

## Action Plan – Discourse Markers

### Goal - Skill to improve:

Incorporate effective words, phrases, pausing, or nonmanuals that create cohesion in a conversation or lecture by linking together ideas and signaling what will happen next.

**Source:** English

**Target:** ASL

**Related terms:** transitions

### Root cause - What is causing the error in your work?

- Did you have problems understanding exactly what the hearing person said in English? (comprehension)
- Was the source information unfamiliar to you? (background knowledge)
- Did you have a clear mental picture of what the hearing person meant? (visualization)
- Did you know how to interpret what the hearing person meant, using effective ASL vocabulary and grammar? (reformulation)
- While you were interpreting, did you simultaneously check your interpretation to see if it made sense? (monitoring)
- Did you prepare to interpret a concept, but then forget it? (memory)

### Knowledge Resources:

1) Read this resource from your center library: American Sign Language Green Books, A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture by Charlotte Baker-Shenk and Dennis Cokely, pages 122-139.

2) Read this resource from your center library: Linguistics of American Sign Language: An Introduction by Clayton Valli and Ceil Lucas, pages 137 – 140.

3) Review Pages 59-60 in Interpretation Skills: English to American Sign Language by Marty M. Taylor, Ph.D. (available for purchase at <http://www.aslinterpreting.com>)

### Activities:

1) Create an audio recording of yourself explaining your three favorite vacations, why you would consider it one of your favorites, and certain things that you did during your time away. Afterwards, note in your journal occasions of movement between concepts or topic transitions which would benefit from appropriate discourse markers to convey a natural English message. Brainstorm potential interpretation options which would incorporate effective discourse markers.

2) Using your audio recording in the previous activity, film your interpretation from English-to-ASL, focusing on appropriately incorporating effective ASL discourse markers (see examples below). Review your interpretation and mark any awkward transitions and potential root causes (reasons that this happens). Journal the potential consequences to both consumers regarding less effective instances of discourse markers used. Think of alternate transitions.

### Examples of some ASL Discourse Markers

**WARN** - I will caution you about something

**INFORM** - I need to tell you something

**CURIOUS** - I will ask you a question now

**POINT** - this is a rephrasing of my main point; it is important

**OK** - opening or ending a topic

**NOW** - opening a topic

**ANYWAY** - I am changing topics now

**ME-EXPLAIN** - I realize you probably don't know what I meant but I will tell you more

**PUSH-ASIDE** - we're moving on to a new topic

**UNDERSTAND** - I just told you something and now I will contrast that idea with something different

**FOR-EXAMPLE** - I will provide clarifying examples or tell a story

**Pausing** – provides breaks between ideas, just like paragraphs and punctuation