

UTSA
Interpreter
Handbook

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INTERPRETER ETHICS



The interpreter's role at UTSA is to facilitate communication between the hearing impaired student and the hearing persons in his/her educational environment. Interpreter services are provided to give students with hearing impairments the same opportunity to realize their academic potential, *based on their own abilities and efforts*, as is provided to their non-disabled classmates. Remember that the interpreter is not to serve as an instructor, note-taker, tutor, counselor, or advisor. If the student does not understand something that was said in class or feels that he missed something, s/he should **ask the instructor to repeat it or explain it**. The interpreter is not responsible for retaining or repeating information the student missed. The interpreter may have to educate the student on the proper use of interpreters since some students may not have used interpreter services in the past. Interpreters should keep in mind that **independence** is the final goal for the student and should help to promote independence at every opportunity.

Interpreters should follow the *Principles for Interpreter Behavior* as outlined in the Board of Evaluators for Interpreters Handbook. Any questions concerning interpreter behavior in specific situations should be referred to the interpreter coordinator.

Interpreters at UTSA should not:

- participate in class
- answer student questions
- engage in conversations with the student (or anyone else) during class
- socialize with students while they are on the job

Confidentiality is extremely important. Interpreters should never discuss a student's progress or grades with anyone or disclose that they are interpreting for a student at UTSA.

Interpreters may:

- answer questions by hearing students and faculty about deafness, interpreting, or sign language before or after the assignment
- voice the conversation if the student talks with other students during class
- discuss with the interpreter coordinator any concerns about scheduling, ethical questions, faculty cooperation, and the student's use of interpreter services.

COMMUNICATION MODE



The mode of communication used by the interpreter should be based on the individual needs and preferences of the student.

FIRST DAY OF CLASS



Prior to the beginning of the semester the interpreter coordinator will contact the instructor to make him/her aware that a student in the class will be using interpreter services. On the first day of class the student will present the instructor with a letter from DS which includes information about working with interpreters (Appendix A). The interpreter should allow extra time on the first day of class to introduce him/herself to the instructor and discuss any special arrangements such as seating, lecture style, lab/discussion groups, and availability of syllabus and/or notes. The interpreter should ensure that the faculty member does not have any other concerns or questions regarding the role of the interpreter.

PARKING



Interpreters can obtain an application for a parking permit from the interpreter coordinator. The Parking Office will issue a faculty/staff parking permit at no cost to the interpreter. Interpreters who are also UTSA students **must** purchase a student parking permit. Faculty/staff parking permits are **not** issued to students. Interpreters are responsible for any tickets they may receive for parking improperly.

TEXTBOOKS



The interpreter coordinator can provide a letter of authorization to permit interpreters to check out a desk copy of textbooks from the bookstore on campus. The interpreter should take this letter to the Book Information desk in the bookstore. The interpreter is responsible for returning all textbooks to the bookstore upon completion of the assignment.

ATTIRE



Interpreters should dress in a manner appropriate to their status as professionals in a university environment. Attire should be clean, neat, and not distracting. It is suggested that the interpreter wear clothes that are comfortable, in solid colors that contrast with skin color. Fingernails should be kept trimmed and any polish should be neutral in color. At times an interpreter may be called upon to interpret for university faculty or administration meetings, public performances sponsored by the university, or other formal occasions. In these situations formal “business attire” should be worn.

TEAM INTERPRETING



Team interpreting may be provided for lengthy assignments as the situation warrants. All requests for team interpreting must be approved by the interpreter coordinator. The following guidelines should be observed:

- Both interpreters should stay for the entire time.
- Teams should take turns at mutually agreed upon intervals.

- Teams should meet before the assignment to discuss and agree upon how to back each other up and be ready to follow that system.
- Teams should also discuss the smoothest way to switch.
- Teams should be ready to provide back-up support at any time.
- Partners should give feedback only when requested. When giving feedback, do so in a constructive manner.

When one member of an interpreting team is absent, a replacement will be sent if one is available. On those rare occasions when a substitute is not available, the interpreter should discuss the situation with the instructor and request that s/he provide an additional break, if possible. UTSA does not provide additional compensation for interpreters when an interpreting partner is absent.

PREP TIME



Preparation time will be considered on a case-by-case basis for classes that involve unusually complex concepts or technical terminology. All requests for preparation time must be approved by the interpreter coordinator. Typically one hour of preparation time per week is provided for a three-hour class. Interpreters are expected to use paid time between classes for preparation.

TIME REPORTING



Time sheets are available in the DS office. Interpreters should place completed time sheets in their individual folders by 5:00 p.m. on the 15th and 30/31st of each month. The time sheet should indicate the number of hours worked on each date. **Please be sure to add up the total time, write it in the space provided, and sign the time sheet.**

Interpreters will be asked to indicate the nature of the interpreting assignment on the time sheet to facilitate record-keeping. If an assignment is for a regular class put the student's initials and the class. Example: JD HIS 1053. If the student is a no-show, put NS after

student's initials and class. If the assignment is for a special request, put the student's initials and the nature of the appointment. Example: JD meet w/ instructor. For

preparation time put the amount of time and the class. See Appendix B for an example of a completed time sheet.

Interpreters will be paid for a minimum of two hours per visit to campus. When interpreting for more than one class, interpreters will be paid for breaks that are 1½ hours in length or less. This “down-time” should be used to assist students in accessing or contacting services on campus, study of course texts, or working on technical vocabulary specific to individual courses. Interpreters may be asked to interpret last minute assignments that come up during “down-time.”

Interpreters will be paid for any cancellation of services if less than 24 hours **notice** has been given. In the case when a student has canceled a class ahead of time, the time the interpreter is notified (either by leaving a message, a text page, by phone, or in person) will be used to determine if the interpreter should be paid for the assignment.

PAY RATES



Level I	\$18.00
Level II	\$21.00
Level III	\$24.00*
Level IV	\$27.00
Level V	\$30.00

*** includes RID (national) certification and certified oral interpreters**

The above rates are for both day and evening classes

UTSA does not pay for interpreter travel time unless the interpreter is traveling between the UTSA main and downtown campuses.

Payment for preparation time is considered on a case-by-case basis and is generally provided for graduate classes and undergraduate classes such as physics, chemistry, calculus, and engineering (one hour of preparation time per week for a three hour class).

Interpreter pay rates were increased by \$6.00 per hour in January, 1998 to meet the increased need for interpreter services.

REQUEST FOR REPLACEMENT BY THE INTERPRETER



In order to ensure the best possible services for our students, the interpreter is responsible for determining whether or not s/he is able to perform the duties required by the assignment. If, at any time, the interpreter decides that s/he does not have the skills necessary for assignment, s/he should contact the interpreter coordinator to make alternate arrangements.

REQUEST FOR REPLACEMENT BY THE STUDENT



Students may request that an interpreter be replaced for the following reasons:

- skill
- communication preference mismatch
- personal reasons

The student must meet with the interpreter coordinator to request a replacement. The coordinator may observe in the classroom, meet with the interpreter, and make recommendations accordingly.

MONITORING



The interpreter coordinator may monitor an assignment to ensure that the assignment continues to be appropriate for the student, interpreter, and faculty member. At the end of the semester evaluation forms will be sent to interpreters, students, and faculty. Students may also complete an evaluation form in the middle of the semester to provide useful feedback for the interpreter. Interpreters can request less formal and/or more frequent feedback from the student or interpreter coordinator. Examples of evaluation forms are contained in this handbook (Appendix C-F).

INTERPRETER NO-SHOWS



Interpreters should give the interpreter coordinator *advance notice as soon as possible* if they will be unable to perform an assignment. If a student is in a class in which the interpreter has not shown up, s/he should wait ten minutes, then contact the interpreter

coordinator. A substitute will be sent if one is available. All interpreter no-shows will be documented and appropriate follow-up will be taken.

STUDENT NO-SHOWS



If a student does not show up at the beginning of class, the interpreter should wait for fifteen minutes. Interpreters are encouraged to use their own judgment on the least disruptive place to wait for students.

In order to be paid in the event of a no-show, the interpreter must contact the interpreter coordinator immediately after the waiting period is over. The interpreter may be asked to accept another assignment. If another assignment is available and the interpreter chooses not to accept it, the interpreter will not be paid for the regular assignment on that day.

SCHEDULING ASSIGNMENTS



Class assignments will be made prior to the beginning of the semester. Interpreters will be assigned to classes on the basis of skill level and requirements of the class, student preferences, and interpreter preferences. Since students may drop classes at any time throughout the semester, no guarantee of hours can be made.

Opportunities for other assignments may occur throughout the semester, including substituting for regular class assignments, outside of class meetings, public lectures and performances, etc. Interpreters will be called for such assignments based on the type of assignment and interpreter availability. Interpreters should accept assignments only from the interpreter coordinator. If a student requests interpreter services directly from an interpreter, the interpreter should refer the student to the coordinator. DS is responsible for paying for special requests for interpreter services **only when approved by the interpreter coordinator.**

REPETITIVE MOTION SYNDROME



Interpreters are encouraged to report any interpreting-related pain to the interpreter coordinator. Every effort will be made to provide an environment in which the interpreter can work comfortably. Interpreters are encouraged to do everything necessary to prevent interpreting related injuries. Performing warm-up exercises is one way of taking care of yourself. (See Appendix G for examples of exercises).

INTERPRETER RESPONSIBILITIES



1. Interpret everything that is signed and spoken as well as pertinent extraneous noises.
2. Make the instructor and student aware that you may be a few words or a sentence behind. Discuss with them how the student will interject questions and comments without interrupting the class.
3. If the student looks away from the interpreter for short period of time to take notes, look for a page, rest their eyes, etc., the interpreter is expected to retain the information missed. Once eye contact is re-established, then the information will be given to the student. If the student is choosing not to pay attention, the interpreter will continue to interpret and is not responsible for repeating missed information.
4. Be prepared for assignments. The interpreter may need to get hand outs from the instructor, read the textbook, talk with the instructor and/or student before or after class, etc. in order to be prepared to interpret the class.
5. Interpret cultural information. Interpreting is not a matter of conveying words, but ideas. It is the responsibility of the interpreter to facilitate the exchange of ideas. Culture is an inseparable aspect of those ideas. Cultural information must be conveyed to be able to make an accurate interpretation.

6. Direct questions to the appropriate person. Questions directed at the interpreter intended for the instructor or deaf person should be directed towards that person.
7. Use the interpreter coordinator as a resource to help with problem-solving as needed.

Appendix A

TIPS FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

During the first class of each course, invite students to see you to discuss any needed adaptations in testing, paper writing, deadlines, or classroom arrangements.

Give students with hearing impairments the benefit of your prior planning:

- Early in the term, provide a brief course outline.
- Before each class, list on the chalkboard any new vocabulary or specialized terminology.
- Some instructors even offer a copy of lecture notes.

When interacting with a student who uses an interpreter:

- Allow the interpreter to sit or stand on one side of you where the student can maintain eye contact both with you and the interpreter.
- Speak directly to the student with a hearing loss **not** to the interpreter. For instance, ask "Do you have your assigned paper?" rather than "Does she have her paper?"
- Allow time during question-and-answer periods for the student who uses sign language to raise his/her hand, be recognized, and ask the question through the interpreter. The interpreter will voice the question to the instructor and the class, and then sign the response back to the student.
- Prearrange a system to notify the deaf student if you have to cancel a class so that the interpreter can be cancelled.

Speak clearly and naturally. Don't block your mouth with your hands (for your information, a mustache reduces clarity in lip reading). Avoid standing in front of windows or other light sources. The glare from behind you makes it difficult to read lips and facial expressions.

Accentuate body language, including facial expressions and gestures, to help get your message across effectively (useful for all students). Avoid speaking while facing the chalkboard or while walking around the room.

There are a variety of ways to include the student who is deaf or hard of hearing in class discussion: indicate who is speaking and repeat the question or comment to clarify the point

the speaker has made, put a microphone in a central location, pass the microphone to the class member who is speaking, or arrange for multiple microphones.

Allow extra time in science labs for students with hearing impairments to find things that you are pointing out. They may need to get instructions from the interpreter, locate the materials, and then turn back for the rest of the discussion.

Provide written instructions or announcements, either on paper or on the chalkboard, such as assignments, test dates, or any changes in schedule or location.

Be objective about evaluating materials written by students who are deaf and hard of hearing. If there are problems with grammar, syntax, or fluency of expression, you should advise the student about remedial services. Such services include tutoring, language development labs, or other resources (just as you would any student with these difficulties).

Be patient with the longer-than-average period of adjustment to postsecondary education for students with a disability. These students have a greater-than-average number of systems to work out before they can achieve independence in learning.

Appendix B
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO
DISABILITY SERVICES

Interpreter Time Sheet

Pay Period: _____ - _____, 19____
 (Time sheets due 15th & 31st of each month)

Employee's Name: _____ Telephone/Pager #: _____

(Specify student initials, class/event & number of hrs for each assignment)

	Date	Hours Worked	Class	Prep Time	Special Request
Monday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tuesday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Wednesday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Thursday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Friday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Monday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tuesday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Wednesday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Thursday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Friday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Monday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Tuesday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Wednesday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Thursday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Friday	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL HOURS WORKED:	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Interpreter: _____ Supervisor: _____
 (Signature) (Date) (Signature) (Date)

Director: _____ July, 99
 (Signature) (Date)

Appendix C

**University of Texas at San Antonio
Disability Services
Faculty Evaluation of Interpreters**

Disability Services is constantly striving to improve the services offered through our office. Your input regarding your experiences with an interpreter in your classroom this semester is greatly appreciated. You may direct any questions or comments to Nelda Ellerbee, Interpreter Coordinator, at 458-7577.

(Instructor's Name)

(Class)

(Semester)

1. Aside from the beginning of the semester, when the class was getting used to the interpreter, did the interpreter distract you or the class in any way? If so how?
2. When the interpreter voiced for the student, was it audible and clear?
3. Did the interpreter present him/herself in a professional manner?
4. Please evaluate your overall experience of having an interpreter in your classroom this semester?
5. Did Disability Services do anything in particular to help facilitate a good classroom situation for you, the interpreter and the student?
6. What other support could Disability Services have offered you?
7. Questions or comments:

**Please return this evaluation via Campus Mail to Nelda Ellerbee
Disability Services, MS 2.03.18**

Appendix D

University of Texas at San Antonio Disability Services Student Evaluation of Interpreters

This evaluation is intended to ensure that you are receiving the best services possible at the University. Fill out a different evaluation form for each of your interpreters for every class. You are assured confidentiality. Please add an explanation for any category in which you rated the interpreter with a 3 or 4. Please return to the DS office before the last class day of this semester. Thank you!

Name: _____ Date: _____
Interpreter Name: _____ Class: _____

Please circle the number that most closely reflects your opinion.
1–Strongly Agree 2–Agree 3–Disagree 4–Strongly Disagree

The Interpreter:

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Wears solid colored attire contrasting with skin tone | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. Wears clothing that is neat and appropriate for the situation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. Signs clearly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. Uses my preferred mode of communication | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. Spells correctly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. Finger spells clearly | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. Has adequate sign vocabulary | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. Voices for me without interruption | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. Has an open attitude and is willing to accept feedback | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. Maintains proper behavior in the role of interpreter | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. Is on time to class | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. Seems to be apart, motivated and concentrates on the task | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. I want to use this interpreter again in the future
(Please explain the reason for your answer below) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Were you satisfied with the services (interpreter services and others) you received through the Disability Services this semester? Please comment. | | | | |

Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Please return this evaluation in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

Appendix E

University of Texas at San Antonio Disability Services

Interpreter Feedback

This is your opportunity to give feedback to Disability Services and the interpreter coordinator regarding your experiences as an interpreter at UTSA this semester. We also welcome suggestions for improvements. Your input is greatly appreciated.

- 1. Were the instructors sensitive to the needs of the interpreter and the deaf student?**

- 2. Were any situations particularly challenging or uncomfortable for you in terms of difficulty of assignments, students, instructors, classroom set-up, etc?**

- 3. Were your students knowledgeable about how to use an interpreter correctly?
Please explain.**

- 4. Was the feedback from the students helpful? Please explain.**

- 5. What did DS and/or the interpreter coordinator do to make interpreting a good experience?**

- 6. What could DS and /or the interpreter coordinator do to improve working conditions ?**

- 7. Any additional comments or concerns?**

Please return this evaluation in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

Appendix F

INTERPRETER OBSERVATION

Interpreter _____ Date _____

Class _____ Observer _____

Student(s) _____

Interpreters are given feedback for each category based on what would be appropriate for this particular situation and student. Please make an appointment with the Interpreter coordinator to discuss this observation.

Conditions /Arrangement

Appearance

Demeanor

Comfort Level

Fluency

Key Information

Conceptual Accuracy

Vocabulary

Fingerspelling

Lip Movement

Non-Manual

Mannerisms

Sign-to-Voice

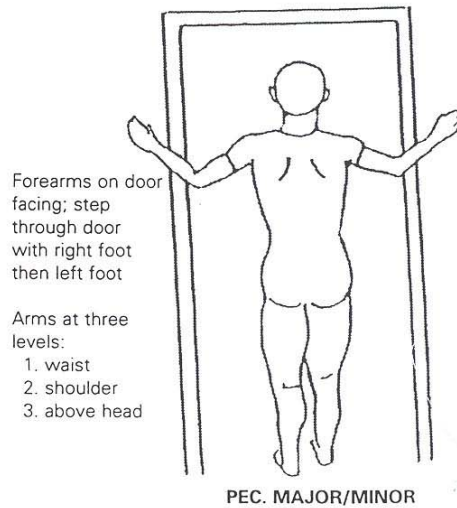
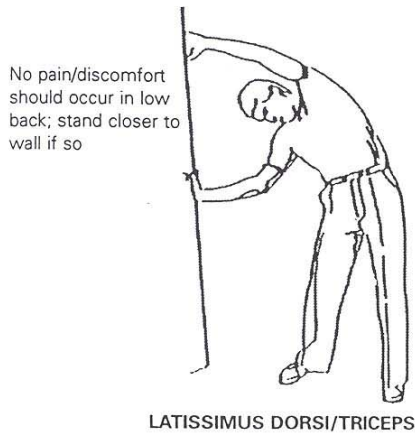
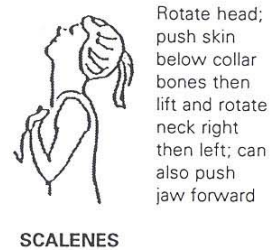
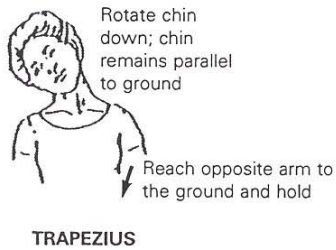
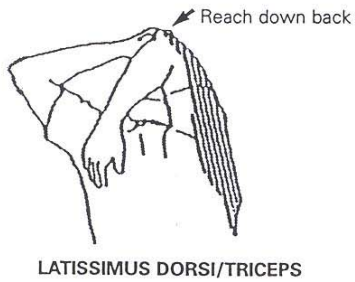
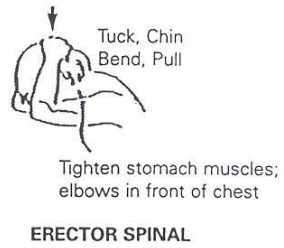
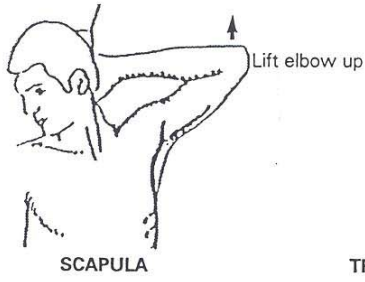
Comments:

Appendix G

EXERCISES TO PREVENT RMS

ALL EXERCISES 2-3 TIMES FOR MINIMUM 15-20 SECONDS DAILY

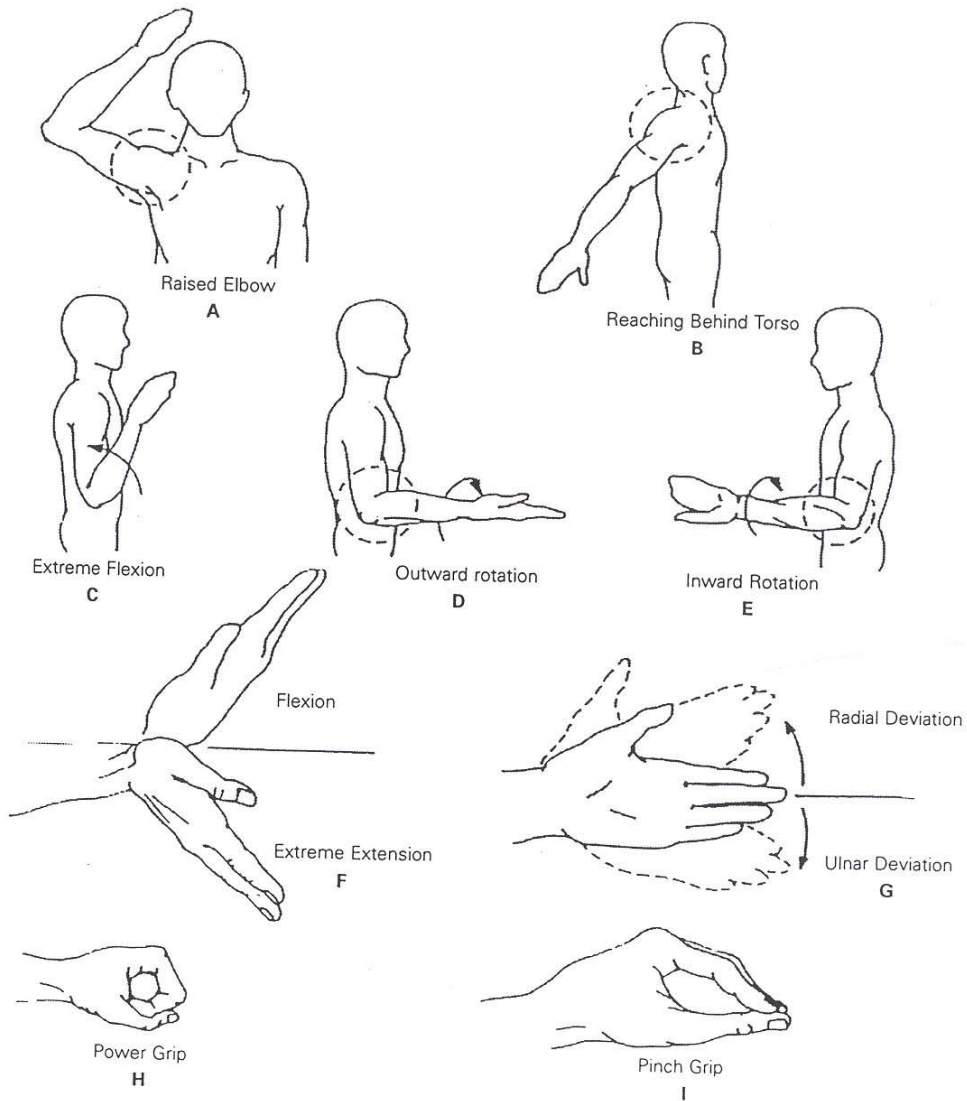
—developed by Holly Warren-Norman & Chris Ferran



Appendix H

POSTURES WHICH PUT YOU AT INCREASED RISK FOR INJURY

Examine these postures in relation to your interpreting style. Ask your partner or supervisor to observe you interpreting so that you can learn how to decrease your risk factors. Exercises to prevent RMS should be done daily.



Postures reported as factors of cumulative trauma

