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California
Subject
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TEST GUIDE

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE
SUBTEST II
Subtest Description

This document contains the World Languages: American Sign Language (ASL) subject matter requirements arranged according to the domains covered by Subtest II of CSET: American Sign Language. In parentheses after each named domain is the domain code from the American Sign Language subject matter requirements.

California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET®)

World Languages—American Sign Language (ASL) Subtest II: General Linguistics; Linguistics of the Target Language—American Sign Language (ASL)

Part I: Content Domains for Subject Matter Understanding and Skill in World Languages—American Sign Language (ASL)

GENERAL LINGUISTICS (SMR Domain 1)

Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the nature, process, and components of language at the postsecondary level, as described in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL): Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers (2002) and reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates demonstrate both broad and deep conceptual understanding of the subject matter, including the universal characteristics of human languages, both spoken and signed, and the ways in which linguistics describes and categorizes language structures. They analyze the processes by which languages change over time, understand how languages vary geographically, socially, and ethnographically, and recognize the family relationships among different languages. Candidates show an awareness of the communicative functions of language and how those functions vary depending upon the context and purpose of communication. They demonstrate a thorough understanding of language acquisition, including the processes by which additional languages are acquired and the developmental patterns of language learning, and recognize that language acquisition involves the interrelationship of language and culture.

0001   The Nature of Language (SMR 1.1)

   a. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature, purposes, and uses of language. For example:
      ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of language structure (i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) and how they are interrelated.
      ♦ Demonstrate an understanding that languages can occur in different modalities.
      ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles of grammar and what is meant by a productive rule of language.
      ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the distinction between deep structure and surface structure.
   b. Demonstrate an understanding of the development of language and the significance of language change, including the variations that occur within the contexts of time, place, age, gender, and situation. For example:
      ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the classification of both spoken and signed languages into families and branches.

◆ Describe different perspectives on the study of language (e.g., synchronic vs. diachronic).
◆ Identify the different types of change that languages undergo at all levels (e.g., phonetic, morphological and syntactic, lexical and semantic).
◆ Analyze the mechanisms by which language change occurs (e.g., assimilation, metathesis, contact, borrowing, euphemisms, metaphors, taboo).

0002   Language Use (SMR 1.2)

a.   Demonstrate an understanding of principles of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and the theory of speech acts. For example:
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of how sentences may communicate more than they literally say.
◆ Analyze principles of structure, regularity, and coherence in extended discourse.
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of distinctions between different types of speech acts (e.g., direct vs. indirect).
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of distinctions between different varieties of speech acts (e.g., commands, questions, assertions, exclamations).
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the functions of speech acts (e.g., to inform, to amuse, to control, to persuade).
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of pragmatic features (e.g., reference, sense, force, tone, conversational implicature) that affect the meaning of speech acts.
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of the distinction between performative and constative utterances (language that performs an act, such as apologizing or promising, vs. language that describes facts or provides information).

0003   Applied Linguistics (SMR 1.3)

a.   Demonstrate an understanding of theories of language acquisition and learning. For example:
◆ Analyze potential differences between learning first and second languages.
◆ Identify the developmental stages through which language learners acquire first and second languages.
◆ Analyze similarities and differences between language acquisition in different modalities (e.g., acquisition of a signed language compared with acquisition of a spoken language).
◆ Demonstrate an understanding of cognitive, affective, and social factors that affect second-language acquisition and learning (e.g., the concept of critical period, family and peer attitudes, linguistic interference, the interrelationship between language and power).

♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the creativity and recursive character of human languages.

(American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL]: Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers, 1.b, 1.c)

LINGUISTICS OF THE TARGET LANGUAGE—AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL) (SMR Domain 2)

Candidates demonstrate a broad and deep knowledge of American Sign Language (ASL) linguistics at the postsecondary level, as reflected in the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve (2003). Candidates demonstrate an understanding of ASL, including phonological structures, the rules by which lexical items are formed, and the ways in which phrases, clauses, and sentences are structured, and can explain the major levels and features of ASL grammar. They are able to describe ASL phonological features, transcription conventions, morphological rules, syntactic patterns, and semantics. Candidates are able to describe the rules for sign and sentence formation, as well as the structure, function, and meaning of ASL discourse, including pragmatic features, sociolinguistic features, and features for producing coherence in discourse. Candidates are familiar with rhetorical and stylistic devices and the levels of language appropriate for various tasks and communicative purposes. In addition, candidates understand the historical changes in ASL and its variations, including differences in articulation, vocabulary, and grammatical structures, as well as register.

0004   Language Structures (SMR 2.1)

a. Demonstrate an understanding of the phonology of ASL. For example:
   ♦ Describe the primary phonological features of ASL (e.g., handshape, movement, location, nonmanual markers, orientation, stress and tempo in sign formation).
   ♦ Describe the phonological structure of ASL (e.g., hold and movement patterns, eye gaze, nodding).
   ♦ Describe basic phonological and morphophonemic rules of ASL.
b. Demonstrate an understanding of the morphology of ASL. For example:
   ♦ Understand inflectional morphology in ASL (e.g., rules for adding adverbial, numerical, or distributive morphemes to root verbs; rules for forming plurals of nouns).
   ♦ Understand derivational morphology in ASL (e.g., rules for forming derived and compound signs).
   ♦ Understand lexical morphology in ASL, including the lexicalization of finger-spelled forms.
   ♦ Describe strategies for identifying and using new signs in ASL by recombining morphemes.

c. Demonstrate an understanding of the syntax of ASL. For example:
   ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the rules that govern the formation of phrases and sentences (e.g., the use of classifiers and classifier predicates).
   ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of sign order in ASL.
   ♦ Identify ways in which syntactic patterns in ASL can be used to convey nuances of meaning.
   ♦ Identify linguistic devices used to create connected and cohesive discourse in ASL.
d. Demonstrate an understanding of the semantics of ASL. For example:
   ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of how meaning is structured and communicated in ASL.
   ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the cultural meaning of ASL signs and sentences.
e. Demonstrate a basic understanding of transcription conventions in ASL. For example:
   ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of commonly used glossing techniques in ASL.
f. Describe changes that have occurred in ASL over time.

Error Analysis (SMR 2.2) *NOTE: Content from SMR 2.2 is contained only in Subtest III.*

a. Identify, analyze, and correct grammatical and mechanical errors in ASL.

0005   Contrastive Analysis (SMR 2.3)

a. Analyze and contrast linguistic structures of ASL and English.
b. Compare and contrast how meaning is expressed in ASL and English.

0006   Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics (SMR 2.4)

a. Demonstrate an understanding of pragmatic and sociolinguistic features of ASL discourse. For example:
   ♦ Explain how linguistic choices depend on the setting, goals, and participants in communicative interactions.
   ♦ Demonstrate an understanding of the influence of social and cultural norms on the use of ASL.
b. Demonstrate an understanding of the origins and social implications of variations within ASL. For example:
   ♦ Describe variations in articulation, vocabulary, and grammatical structures within ASL.
   ♦ Describe the factors that account for the variations in ASL (e.g., culture/ethnicity, political background, level and/or background of education, gender, social class).
c. Demonstrate an understanding of how the history of ASL in the United States and its acceptance as a language have influenced the use of ASL (e.g., how changing attitudes toward ASL have influenced language choice).