TASK12 New Hampshire State Report

June 2018

Submitted by Jennifer Harvey,

TASK12 Project Director

Introduction

Training and Assessment Systems for K-12 Education Interpreters (TASK12) is a multi-state assessment and training program for interpreters working in education settings. The TASK12 project serves 14 States by providing on-site testing opportunities using the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA). Each State receives a research-based report with training and education recommendations based on interpreter performance. This report provides a summary of identified patterns in each domain area so that training opportunities can be addressed by the state.

TASK12 partners with the EIPA Diagnostic Center, located in Omaha, Nebraska, at Boys Town National Research Hospital (BTNRH), which is a non-profit organization dedicated to research, education, and clinical treatment of children and adults with hearing loss. BTNRH oversees the administration of the EIPA Diagnostic Center, approves all Local Test Administrators (LTA), coordinates the rating of assessments, and is the sole proprietary owner of the EIPA and all associated materials.

Overview of the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment

The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) was developed in 1991 from a team with the Boys Town National Research Hospital as a tool to evaluate the proficiency of sign language interpreters to work in K-12 educational settings. The EIPA allows exam candidates to select from Elementary or Secondary classroom settings and to interpret for students who use American Sign Language (ASL), Pidgin Sign English (PSE), or Manually Coded English (MCE). Candidates are assessed by a trained evaluation team on their expressive and

receptive skills as well as the ability to effectively manage the interpreting process. Candidates are assessed on his/her ability to effectively interpret the classroom content from the teacher as well as from the student. The EIPA rating team uses a Likert Scale to assess a variety of established criteria and domains. The scores from each evaluator are averaged in each of the skill domain areas, as well as for the overall assessment. The average from the overall assessment is the score that is assigned to the candidate. In addition to receiving an overall assessment score, each candidate is provided diagnostic feedback in each of the domain areas with suggestions for further development.   After the candidate has received results from the exam he/she will have an assessment score, classroom setting, and language system (e.g. Jane Doe EIPA 4.3 Secondary, ASL).

State Assessment Data

As a member state, a copy of each exam candidate's assessment is provided to TASK12. Data from each assessment was compiled, reviewed, and used to create this state report and recommendations. In June 2018, a total of two candidates took the EIPA in the following settings and language modes.

Table 1: Classroom setting and language mode taken by candidates

Classroom setting	Language modality	Number of candidates
Elementary	ASL	2
Elementary	PSE	0
Elementary	MCE	0
Secondary	ASL	0
Secondary	PSE	0
Secondary	MCE	0
	Total	2

A candidate can receive an EIPA score ranging from 0.0 to 5.0. It is essential to understand the descriptions of

each level provided from the Boys Town National Research Hospital:

Level 1: Beginner
Demonstrates very limited sign vocabulary with frequent errors in production. At times, production may be incomprehensible. Grammatical structure tends to be nonexistent. Individual is only able to communicate very simple ideas and demonstrates great difficulty comprehending signed communication. Sign production lacks prosody and use of space for the vast majority of the interpreted message.

An individual at this level is not recommended for classroom interpreting.

Level 2: Advanced Beginner
Demonstrates only basic sign vocabulary and these limitations interfere with communication. Lack of fluency and sign production errors are typical and often interfere with communication. The interpreter often hesitates in signing, as if searching for vocabulary. Frequent errors in grammar are apparent, although basic signed sentences appear intact. More complex grammatical structures are typically difficult. Individual is able to read signs at the word level and simple sentence level but complete or complex sentences often require repetitions and repairs. Some use of prosody and space, but use is inconsistent and often incorrect.

An individual at this level is not recommended for classroom interpreting.

Level 3: Intermediate
Demonstrates knowledge of basic vocabulary, but will lack vocabulary for more technical, complex, or academic topics. Individual is able to sign in a fairly fluent manner using some consistent prosody, but pacing is still slow with infrequent pauses for vocabulary or complex structures. Sign production may show some errors but generally will not interfere with communication. Grammatical production may still be incorrect, especially for complex structures, but is in general intact for routine and simple language. Comprehends signed messages but may need repetition and assistance. Voiced translation often lacks depth and subtleties of the original message. An individual at this level would be able to communicate very basic classroom content, but may incorrectly interpret complex information resulting in a message that is not always clear.

An interpreter at this level needs continued supervision and should be required to participate in continuing education in interpreting.

Level 4: Advanced Intermediate

Demonstrates broad use of vocabulary with sign production that is generally correct. Demonstrates good strategies for conveying information when a specific sign is not in her/his vocabulary. Grammatical constructions are generally clear and consistent, but complex information may still pose occasional problems. Prosody is good, with appropriate facial expression most of the time. May still have difficulty with the use of facial expression in complex sentences and adverbial non-manual markers. Fluency may deteriorate when rate or complexity of communication increases. Uses space consistently most of the time, but complex constructions or extended use of discourse cohesion may still pose problems. Comprehension of most signed messages at a normal rate is good but translation may lack some complexity of the original message.

An individual at this level would be able to convey much of the classroom content but may have difficulty with complex topics or rapid turn taking.

Level 5: Advanced

Demonstrates broad and fluent use of vocabulary, with a broad range of strategies for communicating new words and concepts. Sign production errors are minimal and never interfere with comprehension. Prosody is correct for grammatical, non-manual markers, and affective purposes. Complex grammatical constructions are typically not a problem. Comprehension of sign messages is very good, communicating all details of the original message.

An individual at this level is capable of clearly and accurately conveying the majority of interactions within the classroom.

Each State has different requirements for the minimum score an interpreter must receive to be allowed to work in the classroom. Most require at least a 3.5 or above. It is important to note that based on the assertion of the BTNRH and industry standards, a person with a score below a 3.0 does not demonstrate the ability to effectively manage the interpretation process and is not recommended for any type of classroom interpreting. The overall scores for this group of candidates range from 2.9 to 3.7 on the EIPA 5-point scale.

Table 2: June 2018 New Hampshire EIPA Scores

	Setting	Language	Roman I	Roman II	Roman III	Roman IV	EIPA Score
Participant 1	Elementary	ASL	2.8	2.6	4.0	2.2	2.9
Participant 2	Elementary	ASL	4.1	2.8	4.7	3.3	3.7
Averages			3.5	2.7	4.4	2.7	3.3

Table 3: Range of New Hampshire EIPA scores

Range EIPA Levels	Number of candidates
Below 3.0	1
3.0 - 3.4	0
3.5 - 3.9	1
Above 4.0	0

Pattern Analysis and Recommendations

This summary of results has been developed through examination of the overall data and individual feedback each interpreter received. When reviewing the data from all of the results, often patterns emerge of professional development needs for the group of candidates who took the assessment. While there are numerous areas where improvements need to be made, the most predominant patterns within the group are discussed. For consistency purposes, some of the terms and descriptions below are taken directly from the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment: Glossary of EIPA Terminology, written by Kevin Williams and

Brenda Schick. The term ASL will be used throughout the remainder of the report and is intended to include all contact variety of sign language systems.

Upon analysis of the EIPA results from the June 2018 testing in New Hampshire, the TASK12 Project has identified patterns of skill development areas in need of further training. Each area is listed in Roman numeral order, as is found in the EIPA evaluation instrument.

Roman I: Interpreter Product – Voice-to-Sign

This domain of skills evaluated is related to the classroom portion of the exam interpreting the spoken English instruction/discussion from teachers and students into the appropriate sign language system used by the student who is deaf. The effectiveness of the interpretation in areas related to language prosody, production, and grammar are measured.

The average scores for both candidates (88%) were low in every category of this domain. The three lowest have been identified as critical areas that need attention.

1. Prosodic information related to the register
2. Signing space: Incorporation and use space for event sequence, cause/effect, and compare/contrast
3. Signing space: Incorporation and use of ASL classifier system

1. *Prosodic information related to register*

Candidates scored an average of 2.9 in this skill domain. Register is the variety of language that can be used for a particular purpose or in a particular social settings. Registers are usually characterized by differences in vocabulary selection that create variations in level of formality. In linguistics the different levels of register are Frozen, Formal, Consultative, Informal, and Intimate. The register used by people in various settings also guide the amount of interaction that is invited by participating parties. For example if a person is giving a presentation in formal register he/she will make vocabulary selections and create certain cues that let the audience know that it is not interactive. By contrast if a presentation is consultative, the vocabulary and cues will invite the audience to participate. It is important that the interpretation reflect the range of register being conveyed by the teacher and the setting so to foster appropriate cues for participation by the student. The age of students and status of people in the classroom certainly has an impact on level of register and should be reflected in the interpretation.

Recommendation for skill development

•   Study the various levels of register used in both spoken English and ASL. Purposefully observe the levels of register being used in various settings and the type of vocabulary and cues that are used to create social distance or invite participation. Practice different decisions that can be made in the interpretation to reflect the identified levels of register. Record interpretations specifically focusing on vocabulary choices that impact register and assess the interpretation for effectiveness. Focus particularly on register of different age, settings, and status.

- Attend trainings about register in linguistics. Trainings can be found on this topic that are not specifically designed for ASL interpreters but general field of linguistics or translation.

2. *Signing space: Incorporation and use of space for event sequence, cause/effect, and compare/contrast*

Candidates scored an average of 3.2 in this skill domain. Because sign language is a visual language it utilizes many important spatial elements to convey meaning. Some of these spatial elements are effectively using various spatial markers to compare and contrast things, clearly indicate events in time, and show a cause and effect.

Recommendation for skill development

- View various ASL texts by people who are Deaf. Watch for the many ways Deaf presenters incorporate spatial features in their discourse. Create a spatial map for the text. This will help you recognize how Deaf people effectively incorporate space in ASL.

- Record an English to ASL interpretation. Analyze the interpretation for effective use of spatial features as well as missed opportunities. Create a spatial map of the source message. Reinterpret the message incorporating the practiced spatial features.

- Work with a Deaf Language Mentor on learning and incorporating more rich ASL spatial features.

3. *Signing space: Incorporation and use of ASL classifiers*

Candidates scored an average of 3.2 in this skill domain. ASL has a rich system of specific handshapes used to represent nouns and verbs to show the size, shape, matter, manner, and action of things. There are many classifiers to represent noun categories or class of objects. These classifiers also give descriptive information about a subject or predicate. There are rules to the type of handshape and movement that is used in each of the classifier categories. Interpreters will often misuse classifiers or only incorporate a very small number of basic classifiers.

Recommendations for skill development

- Spatial organization (building a visual scaffold in the interpretation), particularly incorporating classifiers as needed. Develop familiarity with the variety of classifiers and be sure to follow the grammatical rules of classifiers. Enhance the ability to incorporate ASL classifier systems into the interpretations (to represent nouns, noun activity, and prepositional relationships). When prepositions are used in spoken English (especially in more descriptive narratives), ASL classifiers should be incorporated. Be sure to label the classifier being used.

- View various ASL texts by people who are Deaf. Watch for the many ways Deaf presenters incorporate classifiers in their discourse. Shadow the form and function for how the classifiers are used in the text. This will help you recognize how Deaf people effectively incorporate space in ASL.

- Record an English to ASL interpretation. Analyze the interpretation for effective use of classifiers as well as missed opportunities. Reinterpret the message, incorporating the practiced spatial features.

- Work with a Deaf Language Mentor on learning and incorporating a broad range of classifiers in ASL.

- Create presentations (not interpretations) in ASL incorporating classifiers.

Roman II: Interpreter Product – Sign-to-Voice

This domain of skills evaluated is related to the receptive portion of the exam, interpreting the message from the student who is Deaf into spoken English. The effectiveness of the interpretation in areas related to comprehension, fluency, vocal intonation, and semantics are measured.

The average scores for both candidates (100%) were low in every category of this domain. The three lowest have been identified as critical areas that need attention.

1. Comprehends and accurately conveys student's fingerspelling and numbers
2. Comprehends and conveys student's non-manual markers and ASL morphology
3. Vocal intonation – accurately conveys emphasis on important words and/or phrases

1. Comprehends and accurately conveys student's fingerspelling and numbers

Candidates scored an average of 2.5 in this skill domain. Interpreters commonly find the receptive task of sign-to-voice interpreting challenging. Educational interpreters often face an even greater challenge because in many cases their exposure to ASL is limited to the student they work with. To add to this, the student may speak for himself/herself or not participate regularly in class, so there may be limited opportunities to interpret from ASL to English. On top of this, interpreters find reading fingerspelling and numbers an even

greater challenge. It is imperative that interpreters develop their comprehension skills so that students can openly and activity participate in their academic and social learning.

Recommendation for skill development

- Create opportunities for more exposure to the Deaf Community and users of ASL.

- Keep a journal of fingerspelled words and numbers observed regularly used by users of ASL.

- View ASL text of Deaf people and identify fingerspelled words and numbers. Stop and write any words and numbers you see, even if only partially. After viewing the entire text, watch it again and use the context to check your work and fill in any gaps.

2. Comprehends and conveys student's non-manual markers and ASL morphology

Candidates scored an average of 2.3 in this skill domain. Non-manual markers (NMM) are various facial expressions, head tilting, shoulder movement, and mouth signals that create descriptive meaning of a sign and classifier. Both ASL and PSE use non-manual markers that are necessary to convey important grammatical information such as sentence types, adverb/adjective descriptive information, and emotive behaviors in a message. It is common for second language learners of ASL to struggle with comprehension of NMM. If a non-manual marker is missed it often will change the meaning of the word and concept that is being conveyed. There are a rich variety of non-manual markers that interpreters must learn and understand to be able to interpret them effectively.

Recommendation for skill development

- Work with a Deaf Language Mentor on learning and comprehension of ASL NMM.

- Watch ASL text from people who are Deaf and identify when ASL NMM are being used. Practice a variety of possible interpretations for those concepts.

3. Vocal intonation – accurately conveys emphasis on important words and/or phrases

Candidates scored an average of 2.5 in this skill domain. The intent of a message is the goal of the message the sender intends to convey and communicate with the receiver. Some types of overall intent could be to educate, inform, entertain, persuade, demonstrate, etc. There is the overall intent of a message and there is also a range of intent. This range of intent is conveyed through the vocal intonation of how words, phrases, and concepts are delivered. If the intent or range of intent is not conveyed accurately the receiver may not comprehend the point of the message. Strong vocal and intonation features also assist with the cohesion of the message.

Recommendation for skill development

- View various ASL text from people who are Deaf and identify the overall intent as well as the range of intent within the discourse. Interpret the message, placing emphasis on the necessary words and phrases to convey the intent of each particular concept.

- Record an interpretation. Assess the spoken English interpretation without viewing the source message. Listen for the vocal intonation that is used for effectiveness and missed opportunities. Record a second interpretation incorporating features from missed opportunities.

Roman III: Vocabulary

This domain of skills evaluated is related to vocabulary. The effectiveness of the interpretation in areas related to vocabulary production, fluency, and appropriate use are measured.

The average scores for both candidates (100%) were higher in every category of this domain except for two. The two lowest have been identified as critical areas that need attention.

1. Key vocabulary is represented
2. Appropriate use of fingerspelling

1. Signs – Key vocabulary is represented

Candidates scored an average of 3.0 in this skill domain. Students are learning new vocabulary at an astounding rate each day. Increasing students' vocabulary is essential for promoting literacy. Teachers will use specific vocabulary in their instruction which also appear in readings, assignments, and tests. Interpreters may choose to omit fingerspelled words or reduce the number of times it is spelled. Regular exposure to a word helps not only with the definition but informs the student of the layered concept and context it conveys. It

also helps in the retention and recognition of the word. A didactic approach should be used by the interpreter when incorporating fingerspelling.

Recommendation for skill development

- Ask for materials from the classroom teacher to prep. This will help identify key vocabulary words, definitions, and spelling, which help the interpreter be more comfortable with incorporating them into the interpretation.

- Ask the classroom teacher what key vocabulary words will be taught and used in printed materials.

- Practice including key vocabulary words consistently throughout the interpretation. The words should at a minimum show up in the beginning, middle, and end of the message.

2. Fingerspelling – Appropriate use of fingerspelling

Candidates scored an average of 2.7 in this skill domain. In addition to avoiding fingerspelling the word, interpreters may also choose to invent a sign for the word to avoid taking the time to spell it. This not only robs the opportunity for the student to learn the word, but it also doesn't adhere to the norms of ASL. Fingerspelling is a common part of ASL and occurs regularly in native ASL users. Additionally, interpreters are often one of the few and maybe only language models for the student who is Deaf. Inventing signs creates vocabulary that can only be understood by the student and the interpreter. When the student enters a

different school, meets other ASL users, and/or goes out into the world as an adult he/she will use vocabulary that won't be understood by other ASL users. This can cause isolation and limit ASL and English proficiency.

Recommendation for skill development

- Work with a Deaf Language Mentor on understanding and implementing appropriate uses for fingerspelling.

- Listen to spoken English text or read written English text and identify all of the words that should be fingerspelled. Work with peers and/or mentors to compare words that they identified.

- Ask for materials from the classroom teacher to prep. This will help identify key vocabulary words, definitions, and spelling, which help the interpreter be more comfortable with incorporating them into the interpretation.

- Ask the classroom teacher what key vocabulary words will be taught and used in printed materials.

Roman IV: Overall Factors

This domain of skills evaluated is related to vocabulary. The effectiveness of the interpretation in areas related to vocabulary production, fluency, and appropriate use are measured.

The average scores for fifteen candidates (80%) were low in every category of this domain. The two lowest have been identified as critical areas that need attention.

1. Demonstrated appropriate process time sign-to-voice

2. Follows principles of discourse mapping

2. Message processing – Demonstrated appropriate process time sign-to-voice

Candidates scored an average of 2.5 in this skill domain. Process time is the amount of time that passes between receiving the source message and rendering an equivalent interpretation into the target language. It is vital that an interpreter allow for enough process time to analyze the message from the source language and make the necessary cultural and linguistic adjustments before producing an equivalent message in the target language. Research has shown that not enough process time creates a higher number of miscues in the interpretation. Too much process time will impact the interpreter's ability to recall the information. Interpreters often function on a lexical level with their process time. The interpreter should have a range of process time that he/she can manage effectively.

Recommendation for skill development

- Enhance working, short-term, and long-term memory. There are many general activities and techniques available for improving one's memory.

- Practice consecutive interpreting regularly. Consecutive interpreting forces the interpreter to wait longer for more information before rendering the interpretation. This increases memory and encourages understanding a concept before making linguistic and cultural interpretation decisions.

- Watch and listen to various ASL and English texts while practicing whole thought processing.

3. Message clarity – Follows principles of discourse mapping

Candidates scored an average of 2.2 in this skill domain. Effective discourse mapping establishes message cohesion through the effective incorporation of topic markers, classifiers, contrast space, and pronoun use. Consistent and accurate spatial maps help to organize, describe, compare, and establish discourse referents. It creates the overall organization and contextual coherence of a message. Discourse mapping is a high-level skill that requires training and purposeful practice to develop.

<u>Recommendation for skill development</u>

- Read the article *The Meaning of Texts* by Anna Witter-Merithew and regularly put into practice performing the ten step discourse analysis. https://www.unco.edu/cebs/asl-interpreting/pdf/library/meaning-of-texts.pdf

- Complete the Analyzing Discourse independent study packet by Digiterp Communications. http://digiterp.com/parallel/AnalyzingDiscourse.pdf

- Record interpretations using the ten step discourse analysis process. Analyze the interpretation for incorporation of discourse mapping principles. Perform additional interpretations as needed to incorporate discourse mapping features.

- Attend training on principles of discourse mapping.

TASK12
Training and Assessment Systems for K–12 Educational Interpreters

Summary

The level of services being provided by interpreters in the classroom have a direct impact on the education of a child who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing. It is the HOPE of that the state report can be used to better understand the quality of interpretation services being provided and guide in the types of training opportunities that can assist in promoting elevating those services. Please contact TASK12 Project Director, Jennifer Harvey jenn.harvey@usu.edu with any questions.

Resources

- Many Universities offer onsite and/or online Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate programs in ASL/English Interpreting. A list of accredited interpreter education programs can be found at
  http://ccie-accreditation.org/accreditation/accredited-programs-2/

- Boys Town National Research Hospital classroom interpreting
  https://www.classroominterpreting.org/About/index.asp

- National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE) http://naiedu.org/

- Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT) http://www.cit-asl.org/new/

- The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) https://www.rid.org/

- Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center http://www3.gallaudet.edu/clerc-center.html

- The TASK12 Project has presented seventeen cohorts of Training Interpreters in Public Schools (TIPS) for interpreters in TASK12 states.

Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) at Utah State University is the home for both the TASK12 and the TIPS Projects. Future testing times in all fourteen TASK12 States are listed at www.task12.org and contain all contact and interpreter testing information.

Electronic (PDF) Copies: Santina Thibedeau, Special Education Director, New Hampshire

Joanne DeBello, TASK12 Board Member, New Hampshire

Individual interpreter data are forthcoming from LeeAnn Lundgreen in the TASK12 Office.