Category
Discourse Analysis *cross reference ENG to ASL Interpreting*
Activity Domain/Targeted skill area
Identification and Incorporation of Transitions in Discourse
Developed by
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Step-by-Step Description of Activity
A way to indicate a change in topic is the head nod which if overused, can skew the target message and if not used does not take advantage of a powerful tool used to indicate a new or shift in topics. Knowing when there is a shift in the topics in English can assist in realizing where to insert the appropriate topic boundaries in an ASL text. Goal of the Activity Hearing topic boundaries in English and utilizing the head nod while incorporating accompanying appropriate non-manuals (head nod, body shift, eyebrow raise, pausing) into muscle memory Weeks 1-2: a) gather ASL stimulus materials. b) for 10 minutes, watch specifically for all shifts in topic and note in a journal how those shifts were accomplished (signs, non- manual markers, gestures, head movements, body movements, etc.) The goal is to watch a variety of signers (gender, race, age, etc.) for at least 5 minutes and to review at least 5 different videos. Week 3-4: repeat using same source texts, however, this week shadow the same 5 minutes that were viewed and analyzed in the first week. Shadowing only the shifts in topics and all of the accompanying information noted in the journal. In the journal, note any feelings that you had while doing this segment of the activity (was it challenging, did you feel natural, etc.) Week 5-6: From memory, generate the same 5 minute of the original source texts used and videotape yourself. Review the videotape and analyze specifically the topic boundary shifts in terms of how natural they looked, the variety used, the accompanying non-manual markers. If there were any that you felt dissatisfied with, re-tape yourself telling that story again. The goal is not to be concerned with the overall message but specifically the amount and kind of topic boundaries used and whether they clearly indicated a shift in the topic. Week 7-8: generate new material signing short stories about things that are familiar to you (approximately 5 minutes worth) with an emphasis on shifting topics and the ways in which you convey these shifts. Videotape yourself telling a story every other day and analyze that video noting in your journal the number of various topic boundary shifts employed, the accompanying NMM information, etc.
Materials
ASL and English stimulus materials – should reflect different ages, genders, etc Technology to support audio and video recording. Depending on which technology used, storage for work samples - DVD, thumbdrive etc Journal
Suggested Timelines

3 times/week for at least 20 minutes per session, for 10+ weeks 10 weeks but with online check-ins to ensure activity is on target and progressing effectively
Next Steps
Week 8-9: begin to interpret information from English to ASL (no more than 5 minutes in length) with the same emphasis on shifting topics. The analysis of your videotape this time will include also the strategies used by the English speaker to shift topic and the ways in which those were conveyed in ASL (both for amount and variety.) Weeks 10+ focus on increasing the length of the English texts interpreting into ASL on a weekly basis by 5 minutes forcing you to increase your repertoire of topic boundary shifts within the same message production to ensure that ample variety is utilized.
Progress Measurements
Log of Identification and incorporation of at least 10 different topic boundaries used in English, in ASL and in interpreted samples