

2006 Annual Business Meeting
Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification
Wednesday, November 7

TESTING: ONE, TWO, THREE

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Outline of Session

1. Introduction of the Spanish Practice Test Kit
2. Overview of Testing Resources Available through the Consortium
3. Overview of Test Development Issues
4. Highlights of What New Jersey Has Learned Over 19 Years of Testing

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INTRODUCTION OF THE SPANISH PRACTICE TEST KIT

SPANISH PRACTICE EXAMINATION KIT – VERSION 1

The following information is provided to members of the Consortium for their information and is provided by the Technical Committee.

The Practice Examination Kit is now available. The kit includes the following:

- Instruction Manual
- CD with a text file containing scoring dictionaries and audio files containing the practice exam and a passing performance on the examination
- Hard copies of the test scripts

Background

The Kit is designed to provide purchasers with a step-by-step process to increase their understanding of four basic things:

➤ *What a real Consortium performance examination looks like*, including the “scoring units.” Practicing with the kit before taking an operational examination will give the individual an opportunity to take a practice examination and score it in much the same way that trained raters do for the actual examinations.

➤ *The scoring methodology used by the Consortium to score oral examinations* in a fair and consistent way. Purchasers will create their own scoring dictionaries and in the process, learn how to research words and phrases like the trained raters do and make decisions about what should be acceptable or not and why.

➤ *What a passing performance is really like*. A certified interpreter took the practice examination as a favor to the Committee and staff recorded that performance. Listening to the passing performance will give the purchaser a feel for what actual raters will do when one takes an operational examination.

➤ *Self-assessment of one’s own level of skill and readiness to take a Consortium exam*. The purchaser will have the opportunity to take the practice examination in a way that closely replicates the actual test environment and to fairly and objectively assess his or her current level of skill. Candidates should be able to recognize strengths, identify weaknesses, and learn what additional training or practice is needed to improve performance.

If one completes all of the assignments in a step-by-step manner and in the order provided, users should gain a better understanding of what a real exam is like. More importantly, users should **gain a more realistic view of their own level of performance**.

Costs and pricing

After developing the kit, the committee examined alternative methods of distribution and explored how the price of the kit would be determined. With extensive help from staff and Agustín de la Mora, the Technical Committee presented a proposal to the Executive Committee, which then approved the following major features:

1. The base sales price would be \$39.95, plus shipping and handling.
2. Staff at the National Center for State Courts would produce and distribute the Kit.

Details about the selling price and cost of distribution

Cost of production:

Kinko's (including all hard copies, color copies, CDs, CD Labels, binding, and CD pockets) @ 1,000 per order \$7.65 ea.

Cost of distribution:

Staff time calculated at 7 minutes per order, plus
Cost of envelope and mailing labels \$5.40 ea.
Total per-kit cost of production plus distribution \$13.05 ea.

Sales price of kit \$39.95 ea.

Revenue to Consortium budget, per Kit \$26.90 ea.

Purchasers will pay \$39.95 plus shipping and handling. They may select two options for delivery:

1. For Fed Ex 2-day delivery \$12.00 ea.
2. For USPS Priority (2-3 days, no guarantee) Mail \$6.00 ea.

Discounted Pricing for Program Managers

A program manager who wishes to order Kits in bulk ("program manager," in this context only, is defined as any individual included on the Consortium listserv subscribers list) will be entitled to a discount of 10% of the purchase price. "Bulk" is defined as five (5) or more Practice Examination Kits. For example, if a program manager orders 10 Kits:

\$39.95 per kit - 10% discount per kit (\$4.00) = \$35.95/kit x 10 kits=\$359.50 total

+

Actual cost of shipping (which will be calculated based on weight)

OVERVIEW OF TESTING RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE CONSORTIUM

1. Existing Consortium Tests (i.e., fully ready for use by members)

- a. *Arabic*:
 - i. *Modern Standard* (sight and simultaneous): No developments.
 - ii. *Egyptian Colloquial* (consecutive): No developments.
 - iii. *Levantine* (consecutive): No developments.
- b. *Cantonese*: No developments
- c. *Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (abbreviated test)*: The English fluency component was completed and the test is now ready for use.
- d. *Haitian Creole* (2 versions): New Jersey has raised numerous questions about both versions and recommended they be reviewed and resolved.
- e. *Hmong*: No developments.
- f. *Korean*: New Jersey has raised questions about the length of the Korean-to-English sight and the need for a possible revision to fully conform the exam to the Consortium's test construction standards.
- g. *Laotian*: No developments
- h. *Mandarin*: No developments
- i. *Portuguese*: A Portuguese test (donated to the Consortium by New Jersey) was revised to meet Consortium standards and is ready for administration. Florida donated funds to complete part of the test's development and offset the costs of training raters for this examination.
- j. *Russian* (2 versions): No developments
- k. *Somali*: No developments.
- l. *Spanish*:
 - i. Version 1: This exam will be retired when the new version, Spanish 5, is completed.
 - ii. Version 2.2: No developments.
 - iii. Version 3: Retired – exam was exposed to candidates during the 2004. Work has begun on a replacement test. Completion of that test is expected by January 2007.
 - iv. Version 4.2: No developments.
- m. *Vietnamese* (2 versions): No developments.

2. New Tests Being Developed (i.e., tests that are not yet ready to be used)

- a. *Ilocano*: Consultants have been identified and work has begun developing a full Ilocano test. It is hoped that the examination will be completed and ready for administration by Spring 2007.
- b. *Korean*: Work will commence on this exam in late 2006 and should be developed and ready for administration by the 2008 annual meeting.
- c. *Panjabi*: Development of an abbreviated test was approved at a prior annual meeting and work will begin on this test in 2007. NOTE: It was incorrectly reported earlier that the language was Gujarati.
- d. *Spanish*: A fifth Spanish test is under development and should be

completed and ready for administration in early-to-mid 2007. This is the replacement test referred to above at 1.I.iii.

3. **Tests Available from Member States**

- a. *French*: New Jersey has completed the process of revising its French test in order to conform it to the Consortium's test construction standards. Raters have been selected and will be trained in late 2006. The exam should be fully ready for use in the first few months of 2007.
- b. New Jersey tests that have not been conformed to the Consortium's test construction standards but which have been deemed functional equivalents and do not require proctors or administrators who speak the non-English language as there is no consecutive part of the exam and for which cassette tape recordings are available for the simultaneous:
 - i. *Arabic (Modern Standard)*: New Jersey's exam may be used when a member state needs to give this exam to an examinee who has already taken the Consortium exam twice and no other Consortium exam is available. This exam includes only sight and simultaneous.
 - ii. *German*: New Jersey has donated its abbreviated test that antedates the Consortium's policy on abbreviated tests. This test includes German-to-English sight and the usual simultaneous.
 - iii. *Turkish*: New Jersey has completed the development of an abbreviated test following the Consortium's model for an abbreviated test and has begun to administer it. It has been donated to the Consortium and is available for use.
- c. New Jersey tests which require proctors who can read the non-English answers in the consecutive part of the exam (i.e., there is not yet a CD recording to use) and for which cassette tape recordings are available for the simultaneous:
 - i. *Italian*: New Jersey has donated its full test for use by Consortium members; procedures for access to and use of the exam by Consortium member states to be developed.
 - ii. *Polish*: New Jersey has donated its full test for use by Consortium members; procedures for access to and use of the exam by Consortium member states to be developed. Work began during 2005 to revise the test and conform it fully to the Consortium's Test Construction standards. Everything is done except for completing the dictionary of acceptable/unacceptable renderings and providing Consortium training to the examiners.
- d. Washington has donated an old Korean test which is no longer used there and which may be used when candidates have exhausted Consortium Korean 1.

OVERVIEW OF ISSUES RE DEVELOPING INTERPRETING TESTS

1. Reminder about existing policy on choosing standard model vs. the abbreviated model (See Appendix A)
 - a. Overview of the policy
 - b. Standard model may be developed one or more states is/are willing to pay for the difference in developing standard model when only an abbreviated model is supported
2. Selecting priorities for test development
 - a. Summary of past experience
 - i. Early days: relatively easy decision at annual meeting
 - ii. 2002 Survey by staff (Appendix B)
 - iii. 2006 Survey by the Professional Issues Committee (Appendix C)
 - b. What criteria should guide our test-development decisions?
 - i. What consideration should be given to those languages for which only one version exists? States with active test programs are starting to run out of options for repeat examinees (reminder: the policy is that no examinee may take the same version of a test more than two times). Which is more important, having at least two versions of each language or expanding into additional languages?
 - ii. Whether commitment to a particular language includes two versions before adding another new language.
 - iii. How to weight “a general desire” by a given state vs. “an actual commitment” and definitive plan to give the exam (i.e., readiness to test).
 - iv. Number of years a state has been asking for a particular language.
 - v. Volume of interpreting in that language among member states.
 - vi. Volume of persons in the country who speak the language per Census.
 - vii. The weight of the state in terms of its level of membership: high, medium, or low (according to its membership fee category).
 - viii. What other criteria might we consider?
 - c. Possible considerations that would take a language out of the corporate decision process
 - i. Willingness of state or combination of states to pay for test development on its/their own
 - ii. Other ideas?

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HIGHLIGHTS OF WHAT NEW JERSEY HAS LEARNED OVER 19 YEARS OF TESTING: SPANISH

Phase One: Imitate Federal Model (November 1987-December 1993)

1. Gave the entire test to all examinees.
2. Used a team of three examiners to grade all exams.
3. Toward the end of this phase, began requiring candidates to complete the Orientation Seminar to become eligible for testing.
4. Permitted giving 6-7 tests/day, but in only the same language.
5. Examiners were present during administration of exam and played the roles of the parties in consecutive; they grade the test on the spot.
6. Consultant cost is about \$200/exam (using 2006 rates)

Phase Two: Managing Increasing Demand and Declining Resources Better (January 1994-December 2004)

Major features:

1. Requirement to complete Orientation Seminar continued
2. Bifurcated the testing process into two phases:
 - a. Simultaneous used as a screening exam
 - b. Sight and consecutive given only to those examinees who qualify on the simultaneous
3. Reduced the number of examiners from three to two
4. Later on, started using only one examiner to grade the simultaneous, then two to grade the sight and consecutive
5. Also later on, used two examiners for all retests
6. Advantages:
 - a. Permits testing more people/day, up to 18 instead of 6 (about 3/hour; see Appendix D).
 - b. Much more flexibility testing in multiple languages on the same date.
 - c. Examiners no longer have to be present.
 - d. Cost reduced: Approximately \$15/test for the screening component.
 - e. Huge savings in time and test exposure.
 - i. Had this approach been used in Phase One, about 555 examinees (71%) would have taken only the simultaneous.
 - ii. In Phase Two, about 670 examinees (63%) were eliminated at the simultaneous.

Phase Three: Managing Increasing Demand and Declining Resources Better Yet (January 2005-Present)

Major features:

1. Requirement to complete Orientation Seminar continued.
2. Added new requirement to complete the written test before proceeding to the interpreting test.
3. Continued to use the bifurcated test sequence.
4. Continued using one examiner when rating the simultaneous (except for retests) and two examiners when rating the sight and consecutive.
5. Biggest new advantage: elimination of examinees from taking any part of the interpreting exam: 52 examinees (33%) do not qualify to go on to the interpreting test. See Appendix E.
6. Still eliminated 65% of examinees at the simultaneous phase!

APPENDIX A
POLICY ON CHOOSING FULL VS. ABBREVIATED EXAMS

**5.0
TEST INSTRUMENTS**

5.1. Modification of Licensed Tests. Tests licensed to the Consortium by members may be modified to meet Consortium testing standards.

5.2. New Test Development. Subject to available resources, tests in new languages will be developed at the discretion of the Consortium. The languages will be selected from those requested by member states. Tests in new languages that are approved by the membership will follow either the standard model or the abbreviated model, as defined below, and the determination of which model will be used shall be made on the basis of the following criteria:

- A. The standard model – this includes two sight components (English-to-foreign language and foreign language-to-English), consecutive, and simultaneous.
- B. The abbreviated model – this includes, at a minimum, a simultaneous component, plus a measure of conversational proficiency in both languages.

Tests that are approved by the membership will be developed in new languages following the standard model when both of the following conditions are met:

- A. The language is requested by 25% or more of the member states.
- B. The Consortium has sufficient resources to develop a glossary and two versions of the test per language under the standard model.

In all other circumstances, the abbreviated model shall be used.

Determinations regarding which tests to develop and which model to use shall be made at the annual meeting, following consideration of recommendations presented by the Technical Committee or from the floor, or in accordance with Section 2.7 of the Agreements. States may submit requests for new languages to be added to the Consortium's test bank to the Technical Committee up to four months before the annual meeting, or at such other time as determined by the Technical Committee. New member states may submit such requests at any time during their first year of membership.

When the Consortium approves the development of a test in a language and determines that the criteria for using the standard model have not been met, a member state, alone or jointly with other members, may pay the difference between the estimated cost of developing the abbreviated exam and the actual cost of developing a standard model exam. The Consortium may then develop a standard model test.

5.3. Standards. All Consortium tests, whether new or modified, will reflect standardized testing objectives related to the general professional responsibilities of interpreters and the common needs of state courts, as defined by the Test Construction Manual.

5.4. Revision. Under direction of the Technical Committee, each test version shall, from time to time, be reviewed and revised if necessary. Test revision will cover, among other items, substitution of memorable lines, phrases or words (e.g., idioms).

5.5. Versions. Subsequent versions of tests in any language will be developed at the discretion of the Technical Committee when repeated administrations of a test create a likelihood that the reliability of a testing instrument has been compromised by overexposure.

APPENDIX B
2002 LANGUAGE CHOICE SURVEY

All member states were asked to list in priority order the four languages for which they had the “most urgent need” for new court interpreter certification tests. The table below presents the results of that survey. Any language names as a first choice was given a weight of 4, second choice a weight of 3, etc.

LANGUAGE	# OF STATES VOTING FOR THE LANGUAGE	RANKED WEIGHT	DECISION
Somali	6	19	Full exam to be developed with MN paying the difference for a full exam
Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian	5	16	Abbreviated exam to be developed
Korean 2	4	12	Full exam to be developed
Navajo	2	8	No decision
Panjabi	3	7	Abbreviated exam to be developed
Japanese	2	6	No decision
Armenian	1	4	No decision
Cape Verdean	1	4	No decision
Ilocano	1	4	No decision
Kurdish	1	4	No decision
Mien	1	4	No decision
Turkish	1	4	No decision
Albanian	1	3	No decision
Arabic 2	1	3	No decision
Greek	1	3	No decision
Hindi	2	3	No decision
Khmer (Cambodian)	1	3	No decision
Marshallese	1	3	No decision
Urdu	1	3	No decision
Micronesia	1	2	No decision
Tongan	1	2	No decision
Farsi	1	1	No decision
Tagalog	1	1	No decision
Urdu	1	1	No decision

Summary:

1. 4 languages mentioned by 3 or more states
2. 3 languages mentioned by 2 states
3. 17 languages mentioned by 1 state only
4. No language met criteria for a standard test

**APPENDIX C
2006 LANGUAGE CHOICE SURVEY**

All member states were asked to identify the three languages in which they would like to have tests developed in, ranking the three they most wanted. Any language for which a test is already available or being developed has not been included in this table. They were weighted by assigning a value of 3 to first-place votes, a 2 to second-lace votes, and a 1 to third-place votes.

LANGUAGE	# OF STATES VOTING FOR THE LANGUAGE	RANKED WEIGHT
Hindi	3	8
Urdu	3	7
Khmer	2	6
Nuer	2	6
Tagalog	2	6
Hmong 2	2	5
Italian	2	4
Amharic	1	4
Albanian	1	3
Bambara	1	3
Chuukese	1	3
Gujarati	1	3
Japanese	2	3
Nuer	1	3
Czech	1	2
Foochow	1	2
Fulani	1	2
Inupiatun	1	2
Mongolian	1	2
Tongan	1	2
Burmese	1	1
Cape Verdean Creole	1	1
Farsi	1	1
German	1	1
Greek	1	1
Laotian	1	1
Marshallese	1	1
Oromo	1	1
Thai	1	1

Summary:

1. 2 languages mentioned by 3 or more states
2. 6 languages mentioned by 2 states
3. 21 languages mentioned by 1 state only
4. No language met criteria for a standard test

8 states did not participate (AR, CA, DE, IA, ID, IL, TX, and VA).

Sates voted for languages already taken care of as follows:

1. 10 lost first-place votes
2. 9 lost second-place votes
3. 8 lost third place votes

APPENDIX D
SAMPLE TEST SCHEDULE IN NEW JERSEY

Thursday, March 23, 2006
Proctor: Robert Joe Lee

SPANISH

(Simultaneous only)

8:40 Steven Brett Luttrell

(Sight and consecutive)

9:20 Elizabeth Barreto

10:00 Eloisa Hernández-Ramos

10:40 Canceled

CANTONESE

(Simultaneous only)

11:20 M. Elizabeth Wong

MANDARIN

(Simultaneous only)

11:40 M. Elizabeth Wong

SPANISH

(Simultaneous only)

12:00 Gilberto Gómez Espinoza

1:00 Henry Alberto Rugeles

1:20 Scott Arthur Simon

1:40 Jonathan Christopher Forte

ITALIAN

(Simultaneous only)

2:00 Giovanni Diamante

RUSSIAN

(Sight and consecutive)

2:30 Natalia Valerievna Fedorova

(Simultaneous only)

3:10 Ludmila Pavlovna Annable

3:30 Daria Gennadievna Whelan

APPENDIX E
NEW JERSEY'S TESTING HISTORY (SPANISH ONLY)

Outcomes of the Interpreting Examination (Oral)

PORTION OF TEST	PHASE					
	Nov 87-Dec 93		Jan 94-Dec 04		Jan 06-Oct 07	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
Sight	779	54	323	74	41	67
Consecutive	778	51	338	71	41	67
Simultaneous	781	36	1066	43	140	44
Total of All 3 Parts	778	48	312	70	39	65

PORTION OF TEST	PHASE								
	Nov 87-Dec 93			Jan 94-Dec 04			Jan 06-Oct 07		
	% Examinees per Range of Scores			% Examinees per Range of Scores			% Examinees per Range of Scores		
	0-49	50-69	70+	0-49	50-69	70+	0-49	50-69	70+
Sight	38	37	25	5	22	74	15	29	56
Consecutive	45	39	16	5	34	60	7	46	46
Simultaneous	71	20	8	63	23	24	65	26	9
Total of All 3 Parts	55	32	13	5	40	55	8	51	41

Outcomes of the Written Test (Spanish Only)
1/1/2005-10/2/2006

OUTCOME	# OF CANDIDATES	% OF CANDIDATES
Pass—Master level	59	37
Pass—Journeyman level	15	9
Conditionally Approved	33	21
Fail	52	33
TOTAL	159	100

Time Candidates Used to Take the Test

Least: 23 minutes (1 person)
 Most: 135 minutes (3 persons)
 Mean: 77 minutes
 Median: 71 minutes