regarding sign language linguistic features and characteristics of simultaneous communication considered important for effective communication with deaf students in the classroom. During interviews with faculty the process for providing feedback on classroom signing and the type of feedback most useful for professional development were discussed. This information guided the subsequent development of the SLSCO. SLSCO observation forms were designed and revised through feedback from NTID Department of American Sign Language and Interpreter Education (ASLIE) faculty and through on-going use by the investigators in over 40 observation events.

B. Using the SLSCO as a base, during the 2001-2002 academic year (AY01-02) an NTID Faculty/Staff Communication Research Project Team initiated development of the CSLA. This development included construction of rating scales for the sign language linguistic features included in the SLSCO, refinement of the descriptors for these features, and development of an examples sheet for these features to assist with observations & reports. During AY02-03, training of CSLA observers and CSLA piloting with NTID faculty were initiated. This training and piloting continued during AY03-04, with implementation for use with NTID faculty occurring during the AY03-04 Spring Quarter.

---


III. CSLA Materials (in addition to this document)


C. CSLA FORMS: The appendix to this document proves a list (p. 7) and copies of CSLA Forms.

IV. CSLA Registration and Request for Classroom Information & Materials: When OCAS Coordinator receives a CSLA registration form (p. 11), s/he -

A. Contacts instructor completing registration form and NTID Educational Design Resources and requests that they schedule the earliest possible date (& time) for CSLA videotaping of instructor’s class (see p. 13 for taping guidelines).

B. Sends instructor completing registration form copies of -
   1. CSLA Goals & Description (pp. 8-9)
   2. CSLA Request for Class Information & Materials (p. 12)

V. CSLA Videotaping Guidelines (page 13)

VI. CSLA Videotape Copies

Following taping of each instructor, OCAS Coordinator has two copies of each CSLA videotape (VT) made. One copy is given to each of the two observers for the VT, with the master copy maintained by OCAS. Following completion of the observation-report writing parts of the CSLA process, one of these copies is given to the instructor at her/his CSLA Follow-Up Meeting (see p. 25, #6) and one copy is erased, with the master copy maintained by OCAS (see IX, p. 6).

VII. CSLA Observation Process

A. Two observers independently view and rate each CSLA VT. The goal is to have completed observation forms returned to OCAS within one week from dates observers receive VTs.

B. CSLA Observers should have their own master copies of forms (paper & on computer) needed for CSLA Observation, Report Writing, & Follow-Up Meeting Process. CSLA Team members make copies from these master copies as needed to complete the CSLA Process for each instructor they provide CSLA services.
C. In addition to a copy of the instructor’s CSLA VT, OCAS provides each observer with a copy of the CSLA Request for Class Information & Materials form (p. 12) completed by the instructor, as well as class materials submitted by the instructor. Information on this form should be recorded by each observer on the top of the CSLA Observation form s/he uses (see p. 17).

D. Each observer uses (1) a blue laminated 2-sided copy of the Six Sign Language Linguistic Features Rated by CSLA Observers and Guidelines for Completing CSLA Observations (pp. 14-15), (2) a yellow laminated copy of Examples for CSLA Six Sign Language Linguistic Features (p. 16), and (3) the CSLA Observation form (pp. 17-18):

1. To rate six sign language linguistic features important for effective classroom communication with deaf students -

   a. On CSLA Observation form, note different wording for sign language linguistic features #1 & 2 rating scale and wording for features #3-through-#6 rating scale.

   b. Also, note feature #5 (Classifiers Convey Accurate Information about the Physical World) has a Not Ratable (NR) option. This should only be used when observers believe instructors’ communication does not provide the need or opportunity to use classifiers.

   c. Raters may circle two numbers, indicating a rating between the two-circled numbers; for example, if 5 & 4 circled, rating is 4.5.

2. To provide, as appropriate, supportive examples (both positives and errors/omissions) for ratings.

3. To provide “additional comments” as appropriate; that is, additional examples, comments about comprehension skills if clearly observable, & other comments pertinent to instructor’s classroom use of sign language based on observation.

E. Observer’s focus should be on sign language communication skills. Simultaneous communication is a secondary consideration that should only be addressed if it includes many sign omissions that interfere with understanding of information expressed via the spoken component. Sign language omissions should be included as Errors under rating item #2 (Sign Knowledge and Use Convey Message Intent) or as Error/Omissions under rating item #3 (Space Used Effectively to Refer to Noun Referents).

F. See Guidelines for Completing CSLA Observations (p. 15); also observers may wish to refer to sample CSLA observations in Reeves et al. (see III-A, p. 2).

G. Observers return their completed CSLA observation forms and CSLA VTs to OCAS.
H. Observers are considered to be in agreement when they have the same or are within one-half point (.5) on the rating scale: When observers are within .5 of one another, the two ratings are averaged; for example, (1) if one rating is 3 and the other 3.5, official rating is 3.25; & (2) if one rating is 3.5 and the other 4, official rating is 3.75.

I. If two observers are:

1. Within one-half point (.5) of one another on all ratings, rating process complete (go to VIII on next page).

2. More than one-half point (.5) apart on one or more items, OCAS Coordinator returns completed observation forms and one copy of CSLA VT to observers and requests that they meet in order to determine if they can reach agreement –
   a. If two observers reach agreement on all features, rating process complete (go to VIII on next page).
   b. If two observers cannot reach agreement on one or more features, a third observer selected by the OCAS Coordinator rates features for which there is not agreement (go to “I” immediately below).

Note: For items requiring discussion, on their observation forms observers should write official (agreed to) ratings below the right end of the rating scale for these items. Only the original ratings of observers should be circled.

J. Third rater returns her/his rating(s) to OCAS Coordinator; if third observer’s rating(s):

1. In agreement with one of first two observers, this rating (these ratings) is (are) the official rating(s), and rating process is complete (go to VIII on next page).

2. Not in agreement with one of first two observers, go to “K” immediately below.

K. Three observers meet in order to determine if they can reach agreement on feature(s) rated by third observer:

1. If three observers reach agreement on feature(s), this/these rating(s) are the official ratings and rating process complete (go to VIII on next page).

2. If three observers cannot reach agreement on one or more features, this/these features are reported as non-ratable (go to VIII on next page).

Note: Names of observers are confidential.
VIII. Sharing CSLA Results: Reports & Follow-Up Meetings

A. Completing CSLA Reports:

1. OCAS Coordinator selects one of observers to write report and sends this observer the completed observation forms and a copy of the CSLA VT.

2. Using above materials, Guidelines for Completing CSLA Reports (page 19) and the CSLA Master Report form (pp. 20-23), selected CSLA Team member records ratings, examples, & comments for sign language linguistic features, and summarizes “additional comments” by observers.

3. The CSLA Team member scheduled to conduct CSLA Follow-Up Meeting (generally CSLA Team member completing #2 above) completes last two sections of the CSLA Report (p. 23):
   a. Priority Sign Language Linguistic Features for Skills Development.
   b. Courses/Activities Recommended for Skills Development.

4. Sample CSLA Reports in Reeves et al. (see III-A) may be referred to when completing CSLA Reports.

Note: The goal is to complete CSLA Reports within one week from dates observation process is completed.

B. Sharing CSLA Results with Instructors:

1. When report completed, CSLA Team member sends completed report to OCAS Coordinator. OCAS Coordinator reviews report and team member writing report and coordinator agree on any needed edits.

2. OCAS Coordinator, via email (with copy to CSLA Team member completing report), informs instructor that her/his report is ready and that NAME, CSLA Team member, will be contacting her/him to scheduled a CSLA Follow-Up Meeting.

3. CSLA Team member completing VIII-A-2 above contacts instructor to schedule a two hour CSLA Follow-Up Meeting (see p. 25 for CSLA Follow-Up Meeting Principles & Guidelines). CSLA Report given to instructor at this meeting. (See exception in Note 1 below.)

Note 1: When instructor receives ratings in the 4 to 5 range for all six sign language linguistic features, OCAS Coordinator sends instructor her/his CSLA Report with a cover memorandum (page 24) that states instructor has the option to schedule a CSLA Follow-Up Meeting.

Note 2: CSLA Follow-Up Meetings should be scheduled within two weeks from dates instructors are informed that their CSLA reports have been completed.
4. At CSLA Follow-Up Meeting instructor is given (a) his/her CSLA report & VT, and (b) an envelope (provided by OCAS) with an OCAS address label that contains a copy of the CSLA Process Evaluation Feedback form (pp. 26-27) and may include the CSLA VT Release Form (p. 28).

C. When CSLA Follow-Up Meeting has been conducted, CSLA Team member conducting meeting provides OCAS with date of meeting.

D. CSLA Reports are shared only with instructors. Reports may only be shared with others if instructors sign release of information forms for sharing their CSLA Reports (see CSLA Release of Information Form, p. 29).

IX. Erasure of CSLA Videotapes

A. Master copies of CSLA videotapes are maintained for two months from dates of observations, and then they are automatically erased unless instructors have signed release forms stating their CSLA videotapes may be used for training, demonstration, and/or research.

B. If release forms for training, demonstration, and/or research have been signed, videotapes are maintained for a minimum of six months. After this six month period, if/when no longer needed for training, demonstration, and/or research, videotapes are erased.
Appendix

Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA) Forms

- Goals & Description ................................................................. 8
- Announcement ........................................................................... 10
- Registration Form ................................................................. 11
- Request for Classroom Information & Materials ..................... 12
- Videotaping Guidelines ......................................................... 13
- Six Sign Language Linguistic Features Rated by CSLA Observers 14
- Guidelines for Completing CSLA Observations ...................... 15
- Examples for CSLA Six Sign Language Linguistic Features ...... 16
- Observation ............................................................................. 17
- Guidelines for Completing CSLA Reports .............................. 19
- Report .................................................................................... 20
- Report Memorandum ........................................................... 24
- Follow-Up Meeting Principles & Guidelines ......................... 25
- CSLA Process Evaluation Feedback ...................................... 26
- Videotape Release Form ....................................................... 28
- Release of Information Form ............................................... 29
The Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA) is designed to assess instructors’ classroom sign language communication skills and to use the information from this assessment to assist instructors with their sign language communication skills development. In addition, National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) faculty may include CSLA information in their annual appraisals and in their tenure and promotion documentation.

The steps in this classroom observational process are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps in the CSLA process:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. One videotaping session of the instructor teaching in her/his classroom using a lecture format.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Viewing of this classroom videotape by trained observers to provide ratings, and examples as appropriate, for six sign language linguistic features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Feedback/other comments pertinent to instructor’s classroom use of sign language, including comprehension skills if clearly observable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Additional viewing and observer discussion as needed to finalize ratings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Preparation of an observation report for the instructor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. A follow-up meeting between the instructor and a CSLA Team member to discuss the observation report, review the observation videotape, &amp; discuss suggestions for improving sign language communication skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---


\(^b\)CSLA Follow-Up Meeting is optional for instructors receiving ratings in the 4 to 5 range for all six sign language linguistic features.
The six sign language linguistic features\textsuperscript{b} rated by CSLA observers are:

1. **Signs and Fingerspelling Accurately Produced:** This feature involves use of appropriate production characteristics of signs and fingerspelling. These include handshape, movement, placement/location, and orientation of the hands/arms while producing signs. Also included under sign and fingerspelling production are the appropriate positioning of hands and arms and their movement within the signing space.

2. **Sign Knowledge and Use Convey Message Intent:** This feature involves breadth of sign vocabulary knowledge and the ability to select and use signs appropriate to intended meanings. It also includes the ability to modify signs as appropriate to communicate more complex meanings; for example, number, size, degree, intensity, manner, distance, and time/duration.

3. **Space Used Effectively to Refer to Noun Referents:** This feature involves establishing and using referents for nouns in the signing space in order to discuss them and to compare and contrast ideas, people, and places. Skills important for this area are establishing points in space as referents, eye-gaze, producing noun signs so that they are consistent with real world orientation, using directional verbs consistently, and shifting of the body to show contrast/comparison and for assuming roles when reporting indirect discourse.

4. **Non-Manual Signals Convey & Support Meaning:** This feature involves the use of facial expression, eye gaze, head movement, body shift, and pausing to convey information regarding sentence types; that is, to distinguish statements vs. questions, to distinguish Wh (what, who, etc.) from yes/no questions, and to mark conditional statements, rhetorical questions and topics. It also includes use of non-manual signals to convey information regarding relative size, degree, intensity, manner, distance, and time/duration.

5. **Classifiers Convey Accurate Information about the Physical World:** This feature involves the use of specified handshapes to communicate efficiently and effectively about the physical world. These specific handshapes are used to show location and movement of nouns, to describe nouns, to show how objects are handled and used, and to show how the body appears/moves. Classifiers are referred to/written about in the following way: CL:B for table located there.

6. **Discourse Organization is Visually Effective:** This feature involves using signs and sign language techniques for organizing the whole, and the sub-narratives/statements within, in extended communication sequences (such as classroom lectures). Specialized signs (for example, NOW, FINISH & OFF-POINT), rhetorical questions, listing on the non-dominant hand for related items and sequence of events, and other signing techniques (for example, non-manual signals such as body shifts & pauses) are used to signal topic introductions, reviews, endings, transitions, and asides. These signs and techniques help to make the entire discourse visually clear and easy to follow.

Dear NTID Faculty Member:

The NTID Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS) is now offering the Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA). The CSLA is designed to assess instructors’ classroom sign language communication skills and to use the information from this assessment to assist instructors with their sign language communication skills development. In addition, National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) faculty may include CSLA results in their annual appraisals and in their tenure and promotion documentation.

Steps in the CSLA process are as follows:

1. One videotaping session of the instructor teaching in her/his classroom using a lecture format.

2. Viewing of this videotape by trained observers to provide (a) ratings, and examples as appropriate, for six sign language linguistic features; and (b) feedback/other comments pertinent to instructors’ classroom use of sign language, including comprehension skills if clearly observable.

3. Additional viewing and observer discussion as needed to finalize ratings.

4. Preparation of an observation report for the instructor.

5. A follow-up meeting between the instructor and a CSLA Team member to discuss the observation report, review the observation videotape, and discuss suggestions for improving sign language communication skills.

If you are interested in scheduling a CSLA, please contact NAME, OCAS Coordinator, LBJ-ROOM #, E-MAIL, PHONE # (V/TTY).

July 2005
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)
Registration Form

Name: _____________________________ Date: __________________

Department #: __________ Office Address: ________________________

Telephone: ________________ Email: __________________________

Your reason(s) for requesting CSLA (check all that apply and fill in #5 if appropriate):

1. Sign Language Skills Development
2. Annual Appraisal
3. Tenure Documentation
4. Promotion Documentation
5. Other: ____________________________

Name of course to be videotaped. Please choose a class that is primarily lecture.

________________________________________

This class will be taught with: _____Sign and voice _____Sign only

Building & Room Number: ____________________________

Days & Times Class Meets: ____________________________

To assist the Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS) in conducting your CSLA, when your class to be videotaped has been scheduled, you will be requested to provide print information for this class (class topic, purposes/goals, class outline if you have one, etc.).

If you have any questions about the CSLA, please contact Geoff Poor, OCAS Coordinator, LBJ Room 3232, gspncm@rit.edu, phone 5-6282 v/t.

Please return this form to OCAS as soon as possible so we may proceed with scheduling your CSLA.

February 2004
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)
Request for Class Information & Materials

Dear

Your course, ________________________________, has been scheduled for videotaping on _________ from ________ to _________.

To assist the Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS) in conducting your CSLA, for your class to be videotaped please complete the information requested below and please provide print materials (class handouts, outline if available, and copies of other prints materials and graphics that you may use). Please return this completed form and class materials to OCAS, LBJ-Room#. CSLA Observers need your completed form and available classroom materials to help prepare them for reviewing your CSLA videotape. Thank you.

Class Topic(s):

Class Goal(s)/Purpose(s):

Other information you wish to share with us:

Thank you for participating in the CSLA process.

July 2005
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)  
Videotaping Guidelines  

April 2004

A model CSLA videotape is available from the NTID Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS), LBJ-Room #, E-MAIL, PHONE #. It is strongly recommended that this videotape be viewed by persons scheduled to conduct CSLA videotaping services.

1. A clear image of the instructor’s signing, close enough to analyze individual signs and fingerspelled words, is needed. In order to clearly see the instructor’s signing and fingerspelling, the instructor's image (a) should be from just below the waist to just above the head, and (b) should take up from 1/2 to 3/4 of the “screen/viewing lens”.

2. The camera should be set-up and moved as necessary during taping so that a frontal view of instructor is maintained.

3. After students have taken their seats and occasionally during the course of the class when students are engaging in discussion with the instructor, the camera should pan around the classroom in order to show the students and their seating arrangement.

4. When the instructor is using a projected image and/or writing on the board, the camera should be focused briefly on the media being used. This provides the observation team with a context for assessing the instructor’s signing accuracy.

5. Operators should monitor the camera in such a way to provide feedback to instructors regarding the affect of lighting on the overall quality of the final videotape. When instructors are using the computer display screen, the overhead lighting in the room is critical to getting a good video of the instructor’s signing. Advise the instructor to adjust the overhead lighting if necessary.
Six Sign Language Linguistic Features  
Rated by CSLA Observers  
July 2005

1. **Signs and Fingerspelling Accurately Produced:** This feature involves use of appropriate production characteristics of signs and fingerspelling. These include handshape, movement, placement/location, and orientation of the hands/arms while producing signs. Also included under sign and fingerspelling production are the appropriate positioning of hands and arms and their movement within the signing space.

2. **Sign Knowledge and Use Convey Message Intent:** This feature involves breadth of sign vocabulary knowledge and the ability to select and use signs appropriate to intended meanings. It also includes the ability to modify signs as appropriate to communicate more complex meanings; for example, number, size, degree, intensity, manner, distance, and time/duration.

3. **Space Used Effectively to Refer to Noun Referents:** This feature involves establishing and using referents for nouns in the signing space in order to discuss them and to compare and contrast ideas, people, and places. Skills important for this area are establishing points in space as referents, eye-gaze, producing noun signs so that they are consistent with real world orientation, using directional verbs consistently, and shifting of the body to show contrast/comparison and for assuming roles when reporting indirect discourse.

4. **Non-Manual Signals Convey & Support Meaning:** This feature involves the use of facial expression, eye gaze, head movement, body shift, and pausing to convey information regarding sentence types; that is, to distinguish statements vs. questions, to distinguish Wh (what, who, etc.) from yes/no questions, and to mark conditional statements, rhetorical questions and topics. It also includes use of non-manual signals to convey information regarding relative size, degree, intensity, manner, distance, and time/duration.

5. **Classifiers Convey Accurate Information about the Physical World:** This feature involves the use of specified handshapes to communicate efficiently and effectively about the physical world. These specific handshapes are used to show location and movement of nouns, to describe nouns, to show how objects are handled and used, and to show how the body appears/moves. Classifiers are referred to/written about in the following way: CL:B for table located there.

6. **Discourse Organization is Visually Effective:** This feature involves using signs and sign language techniques for organizing the whole, and the sub-narratives/statements within, in extended communication sequences (such as classroom lectures). Specialized signs (for example, NOW, FINISH & OFF-POINT), rhetorical questions, listing on the non-dominant hand for related items and sequence of events, and other signing techniques (for example, non-manual signals such as body shifts & pauses) are used to signal topic introductions, reviews, endings, transitions, and asides. These signs and techniques help to make the entire discourse visually clear and easy to follow.

---

1. In addition to identifying areas needing improvement, the CSLA provides feedback on what a person can do; that is, the positive aspects of their sign language skills.

2. Each CSLA sign language (SL) item is considered independent of other items. Ratings for each feature are reported as such, with no single overall CSLA rating or label.

3. For CSLA items #1 and #2, ratings are based on judgments of degree of interference with intelligibility.

4. For CSLA items #3-#6, ratings are based on judgments of frequency of occurrence.

5. For all items, observers may include comments that include different and/or better ways to sign an idea or concept.

6. For CSLA ratings of 5, generally no comments are necessary.

7. For CSLA ratings of 4 and below examples are needed, with more error/omission examples needed for lower ratings.

8. For CSLA item #2, positive examples should be included for ratings of 3 & below; optional for ratings of 4 & 5.

9. Significant sign deletions during Simultaneous Communication are included within CSLA items #2 & #3.

10. For CSLA items #3-#6:
    A. Use letters from yellow laminated examples page for CSLA sign language linguistic features #3-#6, with examples following letters as appropriate.
    B. Frequency of use may be indicated via use of plus (+) symbol, with 3 “+s” or more indicating often & two “+s” or less indicating sometimes; may also include sometimes, often, & other words that best describe instructor being observed.

11. For CSLA item #5, if there were times that were appropriate for classifier use and they were not used, observer should note this. If opportunities for classifier use did not occur during observation, NR (not ratable) should be circled:

12. Additional Comments (optional) may include:
    A. Comprehension - Comprehension is difficult to assess via CSLA procedures; therefore, comments on comprehension should only be included when Observer is comfortable doing so.
    B. If instructor uses signs which may be appropriate for classroom use, & for which there are signs more appropriate for use outside the classroom/academic environment, these may be noted.
    C. Other factors/behaviors that may contribute to or detract from effective classroom sign language communication.

For sample Observations, see CSLA Sample Observations & Reports (Reeves, Poor, & Caccamise, 2005).
Examples for CSLA Six Sign Language Linguistic Features
July 2005

1. **Signs and Fingerspelling Accurately Produced:**
   **Errors:** EMOTION, ASSUME/GUESS, LOUSY, SITUATION

2. **Sign Knowledge and Use Convey Message Intent:**
   **Positives:** THINK for ‘comes to mind’, HOLD-IN for ‘waiting with baited breath’, UP-ALL-NIGHT, KNOW-NOTHING, BAR-MITZVAH, IMPORTANT-very, WRONG-again & again, ISSUE-plural
   **Errors:** REMEMBER for REMIND, A-LOT-OF/MUCH for MANY, NOT+ NOT-YET for NOT-YET, HAVE for SINCE/HAVE–BEEN, INTERESTING for INTERESTED, USE for USUAL, V (n) for VT (v)
   **Note:** #2 errors generally include the word “for”.
   **Comments:**
   Consider fingerspelling more of the technical vocabulary in order to support your signs; for example, _____
   Sign for ‘_____’ may not be appropriate for use outside the classroom. Sometimes spoke words that were not signed; for example ________

3. **Space Used Effectively to Refer to Noun Referents:**
   **Positives or Negatives:**
   a. indexing and eye gaze to reference nouns; “Grandfather (NR), he (NR) spoke only few words” & “Each layer (NR) has different purpose.”
   b. directional verbs: TRANSFER-TO (camera to computer) & MATCH-WITH.
   c. body shift and indexing to contrast nouns: part one vs. part two.
   d. real world orientation: background vs. foreground & top, body, and bottom of page.
   **Errors/Omissions:**
   e. THAT and THIS on palm: “I will demo THAT in few minutes” & “Who is author of THIS poem.”
   f. vocalized pronouns but did not use indexing: “Project is different because it gives 2 classes” & “We’ll see how they work in HTML.”
   g. talk about things projected behind/beside without referencing: ‘describing white sections of board’.

4. **Non-Manual Signals Convey & Support Meaning**
   **Positives or Errors/Omissions:**
   a. facial expression for yes/no and WH questions.
   b. hold last sign & maintain eye contact when questioning.
   c. facial expression, pausing, & body shift for conditional statements.
   **Errors/Omissions:**
   d. sentences tend to ‘run together’: “Suppose you want to print? Then you should…”

5. **Classifiers Convey Accurate Information About the Physical World:**
   **Positives:**
   a. CL: CC for camera model, CL:BB for overlapping documents
   **Errors/Omissions:**
   b. should use CL:1 for showing movement in front of screen.
   c. incorrectly used CL: F (buttons on coat) for buttons on a tool bar.
   d. You used appropriate classifiers, however, production not always fluent/clear/controlled.
   **Comment:** Classifiers not used; not a negative.

6. **Discourse Organization is Visually Effective:**
   **Positives or Negatives:**
   a. rhetorical questions: “TODAY, DO-DO?” & “THAT HAPPEN, HOW?”
   b. listing: “four new things” & “kind of instruments”.
   c. body shifts & pauses to indicate transitions/ beginnings/ endings.
   d. specialized signs: FINISH, PUT-ASIDE, BACK-TO-POINT, NOW, & UP-TIL-NOW.
   **Errors/Omissions:**
   e. presented lists without appropriate pausing, body shifts, or non-dominant hand listing
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA) Observation

Instructor: ________________________________________  Taping Date: __________________________
Course: ________________________________________  Lesson Topic: ____________________________
Primary Communication Mode(s) Used: ______________________________________________________
Observer: ________________________________________  Observation Date: ______________________

Directions to observer: Examine instructor’s use of the six sign language linguistic features listed below. Please rate each feature by circling one of the numbers in boxes for each item. You may circle two numbers if you believe the instructor is “between” two numbers descriptors.

1. Signs & Fingerspelling
   Accurately Produced
   Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/Almost Always</th>
<th>Errors Did Not Interfere with Intelligibility</th>
<th>Errors Interfered Some with Intelligibility</th>
<th>Errors Interfered Significantly with Intelligibility</th>
<th>Generally Not Understandable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Sign Knowledge & Use Convey Message Intent
   Positives
   Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/Almost Always</th>
<th>Positives</th>
<th>Errors/Omissions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Space Used Effectively to Refer to Noun Referents
   Positives
   Errors/Omissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/Almost Always</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>About Half the Time</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never/Almost Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
   Positives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/Almost Always</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>About Half the Time</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never/Almost Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Errors/Omissions

5. Classifiers Convey Accurate Information about the
   Physical World
   Positives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/Almost Always</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>About Half the Time</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never/Almost Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Not Ratable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Errors/Omissions

6. Discourse Organization is Visually Effective
   Positives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/Almost Always</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>About Half the Time</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never/Almost Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Errors/Omissions

**Additional Comments** (Optional): Additional examples, comments about comprehension skills if clearly observable, & other comments pertinent to instructor’s classroom use of sign language based on observation. (Use other side of this page if additional comments.)

July 2005
Guidelines for Completing CSLA Reports
July 2005

1. Using the CSLA Report form, a CSLA Team member (generally one of Observers) records ratings, examples, & comments for sign language linguistic features & summarizes (any) additional comments by observers.

2. Reports are written to person receiving report. This requires use of 2nd person verbs; for example, “You used” or “Used”. “You” is understood and may or may not be written.

3. CSLA items #1, #2, and #5 lend themselves to listings, with the following guidelines: (a) signs in all caps, (b) hyphens between words when more than one word needed to represent a sign, & (c) commas between signs. Errors for #2 generally include the word “for”; for example, “some + time for sometimes.”

4. CSLA items #3, #4, and #6 lend themselves to use of phrases/sentences, with examples as appropriate.

5. For CSLA items #3-#6
   A. Letters from yellow laminated examples page for CSLA sign language linguistic features #3-#6 recorded on Observations are replaced with their corresponding phrases/sentences, followed by examples as appropriate. For example, “You often used body shift and indexing to contrast nouns; for example, teacher and students, home and work, two courses, and two computers. (See #3c on yellow laminated page; page 16 in this document.)
   B. Additional phrases/sentences, with examples, from Observations should be included as needed to accurately describe each instructor observed. For example, “Used directional verbs and eye gaze; for example, LOOK-AT reports and OBSERVE students.”

6. For CSLA items #3, #4, and #6, errors/omissions after Positives should be deleted.

7. For CSLA item #5, if NR (Not Ratable) official rating, in Report delete Positives & Errors/Omissions & include following:
   Comment: You did not use classifiers during this class. This is not a negative as there was no opportunities during the lesson where use of classifiers would have been appropriate and/or made your communication more effective.

8. When possible, include all information for each CSLA item on one page.

9. CSLA Team member scheduled to conduct follow-up meeting completes last two sections of CSLA Report: Priority Sign Language Linguistic Features for Skills Development and Courses/Activities Recommended for Skills Development.

10. For Priority Sign Language Linguistic Features for Skills Development, short phrases that use CSLA item wording that is in bold type should be written as appropriate (generally for items with ratings of 3 or lower). Also, Additional Comments may help identify priorities for improvement.

11. For the last three Report sections (Additional Comments, Priority Sign Language Linguistic Features for Skills Development, & Courses/Activities Recommended for Skills Development), insert a colon at end of each heading & add “None” if there are no comments.

aFor sample Observations, see CSLA Sample Observations & Reports (Reeves, Poor, & Caccamise, 2004).
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA) Report

Instructor: NAME                      Course: TITLE
Lesson Topic: TITLE                  Taping Date: DATE
Primary Communication Mode(s) Used: Report Date: DATE

Ratings for Six Sign Language Linguistic Features Important to Effective Classroom Communication with Deaf Students

Rating Scale for sign language features #1 & #2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/ Almost Always</th>
<th>Errors Did Not Interfere with Intelligibility</th>
<th>Errors Interfered Some with Intelligibility</th>
<th>Errors Interfered Significantly with Intelligibility</th>
<th>Generally Not Understandable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Signs and Fingerspelling Produced Accurately & Clearly**: This feature involves use of appropriate production characteristics of signs and fingerspelling. These include handshape, movement, placement/location, and orientation of the hands/arms while producing signs. Also included under sign and fingerspelling production are the appropriate positioning of hands and arms and their movement within the signing space.

Rating:

Errors:

2. **Sign Knowledge and Use Convey Message Intent**: This feature involves breadth of sign vocabulary knowledge and the ability to select and use signs appropriate to intended meanings. It also includes the ability to modify signs as appropriate to communicate more complex meanings; for example, number, size, degree, intensity, manner, distance, and time/duration.

Rating:

Positives:

Errors:

Comments:

Consider fingerspelling more of the technical vocabulary in order to support your signs; for example, _____.

Your sign for ‘____’ may not be appropriate for use outside the classroom.
**Rating scale for sign language features #3 to #6:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always/ Almost Always</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>About Half the Time</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Never/ Almost Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Space Used Effectively to Refer to Noun Referents:** This feature involves establishing and using referents for nouns in the signing space in order to discuss them and to compare and contrast ideas, people, and places. Skills important for this area are establishing points in space as referents, eye-gaze, producing noun signs so that they are consistent with real world orientation, using directional verbs consistently, and shifting of the body to show contrast/comparison and for assuming roles when reporting indirect discourse.

Rating:

Positives (or errors/omissions):

You (often, sometimes) used/did not use indexing and eye gaze to reference nouns; for example,

You (often, sometimes) used/did not use directional verbs to show relationships between nouns;

You (often, sometimes) used/did not use body shift and indexing to contrast nouns; for example,

You (often, sometimes) used/ did not use ‘real world orientation’ to show spatial relationships; for example,

Errors/Omissions:

You (often, sometimes) signed THAT and THIS on palm instead of connecting to noun referent; for example,

You (often, sometimes) vocalized pronouns (for example, he, you, they, & it), but did not use indexing to connect the pronoun to its noun referent; for example,

You (often, sometimes) talk about things projected behind and beside without referencing; for example,
4. **Non-Manual Signals Convey & Support Meaning:** This feature involves the use of facial expression, eye gaze, head movement, body shift, and pausing to convey information regarding sentence types; that is, to distinguish statements vs. questions, to distinguish Wh (what, who, etc.) from yes/no questions, and to mark conditional statements, rhetorical questions and topics. It also includes use of non-manual signals to convey information regarding relative size, degree, intensity, manner, distance, and time/duration.

Rating:

Positives (or errors/omissions):

You (often, sometimes) used/ did not use appropriate facial expression for yes/no and WH questions; for example,

You (often, sometimes) held/did not hold the last sign & maintain eye contact when questioning; for example,

You (often, sometimes) used/did not use appropriate facial expression, pausing, & body shift for making conditional statements; for example,

Errors/Omissions:

Your sentences (often, sometimes) tend to ‘run together’ with little pausing, body shift, or facial expression to separate ideas; for example,

5. **Classifiers Convey Accurate Information about the Physical World:** This feature involves the use of specified handshapes to communicate efficiently and effectively about the physical world. These specific handshapes are used to show location and movement of nouns, to describe nouns, to show how objects are handled, and to show how the body appears/moves. Classifiers are referred to/written about in the following way: CL:B for table located there.

Rating:

Positives:

Errors/Omissions:

You should use CL:
You incorrectly used CL:
You use appropriate classifiers, however, production not always fluent/clear/controlled.

Comment:

You did not use classifiers during this class. This is not a negative as there was no occasions during the lesson where use of classifiers would have been appropriate and/or made your communication more effective.
6. **Discourse Organization is Visually Effective:** This feature involves using signs and sign language techniques for organizing the whole, and the sub-narratives/statements within, in extended communication sequences (such as classroom lectures). Specialized signs (for example, NOW, FINISH & OFF-POINT), rhetorical questions, listing on the non-dominant hand for related items and sequence of events, and other signing techniques (for example, non-manual signals such as body shifts & pauses) are used to signal topic introductions, reviews, endings, transitions, and asides. These signs and techniques help to make the entire discourse visually clear and easy to follow.

Rating:

**Positives (or errors/omissions):**

You (often, sometimes) used/did not use rhetorical questions to organize lecture, or signal topics, subtopics and transitions; for example,

You used/did not use listing on the non-dominant hand to discuss nouns; for example, You (often, sometimes) used/did not use body shifts & pauses to indicate transitions/beginnings/endings.

You (often, sometimes) used/did not use specialized signs for marking transitions; for example, FINISH, PUT-ASIDE, BACK-TO-POINT, NOW, and UP-TIL-NOW, which could have made communication more effective.

**Errors/Omissions:**

You (often, sometimes) speak without signing.

**Additional Comments (Optional):** Additional examples, comments about comprehension skills if clearly observable, & other comments pertinent to instructor’s classroom use of sign language based on observation.

**Priority Sign Language Linguistic Features for Skills Development**

**Course/Activities Recommended for Skills Development**

---


July 2005
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)
Report Memorandum

TO: NAME
FROM: NAME, OCAS Coordinator
DATE:
SUBJECT: Your CSLA Result & Optional CSLA Follow-Up Meeting

Attached is a report of the ratings for your CSLA videotape. It includes evaluation of your use of six linguistic features of ASL that are important for classroom communication.

If you wish, you may contact me to schedule a CSLA Follow-Up Meeting to discuss your report and review your CSLA videotape.

To schedule a follow-up meeting, please contact me at E-MAIL or TELEPHONE # (V/TTY).

Also, enclosed are copies of the CSLA Process Evaluation Feedback form and the CSLA Videotape Release form. Please consider completing these forms and returning them to OCAS, BLDG., ROOM #. Thank you.

---

[a]This memorandum sent to instructors receiving ratings in the 4 to 5 range for all six sign language linguistic features. Instructors receiving one or more ratings below 4 are contacted by OCAS to schedule CSLA Follow-Up Meetings and instructors’ CSLA results are shared at these meetings.

[b]This paragraph is optional and instructor may only be sent one of these forms, the CSLA Process Evaluation Feedback form. If only the evaluation form is sent, paragraph is modified to reflect this.

July 2005
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)  
Follow-Up Meeting Principles & Guidelines  

July 2005

1. CSLA Follow-up Meetings are an integral component of the process for connecting CSLA results with opportunities for developing sign language communication skills.

2. The OCAS Coordinator designates a CSLA Team member to conduct a follow-up meeting.

3. Prior to each follow-up meeting, the designated team member reviews the instructor’s CSLA videotape and CSLA Report of Results. Also, the completed CSLA Observation Recording Forms may be reviewed in preparation for this meeting.

4. CSLA Follow-Up Meeting should begin with an in-depth discussion of the CSLA Report followed by a review of the instructor’s CSLA videotape.

5. During the follow-up meeting, using the instructor’s CSLA videotape, the following should be discussed:

   A. The instructor’s sign language strengths (generally each sign language linguistic feature rated between 4 and 5).
   B. The instructor's sign language skills recommended for improvement (generally sign language linguistic features rated below 4).
   C. Opportunities for developing sign language skills designed to address skills identified as needing improvement.

6. Instructor should then be given her/his CSLA Report, a copy of her/his CSLA videotape, and an envelope with an OCAS address label that contains a copy of the CSLA Process Evaluation Feedback form (pages 26-27). In addition, a copy of the CSLA Videotape Release Form (page 28) may be included in this envelope. This completes the CSLA process.
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA) Process Evaluation Feedback

Name: ________________________________ (optional)  Date: ________________________________

To assist us in providing quality CSLA services, we would appreciate if you would complete this questionnaire and return it to NAME, NTID Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS) Coordinator, LBJ-ROOM#, E-MAIL. Thank you.

1. CSLA information received prior to taping of my class provided a clear explanation of the CSLA process.

   | Strongly Agree | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | Strongly Disagree | 1 |
   |               |   |   |   |   |   |                      |   |
   Comments:

2. My CSLA videotape provides a good example of my use of sign language for teaching deaf students.

   | Strongly Agree | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | Strongly Disagree | 1 |
   |               |   |   |   |   |   |                      |   |
   Comments:

3. The person conducting my CSLA Follow-Up Meeting provided a clear and thorough explanation of my CSLA written report.

   | Strongly Agree | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | Strongly Disagree | 1 |
   |               |   |   |   |   |   |                      |   |
   Comments:

(over)
4. The CSLA process has provided me with valuable feedback on my classroom signing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Comments:

5. The CSLA process has provided adequate guidance for further development of my sign language skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Comments:

6. Please provide any suggested improvements and/or other comments you may wish to make for the CSLA.

July 2005
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)
Videotape Release Form

I grant the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology, the right to use the ______/_____/_______ CSLA video recording of me for (please check appropriate boxes): month day year

☐ Research
☐ Demonstration
☐ Training

Date ____________________________________________ Signature ____________________________________________

PLEASE PRINT: Name ____________________________________________

Dept. ____________________________________________

Bldg. __________ Room __________

Phone __________ E-Mail __________

Please return this form to NAME, NTID Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS) Coordinator, LBJ-ROOM #, E-MAIL, FAX.

February 2004
Classroom Sign Language Assessment (CSLA)
Release of Information Form

January 2004

I request that the National technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) share results of my ______/_____/______ CSLA with the following individuals/groups (please include addresses):

1.

2.

3.

4.

My signature below is my permission for NTID to share my CSLA results as requested above.

Please return this form to NAME, NTID Office of Communication Assessment Services (OCAS) Coordinator, LBJ-ROOM #, E-MAIL.

Signature of Individual Making Request  Date

Please print your name

CSLA_GMP.doc
9/16/05:mni 10/19/06 fce