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Teaching to Self-Assess: Developing Critical Thinking Skills for Student Interpreters

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In an effort to teach critical thinking skills to interpreting students, our educational interpreting program has stopped providing direct feedback on their interpreted work. We believe that independent practitioners need to be skilled at self-assessment rather than relying on external ratings of performance; thus, for the last 2 years, I have taught and then graded students on the efficacy of their self-assessment of their own work. To assess this change, I analyzed the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) ratings of students who received direct feedback and those who learned to self-assess. The findings indicate that the students who were taught self-assessment yielded statistically significant higher final EIPA ratings than those who were given direct feedback. These findings suggest that a subtle shift in how interpreter educators teach and assess student work can significantly improve students' actual interpreting performance and potentially better prepare them as lifelong learners.

Studies of Higher Order Thinking and Self-Assessment

Critical thinking is defined as an "intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by,

observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (Scriven & Paul, 1996, p. 1). From this definition, there can be little doubt that the work of American Sign Language – English (ASL-English) interpreters involves significant critical thinking skills. As practitioners and educators, we know that interpreters analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information as they discern and convey meaning between two languages while incorporating all the nuanced features of the exchange, the communicators, and the setting. Moreover, interpreters are evaluating moment to moment and afterwards are reflecting on the overall efficacy of the interpretation. This in-the-moment evaluation can change the direction or approach of the interpretation, while the postassignment reflection allows interpreters to focus on their professional development, allowing them to consider potential coping strategies for managing similar discourse events during future interpretations.

Teaching Higher Order Thinking

Higher education as a whole has shifted from pedagogical approaches based on teaching to approaches focused on student learning (Fitzmaurice, 2010) with the overall goal of adult education "to produce graduates who are critical thinkers, independent learners, and reflective and ethical citizens who are deeply committed to lifelong learning" (Napier, 2011). Learning, then, can often be framed as a social process where learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning (Király, 2000). Because learning is an interactive process, it requires empowering learners as "autonomous thinking individuals whose capacity for meaning-making is no less valuable than that of the instructor" (Varney, 2009, p. 29). This requires the development of higher order thinking skills: an undergraduate benchmark competency in many institutions of higher education. Across all disciplines, 28% of teachers consider such higher order thinking skills essential (Cross, 2005).

"Often faculty [in general undergraduate education] hold higher-order thinking as a goal, but it is not clear that their instructional practice goes as far as it might to help students develop their higher-order thinking" (Ludwig, 2000, Technology Section). For example, Kowalczyk,

Hackworth, and Case-Smith (2012) found that instructors in radiologic sciences thought critical thinking skills were important to teach and believed critical thinking was necessary for success of the student. However, an analysis of instructors' confidence in their own critical thinking skills and their ability to assess and teach critical thinking indicated instructors wanted further professional development in this area. In other words, "evidence shows gaps exist between what the educators may believe to be critical thinking and their abilities to promote it within the classroom (Kowalczyk et al., 2012, p. 232)

Specific to ASL-English interpreting education, Winston (2005) asserts that it is vital that students develop the "higher order thinking and analysis skills that interpreters need to be competent practitioners" (p. 219). Toward this end, in an analysis of the teaching goals of ASL-English interpreter educators in the United States, Fitzmaurice (2010) found that these educators, in their teaching goals, place far more emphasis on the development of higher order thinking skills than do educators from most other disciplines. As opposed to other disciplines, interpreter educators rated the most important teaching goals as (a) problem-solving, (b) thinking for self, and (c) analytic skills. Fitzmaurice also found these goals were consistent regardless of whether interpreter educators were employed in a full-time or adjunct capacity or in either a 2-year or a 4-year institution, further emphasizing the importance interpreter educators place on higher order thinking skills.

Fitzmaurice's findings echo those of Winston (2005), who found that interpreter educators "valued activities that lead students toward constructing their own knowledge through critical thinking, decision making, and self-assessment" (p. 220). Because higher order skills, such as critical thinking, decision making, and self-assessment, reach across all areas of interpreting, "educators need to understand how to develop these skills and processes in interpreting students" (p. 229). This chapter describes an attempt to develop those higher order self-assessment skills in students.

Self-Assessment in General Education

Brookfield (1986) points out that evaluating adult learners is challenging because of the tension between the environment of teacher-student trust

each educator aspires to create and the critical judgments that can damage that trust. As a result, many students learn to be "competitive, to seek external approval rather than trust their own creative instincts, and to avoid making mistakes at all costs. Many learn that tests are traps, tricking them into failing" (Fenwick & Parsons, 2009, p. 19). Further, Thomas, Martin, and Pleasants (2011) argue that college students in general become disengaged with the assessment process in higher education. They contend the best way to remedy such disengagement is for all students in all disciplines to practice making judgments about their own learning and direction through self- and peer-assessment activities.

To mitigate this, Fenwick and Parsons (2009) clearly state one of the core purposes of effective educational evaluation is to develop self-assessment in learners. "New knowledge and habits of behavior are only incorporated into long-term changes when learners develop strategies and criteria for monitoring their own ongoing performance" (Fenwick & Parsons, 2009, p. 5). Wiggins and McTighe (2005) add "we need to put students in a position to learn far more, on their own, than they can ever learn from us" (p. 44). Wiggins and McTighe align with Bruner (1960) in that not making clear how skills fit into the larger context is uneconomical because students "can do low-level tasks but are universally weak in higher-order work that requires transfer" (p. 45). Wiggins and McTighe (2005) suggest educators often confuse teaching with learning (p. 44) when they cover concepts without uncovering their value as the result of inquiry and argument.

Kruger and Dunning (1999) suggest that overall skill level is positively related to success at self-assessment. They overwhelmingly found that weak students tend to overpredict their mastery of skills and knowledge, whereas strong performers often underestimate their work. These researchers noted that as students become more skilled in their respective domains, they should become better at self-assessment if they are explicitly taught self-assessment techniques. And, by extension, greater skill translates into more accurate self-assessment.

Similarly, Lew, Alwis, and Schmidt (2010) investigated students' ability to assess their own work and whether college students' self-assessments would improve with independent practice. In their study, students were asked to make 80 self-assessments over the course of a semester. These

self-assessments were then compared to peer and tutor assessments of the same work. Correlations were quite small, suggesting that students were rather unsuccessful at assessing their own work with little to no improvement in accuracy over time. However, McDonald and Boud (2003) trained general education high school students in self-assessment techniques, showing that students' performance on end-of-semester exams was much better for those who had been trained in self-assessment. In other words, it is possible to learn effective self-assessment skills (Kruger & Dunning, 1999; McDonald & Boud, 2003).

To assess clinical skills, Srinivasan, Hauer, Der-Martirosian, Wilkes, and Gesundheit (2007) had medical students self-assess their clinical skills after taking a clinical exam. One month later the same students watched a video of their exam performance and again rated their skills. Half of the students were given feedback just before they watched the video and redid the self-assessment. Correlations remained low for the reassessment if students were not provided with feedback. When benchmark feedback was supplied prior to the reassessment, then performance improved significantly. Clearly, just viewing the footage without any feedback did not improve their ability to improve their self-assessment skills, meaning that although self-assessment can be taught, students need feedback on how to improve their own self-assessments. Students self-reflect inaccurately without intervention, yet with practice-based learning exercises that incorporate feedback, students can improve self-assessment skills.

Replicating this finding, Redwood, Winning, Lekkas, and Townsend (2010) demonstrated that merely having dental students watch videotapes of other dental students does not improve their ability to assess clinical activities. When the observation was coupled with discussions about the criteria and standards necessary for good clinical skills, then students were better able to apply the relevant assessment criteria. Matching and calibrating self-assessments with external ratings and criteria, however, is also important. For example, Ross (2006) indicates the most effective approach is for teachers and students to clearly delineate the standards or criteria for self-assessment. Furthermore, Thomas et al. (2011) found that cooperatively determining the criteria is an important factor, with students reporting that providing the assessment metric beforehand was very helpful.

Self-Assessment in Interpreter Education

Nicodemus and Emmorey (2012) argue that the skills of self-monitoring and self-assessment for signed language target messages are difficult to master because of the kinesthetic nature of the task. They found "bimodal interpreters (especially novice interpreters) may be better able to self-monitor their spoken than their signed output because auditory feedback plays a larger role than visual feedback" (p. 11). In other words, most interpreters have significantly more practice with self-monitoring and assessing for spoken language output than signed language output. This poses a significant problem for ASL-English interpreting students who may not yet be able to monitor or assess their output while working because they have not been taught how. As a result, interpreters must instead must pay extra attention to their post hoc assessments of interpretations to develop effective self-monitoring of sign language production (which requires both visual and kinesthetic input).

Consequently, more and more interpreter educators have moved away from conduit model, error analysis evaluations (Wilcox & Shaffer, 2005) and turned to the teaching of self-assessment. Stauffer (2011), for example, argues that "an interpreter's ability to self-assess is a fundamental requirement for determining readiness to accept an assignment and for setting realistic goals for self-guided continuing education" (p. 1), while both Király (2003) and Macnamara (2009) argue that expert interpreters monitor, evaluate, and revise their thinking processes, their tentative interpretation, and their final product. Patrie (2004) stresses the importance of self-assessment in terms of improving performance, and Winston (2005) reminds us that "interpreting educators have long recognized the need to help students develop competence in self-assessment" (p. 212).

Stauffer (2011) suggests that faculty use self- and peer-assessments as part of classroom feedback, while noting the lack of empirical evidence to support the efficacy of this approach. Examining the accuracy of self-assessment on student ASL competency, Stauffer contrasted 156 student self-assessments against the assessment of 10 instructional faculty. Using the standardized criteria identified on the Sign Communication Proficiency Interview, Stauffer found strong correlations between student and faculty assessments, suggesting that students have a "moderate ability

to assess their ASL competency similarly to their instructors" (p. 89). However, student self-assessments did not improve as they progressed through more advanced studies. Stauffer argues that if students were explicitly taught how to self-assess, their ability to do so may improve, concluding by asking for more research to "determine if self-assessment can serve as an accurate measurement of student learning and progress" (p. 90). Addressing the issue of calibrating self-assessments with external criteria, Bowen-Bailey, Gordon, Jones, and Shaffer (2012) report that teaching focused specifically on specific EIPA competencies tended to improve working educational interpreter's EIPA score by 0.25. Each of these working interpreters knew the specific criterion.

As this literature review suggests, general undergraduate education educators believe higher order thinking skills such as self-assessment are essential skills to be taught (Cross, 2005; Kowalczyk et al., 2012; Ludwig, 2000;). Within interpreter education, there is an added emphasis on developing higher order thinking skills in future interpreters (Fitzmaurice, 2010; Winston, 2005). More specific to self-assessment skills, there is much evidence that self-assessment helps engage higher education students (Thomas et al., 2011) and can be taught (Kruger & Dunning, 1999; McDonald & Boud, 2003; Redwood et al., 2010; Srinivasan et al., 2007) in a variety of academic disciplines. Although the self-monitoring of sign language may be difficult for novice interpreters (Nicodemus & Emmorey, 2012), post hoc self-assessment by ASL students is generally effective (Stauffer, 2011). The goal of the research reported here is to determine if the interpreter education field can empower students to accurately self-assess their work, allow them to relinquish total reliance on teacher opinions (Blanche, 1988), and better prepare them for the autonomy of the interpreting field (Stauffer, 2011; Winston, 2005).

The Stage

The 4-year Modern Languages Program in ASL at Clemson University has an optional ASL-English Educational Interpreting specialization. For this specialization, students take a specific bundle of courses including four educational interpreting skills–building courses. These skills courses include Interpreting in Elementary Schools I and Interpreting in Secondary Schools I with companion, and more advanced

courses including Elementary Schools II and Interpreting in Secondary Schools II. Historically, the educational interpreting program required students to submit interpreting samples either live or by recording, and faculty and peers would provide feedback on what portions of the interpretation were effective and what components of the interpreted product needed attention. Although students would self-assess their interpreting samples, it tended to be relatively superficial with feedback relating to a specific skill set—for example, missed opportunities to employ ASL classifier-predicates or poor fingerspelling. Students would then take that feedback and redo the interpreted texts to improve the areas identified by the faculty member.

Overall, the assessment metrics were typically not calibrated, ranging from prefabricated, instructor-provided assessment criteria or co-created assessment criteria determined in conjunction with the students. In other words, the program had been using a variety of metrics, and assessments were generally *external* to the student because they were predominantly provided by faculty. In terms of exit standards, as the program focuses entirely on educational interpreting, students took the American Sign Language – Pidgin Signed English (ASL-PSE) version of the EIPA assessment (see Schick & Williams, 2004; Schick, Williams, & Kupermintz, 2005) for exit examination purposes in the middle of their last interpreting skills course (Elementary Schools II or Interpreting in Secondary Schools II).

This structure yielded inconsistent results. There were no standardized, consistent criteria for performance, nor was there much opportunity to develop self-assessment skills. We recognize interpreters work in isolation; thus, after graduation, we were unconvinced program alumni were well-equipped to continue to develop their professional skills as they depended too heavily on the feedback of others. Ultimately, faculty could not clearly articulate how we were imparting critical thinking skills. We needed to change.

What we Changed

The framework supporting this initiative is founded on the concept that assessment is an important part of the learning process and, as such, must be included in the entire instructional design process. As Wiggins

and McTighe (2005) argue, "we are not likely to achieve our target of understanding – however we define the term – unless we are clear about what counts as evidence of that understanding" (p. 47). Using an *Understanding by Design* template (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), we determined that critical thinking and self-assessments were key understandings for entry-level interpreters. For our purposes, we held to the idea that critical thinking can be evidenced in self-assessment tasks, and interpreting students can learn post hoc self-assessment skills with guidance from teachers. Thus, the intent of framework developed here is to eliminate the direct teaching of discrete interpreting skills in students and move toward empowering students to improve their own self-assessment through guided work.

As an ASL-English Educational Interpreting Program, the faculty unanimously adopted the EIPA metric (see Schick & Williams, 2001, 2004), which is available for public use. The EIPA is a psychometrically valid and reliable instrument, specifically designed to evaluate the bi-directional aspects of interpreting necessary to support language and cognitive development in elementary and secondary classroom settings (Schick & Williams, 2001). Educational Interpreter samples are assessed using a standard Likert scale from 0 (no skills) to 5 (advanced) on 38 specific competencies across four major domain areas, including:

I.	Sign to Voice:	Interpreting a series of classroom lectures
II.	Voice to Sign:	Interpreting an interview with a student who is deaf or hard of hearing
III.	Vocabulary:	Assessment of the vocabulary, fingerspelling, and number production and reception
III.	Overall Factors:	Assessment of the overall factors in the interpreted product

Profiles of performance expectations for Educational Interpreters functioning at various levels can be found in Appendix A. We have historically used the EIPA metric as our program exit assessment tool because it is the predominant standard our graduates were being held to in educational interpreting employment opportunities. We continued using the EIPA because it had served well as the end-of-curriculum exit standard we had already been using.

Beginning the 2014–2015 academic year, *all* interpreting skills courses extensively reviewed the EIPA competencies at the beginning of each course (Schick & Williams, 2004). In all (i.e., both beginning and advanced) interpreting courses throughout the first 2 weeks, faculty modeled self-assessment of their own video-recorded interpretations by reviewing their interpreted work using the EIPA competencies during class time for students to observe. Gradually, students were asked to peer-assess faculty interpretations using the same competencies. Initially, the modeling was similar to selective watching (Winston, 2000) to assist students in both recognizing and identifying the individual criterion in the EIPA metric while also modeling how to self-assess. As the semester went on, faculty reduced the amount of modeling on interpreted work and began to focus on providing feedback of students' self-assessments of their own interpreting work.

Throughout each term, faculty only provide formative feedback and guidance on the students' self-assessments of their own interpreted products, consistently reminding students of the rationale for not providing direct evaluation and choosing to have students practice self-assessments only. These explicit discussions also served to help faculty resist giving direct feedback on the interpreting work.

Because all interpreting students took the EIPA assessment in the middle of their last interpreting skills course (Elementary Schools II or Interpreting in Secondary Schools II), for this study, the final EIPA scores from the 2012–2014 academic years served as the control group and the final EIPA scores from the 2014–2016 academic years were analyzed. To provide some additional texture on the student perspective of this teaching shift, we also analyzed student comments on the institution-wide, end-of-course student assessment of teaching ratings to cull any feedback from students directly related to this change in teaching method. Lastly, we also asked faculty about their perceptions of this change.

What we Found

The 2012–2014 group consisted of 11 students (n = 11), and the 2014–2016 group had 6 students (n = 6), all between the ages of 20 and 24 years. In the 2012–2014 group, 91% of the students were female and all

students in this group were Caucasian. In the 2014–2016 classes, 83% of the group were female and 17% were male. Of the latter group, 83% were Caucasian and 17% were African American (n = 1). No student in either group had parents who used ASL as their primary language, and all students had entered college with no prior ASL skills. One student from each the 2012–2014 and 2014–2016 groups was a transfer student who had some previous ASL coursework at a 2-year institution.

The final mean EIPA score for the 2012–2014 group was 2.7 (n = 11). The final EIPA rating for the 2014–2016 group was 3.4 (Table 1).

Analyses of the differences in the final EIPA scores between the 2012–2014 classes and the 2014–2016 classes found that the results from the T-test ($t = -3.56245$, $p = .001418$, $p < .05$) were significant, as were those from the analysis of variance (ANOVA) ($F = 12.69103$, $p = .002836$, $p < .05$). The score of the 2014–2016 group was significantly higher. Although there may be factors such as classroom cohesion, prior student language competencies, or other subtle curriculum shifts that had some impact, these findings provide some compelling evidence that the teaching of self-assessment yields much better results for our students, with no other factor–such as gender, race, being a transfer student—having any significance on the EIPA rating.

Table 1. Demographics and EIPA Score for Each Group.

		2012–2014	2014–2016
Number of Students		11	6
Gender	Female	91%	83%
	Male	9%	17%
Race/Ethnicity	Caucasian	100%	83%
	African American	0%	17%
Parental Hearing Status	Deaf	0%	0%
	Hearing	100%	100%
Mean EIPA Score		2.9	3.4

Student Reflections

Because this was an action research project, we did not purposefully collect any qualitative responses to this pedagogical shift. However, some of the comments from the institution-wide *Student Evaluation of Teaching* provided some interesting insights. When asked to "please comment on any teaching methods you found particularly helpful, and suggest alternative methods that you feel would improve the course," the 2012–2014 group often commented on the amount of homework, the type of stimulus materials, or the feedback from faculty. However, the student evaluations from 2014–2016 had a number of responses specific to the transition to self-assessment only.

For example, in the beginning interpreting courses (Elementary Schools I and Interpreting in Secondary Schools I), one student commented that "even though it is an important skill to learn how to self-assess our own work, I would like more critique from the professor on our work so I have a clearer set of goals for improvement." Another student wrote, "the Socratic method is helpful, but a very clear answer when it is all said and done would be extremely helpful." One final student wrote, "Give more feedback. Class was based on more of the student's feelings. Wish there was more feedback from the instructor." These data suggest students wanted direct feedback from faculty in early interpreting courses.

When the same question was asked of the 2014–2016 group in the later, advanced interpreting classes (Elementary Schools II or Interpreting in Secondary Schools II), this sense seemed to diminish slightly. For example, one student reflected, "The instructor guides us to answer our own questions, and though it may be aggravating in the moment because we want the answer, I can truly see the difference by practicing working through it [self-assessment] on my own." Another student commented:

> The guidance [the faculty member] gives [is] for students to figure out how to analyze their skills and determine the answers to their own questions. At the time this is very frustrating because students want the answers in the moment, but now looking back I can see the growth I have made, and now I have skills that I can apply to [my] career in the future.

The overarching sense is that, initially, students want direct, external feedback, but after extensive faculty reminding of the rationale for not providing direct evaluation and choosing to have students practice self-assessments, students ultimately come to appreciate and value the development of their own self-assessment skills and to recognize the value those skills beyond the classroom.

Faculty Reflections

The student comments align with anecdotal reports from faculty. In section and informal meetings, faculty conveyed their sense that students were initially very frustrated in early coursework because they were desperate to have an external evaluation telling them where they were making errors or omissions. There were many discussions around the rationale for insisting on self-assessment as the evaluation approach, an approach students agreed with when they critically thought about their future learning needs. Faculty also reported that once students became adept at self-assessment, they were slowly able to recognize the rewards of their work and able to manage their own professional development.

The challenges faculty reported were avoiding hinting at or providing too much direct guidance while students were developing their self-assessment skills. Evidently, it was initially difficult to "unlearn" traditional teaching styles, but once faculty relearned self-assessment and guiding students toward that end became the standard, it reportedly became easier to teach that way. Faculty also commented that grading, although still time-consuming, was also slightly easier, because checking to provide formative feedback and summative grading on self-assessment was less tedious than seeking out specific patterns of skills to highlight and evidence to showcase to students. Faculty appreciated that this pedagogical shift did not add an additional burden to their already busy schedules or designated learning activities. In all, faculty report that students are uncomfortable in the beginning but essentially seem to grow into the notion of self-assessment over the long term, and although it takes some time, faculty can adjust to teaching self-assessment relatively easily.

Discussion

Like most programs in higher education, our interpreter program and faculty recognized the importance of teaching critical thinking skills (Cross, 2005; Fitzmaurice, 2010; Winston, 2005). We believe the act of interpreting is, in and of itself, an act of critical thinking. We also recognize the value and need to teach critical thinking skills (Király, 2003; Macnamara, 2009; Patrie, 2004; Stauffer, 2011; Winston, 2005) and how important and challenging they are for our profession (Nicodemus & Emmorey, 2012). However, after our own program self-assessment, we noted that even though individual faculty members we engaged in critical thinking, we were not consistently imparting those skills in the classroom for our students (Kowalczyk et al., 2012). In other words, we could not find any authentic support to indicate we were purposefully teaching higher order thinking skills (Ludwig, 2000).

With the intention of promoting critical thinking skills and engaging students in the assessment process (Thomas et al., 2011), our program faculty shifted away from providing direct feedback on student-interpreted products. Instead, faculty consistently revisited the standardized EIPA criteria (Redwood et al., 2010) with students (Ross, 2006) and provided feedback only on students' self-assessments (Srinivasan et al., 2007) of their own interpreting work. Faculty also frequently discussed the rationale for this approach.

Lew et al. (2010) and Stauffer (2011) found students were largely unable to provide effective self-assessments without being taught to do so. Similar to McDonald and Boud (2003) and Kruger and Dunning (1999), we found interpreting students can learn effective self-assessment skills. Over time, faculty report the self-assessment skills improved (Redwood et al., 2010) as did the interpreting performance of students; so much so, the pedagogical shift toward teaching only self-assessment yielded a significant difference in the final EIPA scores of students. The mean gain between the groups was 0.5, twice that of the marginal gains of 0.25 found by Bowen-Bailey et al. (2012). Although we cannot characterize the significant EIPA score gains as causal, the correlational relationship between the pedagogical shift cannot be ignored.

This finding is important in that it avoids what Wiggins and McTighe (2005) illustrate as the twin sins of typical instruction. The first of which is activity-focused teaching such as a series of disconnected interpreting assignments designed to give students a very broad sampling of many different interpreting settings and scenarios. The other sin—coverage-focused teaching—consists of marching through interpreting textbooks to cover as many of the books and videos as possible. In both sins of typical instruction, evaluation is nearly always teacher driven. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) ask educators to consider "what exactly are we trying to get students to realize that is not obvious but important" (p. 126). I put forth that the ability to self-assess one's performance is a critical, higher order thinking skill that all interpreters need to master.

To claim that this was an enjoyable experience for students would be false. Student comments to faculty in class and in end-of-course evaluations indicated they wanted an external evaluation of their interpreting work. Bowen-Bailey et al. (2012) write,

> We can design what we see as really impressive programs, gather the expertise of our profession, and still end up with small gains in actual results. Of particular importance, we should be wary of assuming that because participants really enjoyed a program and report learning a great deal that it necessarily translates into a significant change in practice. (p. 19)

Student comments in early coursework support their warning in that our students did not enjoy the experience of self-assessment only. What was key was faculty supporting each other in the face of student complaints and modeling expected behaviors. Resisting those student demands (based on their education histories) translated into a significant improvement in performance. Student resistance, however, changed over the longer time frame as students grew to value the ability to self-assess their own interpreting work and began to consider their own future-learning goals. We now call for how to better help students become less resistant to the absence of faculty-generated evaluations of performance more quickly.

In other words, we find the self-assessment process not only serves as a performance measure, but it also encourages the lifelong learning

skills interpreters need in the professional community. When asked, an alumna from the latter 2014–2016 group responded:

> [H]ated it [self-assessment], but now it is my "superpower." I know how to look for things I need to work on; I don't feel helpless or desperate for someone to tell me what I need to fix. I can figure that out on my own and go and do it. My after graduation EIPA scores are even better and my interpreting is better. I know how to become awesome. (personal communication, October 2016)

The benefit of this pedagogical approach is that it is not an additional thing to add or do in the classroom. Instead, it is replacing one assessment philosophy with another. Although some additional time is taken to engage the students in the assessment process and in the rationale for supporting self-assessment, the rewards appear to make it worthwhile. It was, however, initially challenging for faculty to relearn to *stop* providing direct assessment. It was also a bit challenging for faculty when students' early self-assessments focused on discrete and less global factors. Gently guiding students to reexamine their self-assessment without providing a direct evaluation was sometimes difficult, but faculty reported it became much easier after the first term. Faculty had to learn how to assess differently and more effectively as well.

According to Kowalczyk et al. (2012), "curriculum guides only provide the content, and it is the educator's responsibility to define the mechanisms that will enable the students to grasp the knowledge. Students must be able to create a relationship between content and professional practice" (p. 234). We argue that teaching self-assessment develops that relationship. A committed but manageable change in evaluating student work yields higher interpreting performances and seems to promote critical thinking skills (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) interpreter educators all aspire to teach. Empowering students to accurately self-assess (Fenwick & Parsons, 2009) allows them to relinquish total reliance on teacher opinions (Blanche, 1988) and better prepares them for the autonomy of the interpreting field (Stauffer, 2011). Such autonomy only serves to empower interpreting students to become better interpreters and

> [T]o become full-fledged members of the communities in which they live and will work: we are helping them to build character and trustworthiness;

> we are promoting a culture of expertise and professionalism in our future colleagues and successors. This is empowerment for all of us: teachers, students and administrators alike. (Király, 2000, p. 194)

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Appendix A

EIPA Profiles

Scores on each competency are used to determine the mean score for each of the four domains, which are then averaged for the mean total score. The profile of abilities for each total score as provided by Schick & Williams (2004) are as follows.

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 nonmanual 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, nonmanual 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 (Schick et al., 2005, p. 15–16).