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Discourse Mapping

Developing Textual Coherence Skills in Interpreters

SUCCESSFUL INTERPRETATIONS require an in-depth understanding of the underlying coherence of a source language text and the ability to produce an equally coherent message in the target language. This is much more than a superficial recognition of the words or signs; it is the ability to understand a message from multiple perspectives, recognizing the subtle links between the meaning of the message, the context of the message, and the linguistic form that the meaning takes. Discussing language tests, Oller compares these perspectives to windows:

If language tests were like windows through which language proficiency might be viewed, and if language proficiency were thought of as a courtyard that could be seen from a number of different windows, it would seem that a clearer view of the courtyard is possible through some windows than others. (1979, 64)

Discourse analysis is the study of how communication in any form is structured so that it is socially appropriate as well as meaningfully and linguistically accurate (Hatch 1992, 1). When interpreters attempt to translate a message successfully, they are attempting to render the message with the following:

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1. Accurate content (themes, topics, and events)
2. Appropriate context (register, settings, speaker's goals, etc.)
3. Appropriate linguistic form (discourse structures, transitions, vocabulary, etc.).

This chapter deals with these three aspects of a message. Each aspect contributes an essential piece of the picture, not separately, but as an integrated whole.

Discourse analysis leads to an awareness of the interdependent perspectives of language. It is the logical approach to processing for interpreters and leads to an understanding of the overall meaning that we must convey, providing a multifaceted view of the source, much as Oller described. Historically, considerable training time is spent on the analysis of words, signs, sentences, and sign production. This leads to a common complaint about new interpreters: They include many facts, but the overall meaning is somehow missing. The missing elements are the coherence of the discourse, the goal of the speaker, and the point of the presentation. The features of language that convey the coherence do not coalesce at the phonological, morphological, or syntactic level; they integrate the text only at the discourse level.

When interpreters take time to analyze discourse and become familiar with the schemas and structures, they are better able to attend to the full message that is being presented and therefore have the potential to render a more effective and comprehensible message. The key lies in finding a way to teach the skill of analyzing discourse that works effectively with the languages we deal with and that applies to all kinds of discourse. Finding the key helps interpreters hone a skill that will serve them when working in any situation with any text. Discourse analysis yields an analysis of the meaning of a text at individual interactions in specific situations and at the linguistic features used to negotiate the interactions.

Discourse mapping, based on discourse analysis, provides a systematic approach for teaching students to analyze a text so they can produce successful, effective interpretations. These interpretations are accurate in content, socially appropriate, and linguistically accurate. Discourse mapping is a technique that teaches students how

to develop a mental picture of the meaning structure in any given source text. It helps them reconstruct a similar map in the target language. By creating an actual map of a text, students can see the relationship of its three perspectives: content, context, and form. In addition, it helps students actually visualize the production of the text. It is similar to techniques used in reading and writing instruction, often referred to as concept mapping, mind mapping, or idea mapping (including Anderson-Inman and Zeitz 1993; Schultz 1991; Collins and Quillian 1969).

In this chapter we present an in-depth explanation of the entire process of discourse mapping. We begin with an explanation of the process and then describe each activity and the numerous steps involved in the process. We have provided specific examples from two texts, one in ASL and one in English. We hope that as you read through each section, you will take the time to read the full transcripts, follow the maps given as examples, and come to an understanding of this complicated process.

DISCOURSE MAPPING: AN EXPLANATION

The goal of discourse mapping is twofold: to identify the overall structures within a text and to create meaningful visual representations of these structures. The visual representation of a complete text allows the student to see how the overall structures within it relate to each other, without depending on words or signs. If discourse analysis is truly the appropriate approach for interpreters, then we must consider how to enhance a student's ability to analyze, and we must provide opportunities to practice this analysis for meaning in a nonthreatening, supportive environment. The dated and unsuccessful educational approach of turning on an audiotape and expecting a student to interpret has taught us the value of time and analysis. Discourse mapping is an actual skill that we can impart to students in the classroom and one that will serve them well in future interpreting situations.

Discourse mapping may be used to develop a variety of skills. It can help students to prepare for comprehension before seeing or hearing a text, providing the student with an opportunity to focus on

possible topics, events, and interactants (a brainstorming activity). It can be used to enhance comprehension once students have seen or heard a text, providing them with the opportunity to analyze the structure of the text. This in turn helps students understand the signer's or speaker's intended meaning while also attending to vocabulary and grammatical structures as needed. When used to prepare for producing their own original texts, students can map their own brainstorming. When used with interlingual activities, students can develop possible target language texts that effectively represent the source message. Finally, discourse mapping can help students build their analysis skills by providing them with an opportunity to assess the structure of a text they have produced.

Choosing Texts

One of the first tasks the interpreting instructor must perform is choosing texts that are appropriate for the level and goals of students at different stages of their training. As we begin training, more straightforward texts are appropriate; as students master the skills of interpreting, the texts can become more difficult and complex. The challenge is in choosing texts that are appropriate. Unfortunately, we have few guidelines for choosing: Do we base our choices on vocabulary students already know? Do we pick simple topics told in narrative form (which often turn out to be much more difficult than we ever suspected)? How can we choose texts that will be effective for our students? Too often we choose a text because it "looks good," only to find that for some reason it is completely inappropriate. When we happen to find a text that "works," we use it again and again, possibly without ever having a clear idea of why it works and how to find more such workable texts.

Discourse mapping is a very effective strategy for making these choices. Mapping a text provides us with a clear picture of the underlying structure of that text and of the challenges it poses. Mapping highlights the structure of both interwoven and sequential themes. It lets us analyze the presenter's approach, helping us differentiate between a text that is straightforward (a simple listing of topics, subtopics, and details) and a text that is full of asides, multi-

level subtopics, or strategies of suspense and involvement in addition to the basic ideas. Once we have mapped the texts, we can choose those that provide the level of complexity appropriate for our students. And once we have mapped the texts ourselves, we have a ready-made means of evaluating students' work throughout the discourse-mapping process. Our map becomes the basis for determining the adequacy and effectiveness of students' own final productions. It also helps us to better understand the processes students experience or struggle with as they approach the texts.

Intralingual Skills: Comprehension and Production

Once texts are chosen, discourse mapping is an invaluable tool for developing the intralingual skills necessary for comprehending a source text.¹ This works for any source text, whether it is ASL or English. For example, discourse mapping develops comprehension of an ASL text by helping students overcome their tendency to freeze when they see a sign they do not recognize. Discourse mapping leads them to an understanding of the larger context and discourse structures of the text; by understanding these, they can develop analytical skills for zeroing in on the meaning of single vocabulary items. In other words, it helps them understand the meaning rather than the words. If the source text is English, discourse mapping can demonstrate that their initial understanding of the text may be both superficial and inadequate and that a deeper level of understanding is essential to truly interpreting the purpose of the text and the goals of the speaker.

Once students comprehend the meaning of a source text, mapping is effective in developing the visual and auditory perception skills necessary for perceiving the linguistic forms that express this meaning. Students often have great difficulty seeing topic boundaries in an ASL source text. Once they have mapped the topics and goals, however, students can review a text and identify the linguistic features that mark the topic shifts. They begin to see that topic A becomes topic B at the same time that a body shift occurs (or an ASL

1. Mapping is effective in introductory ASL courses as well as in interpreter education.

discourse marker appears or a certain combination of eyegaze, head nod, and pausing co-occur). As their perceptive skills grow, they begin to recognize the linguistic forms of ASL as structural elements that express the underlying meaning of the message. Similarly in English, students can begin to recognize the intonation patterns that signal discourse structures such as lists, disagreement, enhanced involvement, and idea boundaries.

Once students understand the meaning and context of a message and recognize the linguistic forms that express that meaning, they can more effectively produce their own messages. Discourse mapping promotes skill growth in this area, both in developing intralingual production skills and later in transitioning to interlingual activities. Students can use the discourse maps from texts they have understood (previous activity) to retell the meaning in their own way in the same language. As they focus on retelling the meaning, they are forced to think about the linguistic forms their retellings will take. Their retellings begin to include both the underlying meaning of the original and the many linguistic features needed to produce a comprehensible target text. When students, for example, understand that head nods are very useful to them in understanding ASL, they tend to use them more frequently in their own productions. The same principle applies to the retelling of English texts in English. An important impact of discourse mapping at this level is that, because all the students are developing both their perceptive and productive skills, they are far more able to provide quality feedback to their peers. This means that students receive increased feedback time during their courses; they do not have to sit and wait until the instructor tells them what is effective and what is not.

Discourse mapping can also help students produce their own original source texts. Often, intralingual activities require students to prepare a text in either ASL or English. Especially when the goal is an ASL text, students often revert to writing the English text, then looking up signs to gloss onto those words. Students are forced to stop thinking about discrete signs when they are first required to develop a map of their text and to think about both the meaning they wish to convey (whether it is a joke or a persuasive argument) and

the context in which they intend to situate the text. When they have mapped their text, they can then think about the sequencing of the ideas and the linguistic forms needed to make their texts comprehensible to others.

Interlingual Skill Development

Once students are able to map source texts easily in both ASL and English—first for comprehension and then for intralingual production—they can continue to benefit from discourse mapping as they shift to interlingual exercises, a transition that is difficult at best. At this stage the concept of spiraling in discourse mapping becomes applicable. Using texts that have already been comprehended and then produced in the intralingual exercises, students can transform these texts into the target language. Spiraling eliminates the typical barriers we erect for students and allows them to focus on the single skill of transforming meaning; they are not distracted by the need to also understand the source. Discourse mapping provides a clear understanding of the source, allowing students to work on the target. In addition, they can focus on the underlying meaning in the target and discuss how the target language expresses the meaning. If the source text in ASL is based on a spatial comparison and their analysis of English comparisons indicates that English uses prosody and intonation for the same function, then they know how to effectively produce a similar meaning in the target language.

The transition to interlingual activities takes advantage of discourse mapping at every step. Students begin translating between ASL and English, building their translations from their discourse maps of the source texts. Once proficient at building translations through discourse mapping, they can progress to consecutive interpreting more easily. They can take in the source text, map it, and, using their internalized skills, map their production in the target language. Discourse mapping is especially effective at this point because here student interpreters so often fall back on word-for-sign glossing, and underlying meaning flies out the window. Interestingly, students who have internalized the mapping process are not

satisfied with the output of word-to-sign matching. It no longer makes sense to them to throw out a string of signs just because the speaker said something (or vice versa). Because they see the connections between the topics, the context, the speaker, and the audience (thanks to their training), they are no longer satisfied with just making a connection between a word and a sign. Students transitioning through consecutive and eventually simultaneous interpreting using discourse mapping discuss questions of meaning. They ask “What’s the point” of a text or passage? They do not ask “What’s the sign for this word?” or “What’s the word for that sign?” They are truly learning to interpret.

Determining Equivalence

Finally, discourse mapping becomes an effective tool for evaluating the adequacy of an interpretation. Once a source text has been mapped for underlying meaning, context, and linguistic forms, students transform the text according to this map, thus building these aspects into the target language. Then it is an easy matter to evaluate the transformation, whether it is a translation, a consecutive interpretation, or a simultaneous interpretation. Students (and instructors) can map the resulting target text and compare that map to the source map: Are the meanings, the topics, the interrelationships of ideas, the context, and the goals of the source text apparent in the map of the target text? Does the map reflect the same level of conceptual subtlety, linguistic sophistication, generalities, and specifics of the source map? If so, the transformation is effective; if not, the gaps are usually very clear.

APPLICATION

Our first goal is to introduce you to the texts we will be using and provide a brief summary so you can follow our examples. The first is “Buying My Condo,” a text that we refer to throughout the chapter. The second is “Living Fully,” an English source text. We recommend that you read the transcripts provided in the appendices and watch the originals, if possible.

In “Buying My Condo,” the signer tells the story of how and why he bought a condominium (see Appendix 1). His underlying goal is to share the information and perhaps to entertain an audience, but his underlying approach is to emphasize his luck at the various factors that came together to make the purchase possible. He relates that he has been thinking about buying a place to live and has been looking around but has not been serious about it because he is still in school. He plans to wait until his studies are finished before buying a home but continues to go to open houses, read the classifieds, and ask friends for advice.

As he continues his search, he happens upon the perfect place. He describes its location and appearance. He makes an offer, which is eventually accepted, and then has to deal with financial issues such as getting a mortgage, demonstrating his credit rating, arranging inspections, and so forth. Finally all the paperwork is done, and he moves in. He concludes by saying that he has also finished his studies.

In “Living Fully” (Appendix 2), the speaker provides information in the hopes of inspiring people to have a positive attitude. She begins by introducing herself and her hope that the presentation will be useful. She cites several references related to her topic and then tells a story about a boy talking to three bricklayers. The story illustrates three interpretations of bricklaying: putting bricks down, one on top of the other; putting bricks together to achieve a product (a wall); and striving toward a finished project, a beautiful cathedral. Following this story, she asks the audience which interpretation they prefer and emphasizes that the interpretation affects our outlook as either positive or negative. She discusses the effect of our perceptions and fears on our attitude and further illustrates her point with two more stories. She closes by once again emphasizing that we control our attitudes, and she finishes with a poem to further illustrate her message.

Discourse Mapping Applied to Intralingual Activities

In this section we apply discourse mapping to an actual text and work through the process, step by step. Remember that this process

is not meant to be accomplished in a short period of time. Rather, parts of this process can be used in a variety of courses, from the initial brainstorming to completing and evaluating a successful interpretation. In addition, each of these activities should be spread over several class periods, allowing students time to internalize the text as well as the structure of the activity. Each activity is meant to be practiced numerous times with different texts. The point is to teach students the entire process over a period of time. Later in the education process, it is reasonable to expect students to work through the entire process independently.

Comprehension

PREPARATION (BRAINSTORMING)

1. Goals

- a. Students map possible topics, themes, relationships, and events that relate to the given topic.
- b. Students practice discussing this topic with both their peers and the instructor.

2. Objectives

- a. Practice vocabulary related to the given topic.
- b. Build confidence in prediction skills.
- c. Share world knowledge and experiences.
- d. Practice the ability to focus on a specific topic.
- e. Practice assessing language production for accuracy and completeness.
- f. Build confidence in comprehension skills.
- g. Practice discussing a given topic.
- h. Develop feedback skills through discussion of topic and maps with peers and instructor.
- i. Develop feedback skills through discussion of productions and maps with peers and instructor.

3. Discussion

This mapping activity—done intralingually—prepares the students for comprehension by helping them focus on possible topics.

DEVELOPING TEXTUAL COHERENCE SKILLS

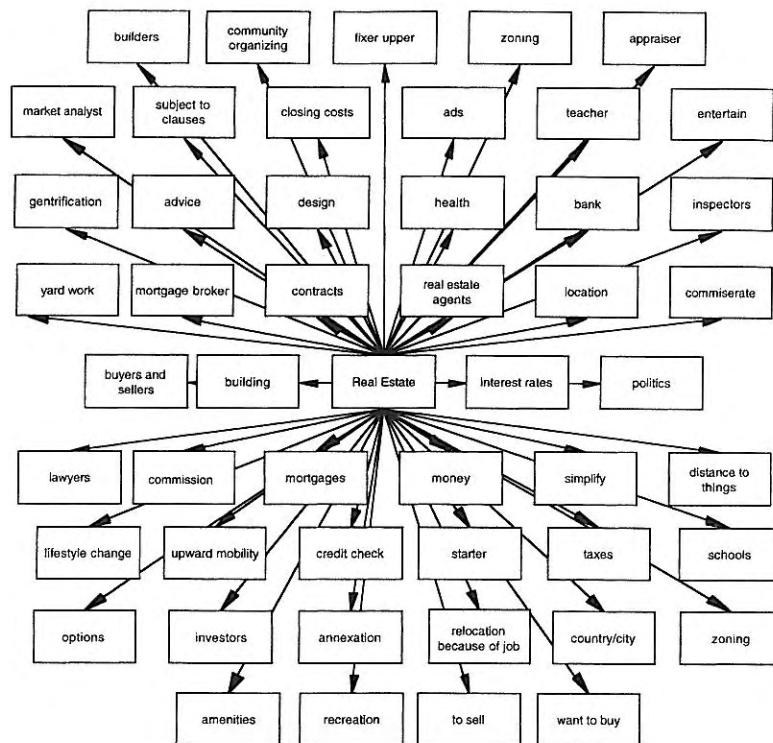
That is, if the source message is ASL, all class discussions are conducted in ASL (maps are written in English notes or pictures). Having chosen a text ("Buying My Condo"), the instructor might give the topic "real estate" to the class to brainstorm. Students will brainstorm through three levels: (1) content—topics, subtopics, themes, relationships, and events that might occur in that text; (2) context—registers, settings, audiences, and speaker goals for such a text; and (3) form—specific linguistic features of ASL that might be used, including possible vocabulary. Besides creating the visual map with students, this trilevel analysis of a topic presents an opportunity for students to develop their analysis skills. It helps them analyze the meaning of a text without being tied to its sequentiality. At this point, we do not want to know "what happened next." We want to comprehend the meaning.

Step 1. The instructor first selects an appropriate text for this activity (See "Choosing Appropriate Texts."). We have chosen "Buying My Condo."

Step 2. Once the videotape has been selected, the instructor introduces the topic "real estate" to the students but does not show the videotape at this point.

Step 3. Begin the brainstorming activity, eliciting possible subtopics, themes, relationships, and events that may occur in a text related to real estate. In addition, the instructor should elicit student brainstorming regarding the setting, register, and speaker goals that might be associated with such a text. As the students contribute their ideas, the instructor begins to draw a random map on the board, filling in nodes as the students respond. Prompts such as "What might someone talk about if he/she were telling a story related to real estate?" and "Who are specific individuals involved in such a transaction?" are appropriate at this time.

Step 4. Often students focus on content (themes, events, etc.). If the brainstorming peters out, the instructor may prompt the students by asking questions such as "Who might be in the audience?" or "Why would someone tell this story?" This information is included in the random map on the board. (Map 1 is an example of a random map for steps 3 and 4.)



Map 1

Step 5. Now the class discusses linguistic features that convey specific information. For example, the instructor might lead a discussion about the use of space in ASL. “If one were comparing possible residences, which features of ASL might be effective for comparing the asking-price by the sellers?” “If one were to discuss applying for a mortgage, which features of ASL might be effective for conveying the amount of time required to complete such a task?” Discussion should also include the vocabulary a signer might be using for this topic.

Throughout this process, teachers should prompt students to consider subtopics that are not readily mentioned. This activity

helps students use their world knowledge, their experiences, and their prediction skills to come up with numerous possibilities. The instructor must also guide the students to the information contained in the selected text (keeping in mind that this is an activity that prepares the students to view that text). Perhaps “Other than apartments and townhouses, what types of residential purchases might a person make?” would elicit the answer “condo” or “house.”

The map developed during this activity may appear chaotic, but right now the goal is to identify features from all three levels. The teacher should lead the group the first time this activity is done. Once students understand the activity, it can be assigned as group work, individual work, or homework for subsequent texts. When groups or individuals create maps, they should be shared and compared; sharing everyone’s map exposes students to many possible subtopics. Again, the instructor needs to guide this activity so students do not stray too far afield. We want them to be creative, not disconnected. And finally, it is essential to remember that this entire process requires time.

Step 6. When the instructor decides that enough possibilities have been identified, the class begins categorizing the map. For example, the real estate topics could be grouped into the following three categories: finances, people involved in the purchase, and location. We are trying to avoid any kind of sequential categorizing (e.g., first this happened, then this, etc.) and to focus instead on the main themes. (We provide an example of categorizing the topics in a later activity.)

Enhancing Comprehension

1. Goals

- Discuss the content, context, and form of an actual text.
- Produce a map reflecting comprehension of the topic.

2. Objectives

- Identify external aspects of the text (context).
- Begin to identify internal structures of the text (content and linguistic forms).
- Build confidence in memories of the source text.

- d. Practice analyzing underlying meaning through surface linguistic features.
 - e. Build confidence in abilities to analyze meaning.
 - f. Practice assessing the source language of others for accuracy and completeness.
 - g. Build confidence in their comprehension skills as students discuss their work with the group.
 - h. Practice assessing language production for accuracy and completeness.
 - i. Develop feedback skills through discussion of productions and maps with peers and instructor.
3. Discussion

The second mapping activity, used to enhance comprehension, builds upon the brainstorm map from the first activity. We continue to address the three aspects of discourse structure: content (topics, events, and relationships); context (setting, register, and speaker's goals); and form (linguistic features and vocabulary).

Step 1. After completing the brainstorming activity, show students the preselected text, "Buying My Condo," looking for content and context.

Step 2. The class now begins to develop a new map that represents actual topics, themes, and relationships (content) as well as setting, register, and speaker's goals (context). As we said before, this activity is best conducted as a class the first time. However, this activity, as well as all the others, needs to be repeated numerous times. Once students understand the activity, it is possible for them to work in small groups. The activity is repeated several times at this level until the map is complete. This not only creates a visual representation of the text but also provides the opportunity for students to recall and organize the text, build confidence in their memories and their ability to make sense of events, and discuss their decisions with their peers. (Maps 2A and 2B demonstrate two different examples of this same process at this point.) The instructor should again guide the students to accuracy.

Step 3. Watch the videotape again.

Step 4. Expand the map, making sure the information about content and context is adequately represented. Repeat until the map is fairly complete.

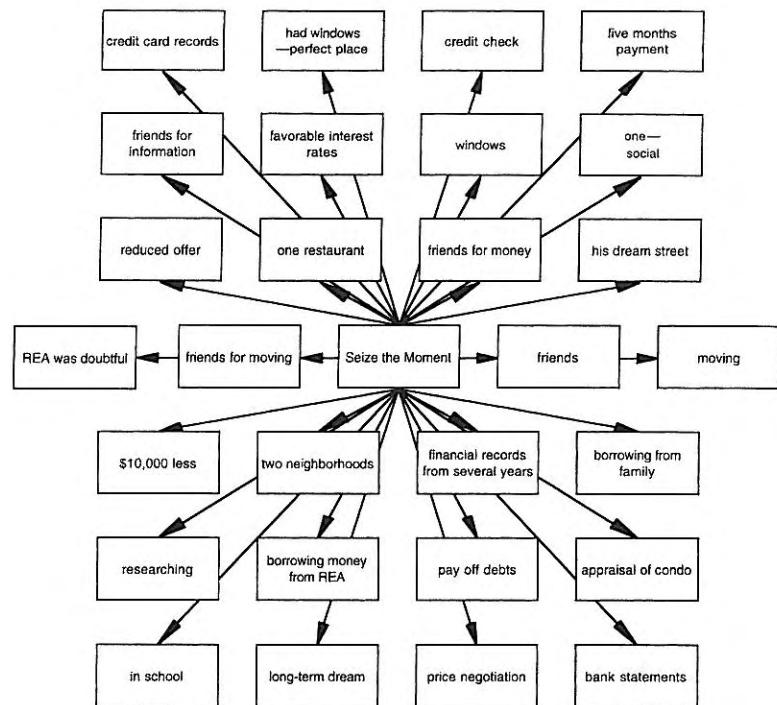
Step 5. When the instructor decides the map is complete, the class begins to categorize the concepts (see Map 3).

Step 6. Once the map has been categorized, the instructor can focus on form (linguistic features and vocabulary). The students identify or recall the linguistic features used by the signer. For the condo text, these features would include use of space to talk about houses, townhouses, and apartments; use of classifiers to describe the windows in the condo; and use of constructed action and dialogue to show the negotiation for the price. The instructor should also focus on any vocabulary that occurred in the text that might be new to the students. These features can be mapped onto Map 3.

Step 7. Repeat the cycle until the students' maps are complete.

Production: Reconstructing Existing Texts

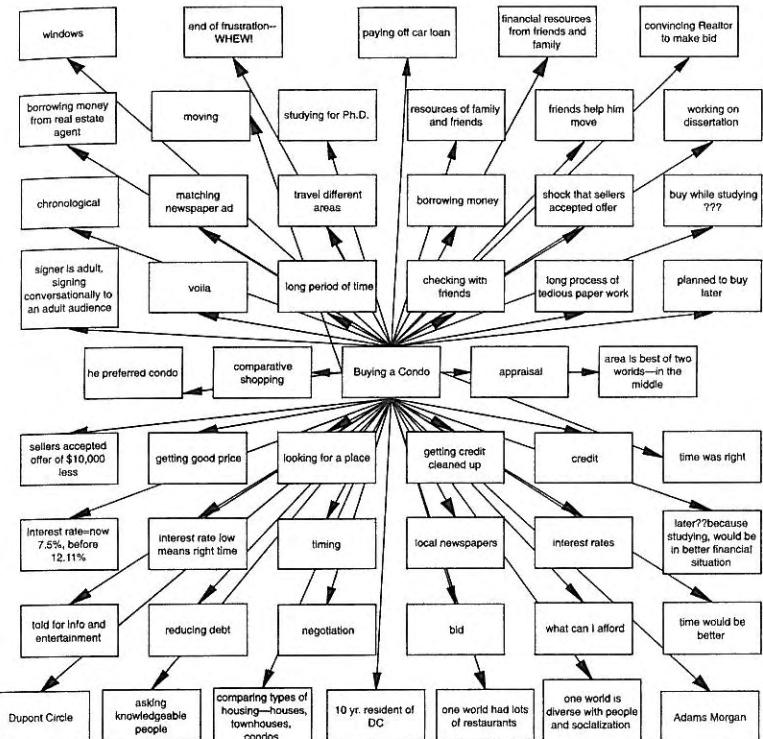
1. Goals
 - a. Using their own mental constructs, students produce meaningful texts that contain the content and meaning of the source.
 - b. Practice assessing the language for accuracy and completeness.
2. Objectives
 - a. Build confidence in production skills.
 - b. Build confidence in comprehension skills (each time students watch another person's story, they build comprehension skills).
 - c. Practice producing underlying meaning through surface linguistic features.
 - d. Practice assessing productions for accuracy and completeness.
 - e. Practice assessing others' productions for same.
 - f. Build confidence in abilities to analyze meaning.
 - g. Build confidence in memories for the source text.
 - h. Practice analyzing underlying meaning through surface linguistic features.



Map 2A

- Continue practicing mapping (i.e., analyzing meaning and linguistic forms).
 - Develop feedback skills through discussion of productions and maps with peers and instructor.
3. Discussion

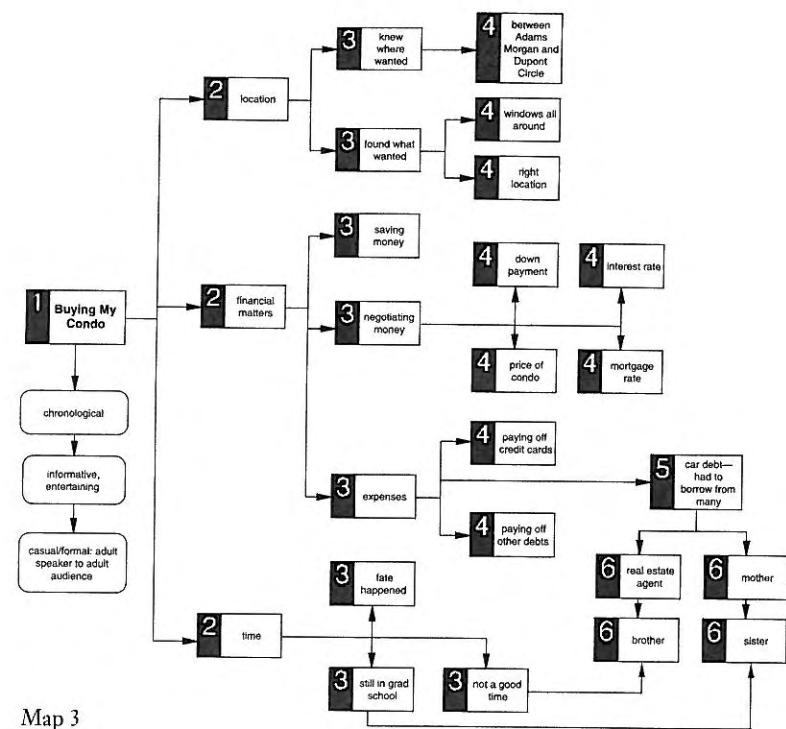
To summarize, students have completed the first two activities, brainstorming and enhancing comprehension of the topic. Students now have a visual map of the content, context, and form used in the original text (Map 3). The instructor can now continue to the next step—production. This is still an intralingual activity, asking the students to retell the source text in their own way.



Map 2B

Production is most effective if students are not permitted to see the source text (video) again at this point. This forces them to produce a text with the same meaning but using their own mental constructs, skills, and abilities to express those same meanings. This helps them to make the meaning their own and allows them to play with their productions.

Step 1. Working solely from their own maps (activity #2), students prepare their own signed presentation of the material, making sure that the presentation includes the content, context, and appropriate linguistic features. They prepare a sequential map that visually represents the sequential structure of their own presentation.



Map 3

Based on previous maps, at this stage such a map lists each feature, topic, and so on in the order the student intends to use for retelling. Using the condo text as our base, one student might sequence the text by doing the following:

1. Describing the condo
2. Describing its location
3. Explaining why it is perfect for the buyer
4. Discussing the financial hassle.

Another student may focus more on the timing aspect of the text, starting with the following:

1. The condo becoming available
2. The buyer leaping at the chance
3. Issues of negotiation.

This sequential map should be fleshed out for the entire text.

Step 2. Once the internal ordering of the text is prepared, students can focus on the linguistic features to be used in producing the text. Next to each segment of their sequential map, they should explain the linguistic features they intend to use in retelling the text. For example, one student may choose to use classifiers to describe the condo features:

CONDO, WINDOW++, BIG-WINDOW, THERE, THERE, THERE, WOW.

Another may prefer to describe it lexically, adding emphasis by using facial expressions instead of classifiers.

CONDO HAVE MANY WINDOW++, SUN, BRIGHT, PERFECT!

These two productions demonstrate each person's understanding of the source text's discussion of the windows in the condo. One person has understood that the benefit of having lots of windows is the light, whereas another has simply commented on the number of windows, leaving the watcher to fill in the reason the windows are important. A third student may sign something about having a view.

Step 3. Once the students have prepared their retelling maps, they practice the retelling until they can do it comfortably. Students then present their own renditions to others (whether this is to the instructor for a grade, to another student for feedback, or on videotape for self-assessment is a matter for the instructor to decide; each approach will be used at different times during this activity). This exercise again points out the variety of different understandings any interpretation may represent. As students see each variation, they can be directed to discuss the adequacy of the variations:

- Which ones are closer to the source text and why?
- Which ones have been too specific or too general and why?
- What underlying assumptions did the signer have that influenced her or his particular retelling of the text?

This type of discussion helps students hone their skills in understanding source texts at the level of meaning. Rarely do students discuss which sign they chose; usually they discuss the effectiveness of

classifiers versus lexical signs for conveying the idea of “great windows,” which works better to show emphasis, or better yet, which works more effectively in a particular style of retelling.

One valuable benefit of this retelling from the discourse maps is that students see a variety of appropriate retellings and begin to accept that there is more than one way to accurately represent a message. This frees them from the narrow view they often have that “If the signer used that sign, then I have to say that word” and helps them to develop a broader understanding of the meaning of the original text.

Step 4. Once students have retold the text, it is a simple matter to assess its accuracy. The retelling is compared to: 1) their own map to determine whether they actually included everything they intended to include; and 2) their maps of the original text (activity #2) to determine whether they have included everything they needed to include from the original text. (Determining equivalency by comparing maps is discussed in more detail later.)

Discourse Mapping Applied to Interlingual Exercises

Translation

Once students have become adept at mapping texts for comprehension and for production as intralingual activities, they are ready to move on to interlingual activities. As we have already stressed, students are expected to practice these activities on several texts over a period of time, internalizing the process of analyzing meaning one step at a time. Once they have mastered the intralingual mapping skills in both English and ASL, they are ready to focus on transforming that meaning from one language into the other. In this section we discuss the progression from intralingual to interlingual, and we outline the process from translation to simultaneous interpretation.

1. Goal: Students produce accurate and complete target texts based on source text discourse maps.

DEVELOPING TEXTUAL COHERENCE SKILLS

2. Objectives

- a. Review maps of ASL source text and review maps of students' own retelling of text.
- b. Analyze the most effective sequencing and discourse structures for presenting the message in the target language.
- c. Analyze the most effective linguistic features for presenting the target text.
- d. Build confidence in memory, analysis skills, feedback skills, and production skills.

3. Discussion

Teachers can approach the progression from intralingual to interlingual exercises using discourse mapping in two ways. First, students can translate the original text using the discourse maps created in activity #2; second, students can translate their own retellings using their discourse maps from activity #3. As always, the goal in these exercises is to lead the students through one step at a time, building incrementally on their previous skills. One way to achieve this is to spiral and recycle materials. Students begin translations by working from texts whose meaning they have already mastered; they use texts that they have already mapped. This way they are only focusing on the process of translation and not also dealing with the process of comprehension and production. Asking students to comprehend, translate, and produce in one giant step from the beginning is not effective; even combining two steps makes the task overwhelming. Consistently adding one step at a time helps them internalize and master each step, so that as they move on, they have confidence in their abilities.

At this stage students should still not review the source text but continue to work from their maps. This helps them avoid the pitfall of glossing and falling back into the “signs” rather than relying on meaning.

Step 1. Using the map of the source text (activity #2), students review the concepts, structures, and linguistic forms they have outlined as they occurred in ASL.

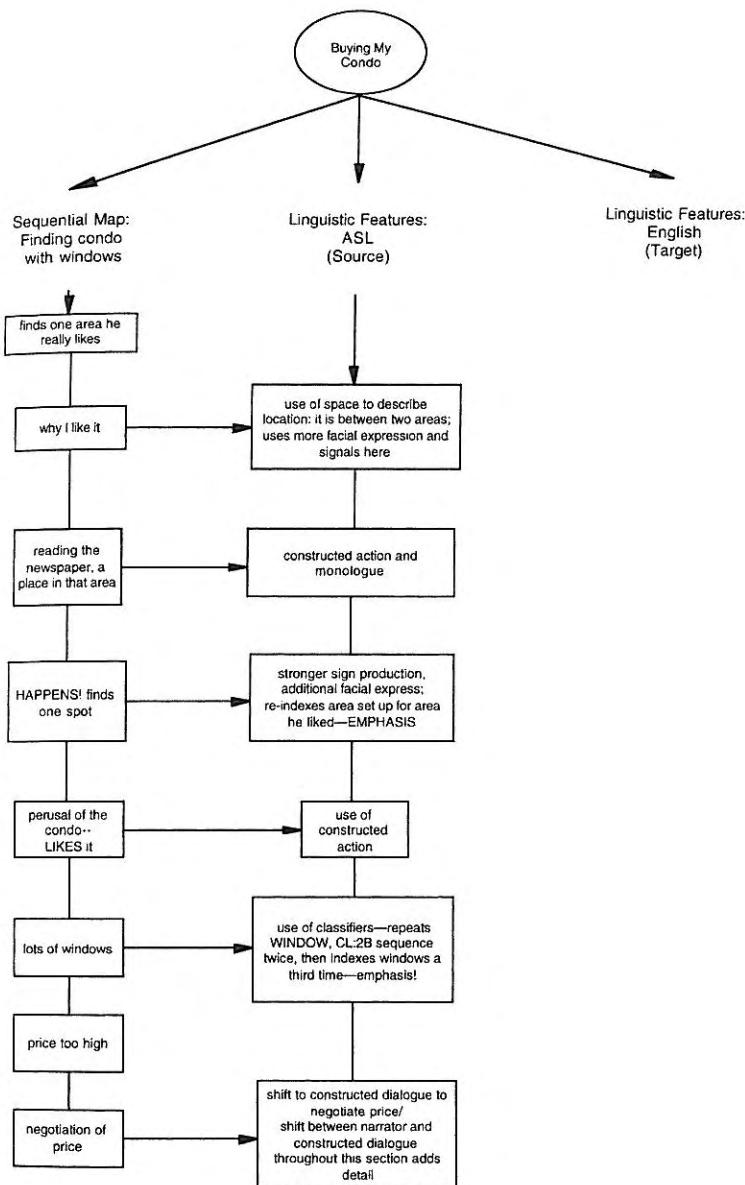
Step 2. Students prepare a sequential map of the original source text (Map 4A, column 1). This map represents the actual order of the original condo text.

Step 3. Students analyze the specific linguistic features associated with each step of the sequential map. (In the condo text, the linguistic features might look like Map 4A, column 2.) In the section of text mapped here, the signer uses space to describe why he likes the location of the condo. He sets up two different neighborhoods, describing the benefits of each one. As he does this, he adds more facial expression. The use of space and facial expression adds emphasis to this segment, drawing the watcher into the telling of the event. Following this segment, the signer mentions that he was reading the newspaper and found a place in that very area. For this segment he continues to use space for emphasis and detail, but he switches to a different type of spatial map. He uses constructed action and monologue to demonstrate his actions and thoughts. Each segment of the sequential map is analyzed for the accompanying linguistic features.

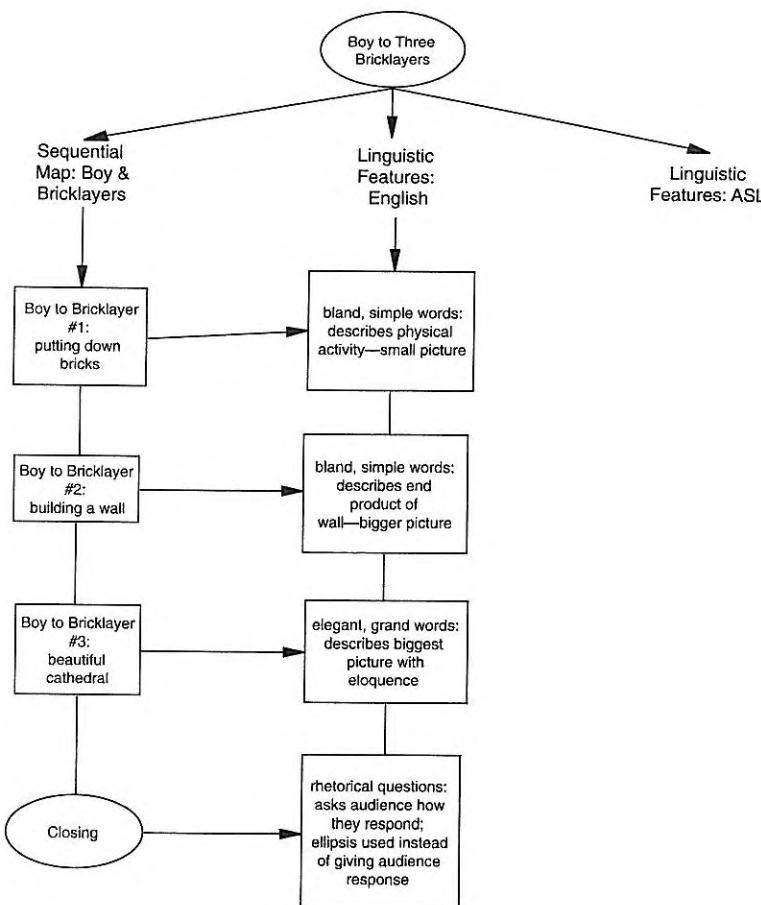
In the “Living Fully” text, the sequential and linguistic feature map might look like Map 4B. The speaker uses ellipsis and poetic language to build involvement. She employs rhetorical questions often, and she uses sentence and paragraph structures that recur, a technique used by orators to build rhythm and a sense of continuity within a text. When she describes the boy talking to each bricklayer, she uses the same type of sentence.

A little boy happened by and asked a question of the first brickmason. The little boy approached the second brickmason and asked him the same thing. The little boy approached the third brickmason and asked the same question again.

This recurrence of similar form and vocabulary is intentional; it builds structure for the audience. The brickmasons’ answers are also structured in similar patterns; each is described by where he looks and then by what he says (I’m . . . , I’m . . . , I am . . .). The major difference in these three sections of the story lies in the way each bricklayer ends the final sentence. One finishes with “I’m laying brick” (intonation is somewhat sarcastic and dismissive); one with “I’m



Map 4A



Map 4B

building a wall" (ordinary intonation); and one with "I am building a beautiful cathedral" (the speaker uses the word *pride* and also adds pride to her voice). The speaker does not comment on these differences; she leaves the audience to interpret the point of her story by their recognition of both the redundancies of most of the text and the clear differences in the final sentences.

Step 4. Students begin to determine which English structures will achieve the same results (Map 5A, column 3). Because the signer

used space and facial expression for added emphasis and detail, an English rendition might need to include descriptive adjectives as well as intonation and stress.

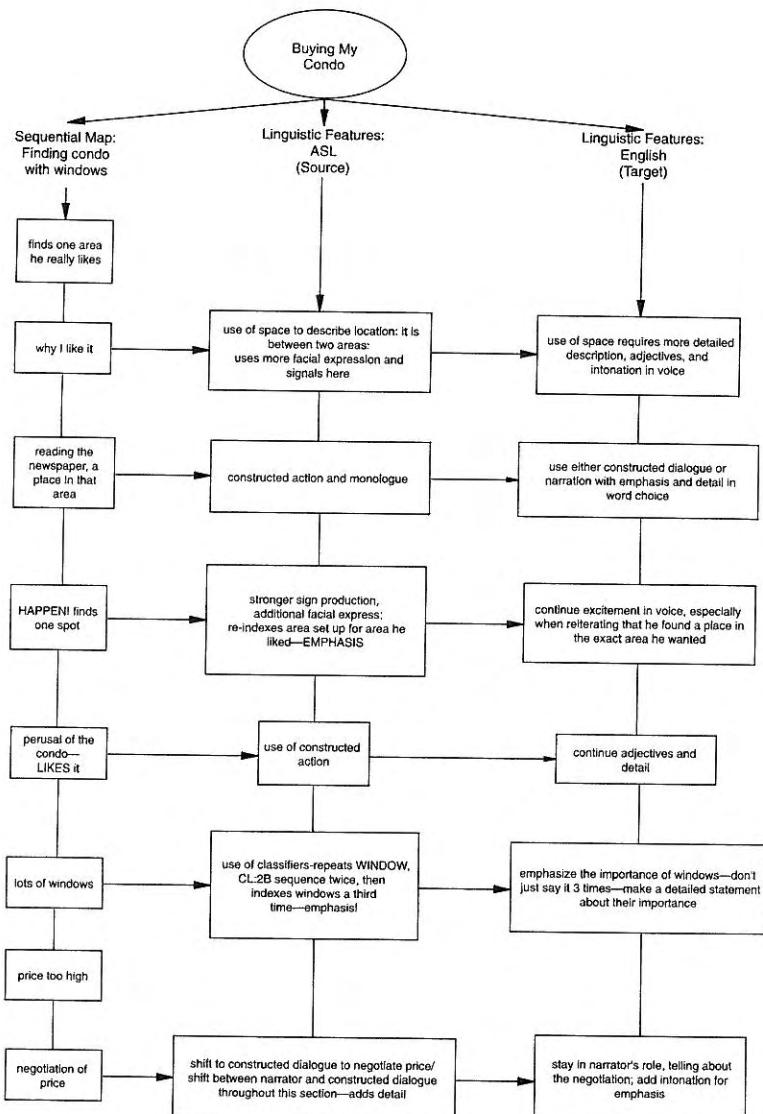
We also provide an example of this step for the English text, "Living Fully" (see Map 5B). When the boy is talking to the first bricklayer, where the English words are bland, the signed rendition might use constructed dialogue with little additional facial expression. When the boy talks to the second bricklayer, the signed sentence might be very similar, especially because the source sentence structures are similar (as noted earlier). The signed rendition of the question to the third bricklayer would need to continue the use of constructed dialogue to portray this intended parallel.

The result of this exercise is a map representing the internal structure and the linguistic features of the target text that effectively represents the source text.

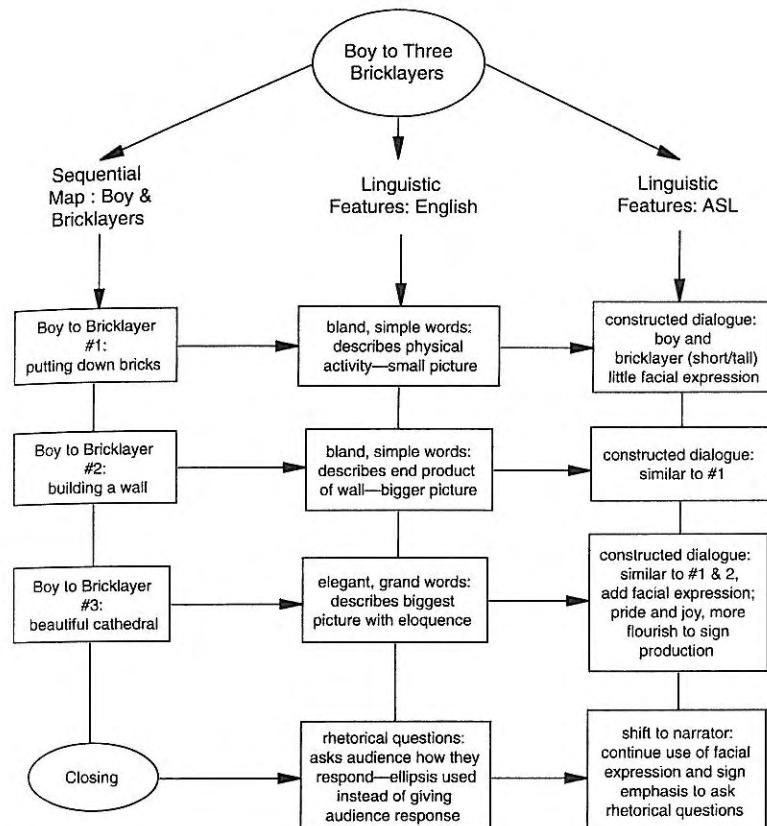
Step 5. Once this map is ready, students produce the target version. When working from the condo text, the target version might be in written English. The goal for a written translation would be to focus primarily on the appropriate register, vocabulary selection, and major discourse structures (such as time passage, comparisons, and performatives). Or the translation may be directly into spoken English, focusing on voice production, intonation, stress, pitch, and so on, as well as structure. When the preparation for the translation is completed, students practice it and present it (as in previous activities).

Step 6. The presentation is assessed for both accuracy and completeness. This can be done by mapping the presented text and comparing that map to the one used to prepare the translation (from activity #3).

A variation of this activity is to have the students prepare a translation from the maps produced in activity #3 from their own retellings of the source text. Once they have prepared and presented these translations, it is beneficial for students to compare their translation of the source text and their translation of their own retelling. This comparison points out clearly those ideas that have been lost along the way, the ones that have remained, and the places where students need to refocus their efforts. Students whose maps



Map 5A



Map 5B

have been accurate and complete at each stage of the process should have translations that are elegant, well formed, complete, and accurate, albeit very different in the surface linguistic forms. Students whose maps have strayed from preceding maps will find gaps in their final translations and topics or details that range from completely lost to minimally distorted. This analysis leads to a greater awareness of effective translations.

The step from intralingual retelling exercises to interlingual translation exercises has traditionally been a difficult one for students. Using discourse mapping, students make the transition one step at a time, always working with underlying meaning to understand the message and transform it. However, this process also focuses on the surface linguistic structures, helping students perceive the subtle linguistic strategies used to produce underlying meaning. In the next section we discuss the transition from translation to consecutive interpreting using discourse mapping as a tool.

Consecutive Interpreting

1. Goals

- a. Transition from translation to consecutive interpreting
- b. Develop techniques that build skills and confidence

2. Objectives

a. Preparation

- (1) Develop discourse maps of texts within a time limit
- (2) Produce sequential discourse maps of source texts within a time limit
- (3) Prepare translations based on sequential discourse maps within a time limit; assess translations
- (4) Chunk the translations within a time limit.

b. Performance

- (1) Perform the chunked translations within a time limit
- (2) Assess the chunked translations

c. Using new source texts, apply the preceding process to new texts.

3. Discussion

The first part of this activity is preparation. If students have internalized the process of transforming a message from language to another, then the biggest change from the previous activity, translation, to consecutive interpreting should be the change from an unlimited to a limited time for preparation and production of texts. Because one goal is always to limit the number of new steps when advancing from stage to stage, it is important that students enter

into consecutive interpreting facing first the challenge of time, without also facing the challenge of processing and producing new text. For this, we start once again with the texts mapped during activities.

Step 1. Discuss goals and objectives of this activity. At this stage students should review the actual source text. Continuing with the example of the condo text, the teacher introduces the goals of the activity and leads students through a review of the mapping process.

Step 2. Prepare a discourse map of the text within a limited time. Begin this step by showing the source text to the class. Give students 10 minutes to produce a discourse map of themes, ideas, and so on. These maps will not be as detailed as the original maps from activity #2 but should include the major features and supporting information. This activity adds the pressure of time without adding the fear of not understanding the source text.

Step 3. Students view the source text again and have another 5–10 minutes to categorize the ideas.

Step 4. Sequence the text within a time limit (5–20 minutes). Once they have mapped the text, they need to sequence the items on their maps in the order they occur in the source text.

Step 5. List the linguistic features occurring at each sequenced chunk within a time limit. Students list the linguistic features used in the source text for each chunk of the sequential map. Our suggested time limit is 15–30 minutes. (The results would be similar to Map 5A.)

Step 6. Assess sequential maps for accuracy and completeness. This step can be done as a class, by the instructor, or through small-group discussion. Assessment is based on the discourse maps produced during activity #2, the original mapping of the source text. Successful completion of this activity builds student confidence in their abilities to analyze source texts more and more quickly.

Step 7. Prepare a translation based on the sequential map within a limited time. Once the sequential and linguistic feature map is prepared, students begin building the translation. Much of this will be familiar because the students have already worked intensively with this text. However, the forms of the target language may be very

different; students should thus be encouraged to produce a translation based on the map produced during this activity rather than trying to remember how they did it the last time. Thus, their translation of the condo text may be very different from the one they prepared for the previous translation activity. Suggested limit for the first time is 30 minutes. This time limit can be increased if necessary but should be progressively decreased with subsequent texts.

Step 8. Chunking the translation. Once the translation is prepared, the teacher introduces the next step—chunking the material into meaningful sections for consecutive interpreting. These sections should include full ideas and should be of some length (four to five idea units). The goal is to have students learn where and how to chunk larger texts. Discourse mapping is useful at this stage; students can usually use their maps to find the meaningful sections of the text.

Step 9. Consecutive interpreting/unlimited production time. When the text has been translated and chunked, students can begin the next step—consecutive interpreting. The source text should be prepared so that it is paused at each chunk; students can pause the tape, they can cue a partner to pause the tape, or they can edit the tape so that there is a pause in it (much easier technically for audio than videotape). During the initial consecutive interpreting, students are allowed as long a pause as they need to present their interpretation of the chunk. The source text is not restarted until they have finished. (It is assumed that they are adept at this interpretation and are not repeating, repairing, and otherwise stumbling along during this pause.)

Step 10. Consecutive interpreting/limited production time. Once students are comfortable with consecutively interpreting with self-regulated pausing, the next step is to introduce another time constraint. This time the time constraint is the length of the pause between chunks. To begin, it is often effective if the pause is slightly longer than is needed to take a few seconds to think and then say the interpretation. This adds pressure to the students' task while still allowing them to produce successful interpretations without falling behind. As the students' comfort level increases, the pause length is

shortened until the students are still interpreting while the next chunk is presented. At first this overlap should be just small enough to provide students with the experience of taking in information while also producing it. (Students should also have had exposure to multitasking activities before moving into this level of consecutive interpreting.) It is important that students wait to begin each chunk until they have heard it all.

In consecutive interpreting, the pauses never completely disappear. An end step for this activity is to have 5-second pauses between chunks. Students are viewing the new chunks while producing the old ones but know that they have fixed places for pulling themselves back together. As students become comfortable with this activity, it is useful to have them chunk the tapes according to their own needs. This helps build their confidence in their chunking abilities and their ability to deal with a variety of pacing approaches. Once students have chunked their source texts, they can share them with their peers and practice consecutively interpreting each other's texts.

Step 11. Assess production. When students have done their consecutive interpretation of a text, they return to the mapping process to evaluate the effectiveness of their interpretations. They map the target text, comparing that map with that made of the source text. This comparison points out clearly the areas needing improvement, and so on. Students may also practice mapping each other's target texts and giving feedback to their peers about the productions.

As a form of assessment at this point, teachers may want to evaluate the target production for accuracy and completeness (comparing the students' text to the teacher's own map of the source text) and also evaluate the students' ability to self-assess by comparing the students' source and target maps. In this way students learn not only what they did on a particular text but also how to assess their own performances, a skill they need for continued development once they leave the program.

The third part of this activity includes the introduction of new texts. As we have stressed before, it is important to work through this process with known texts, adding only one new step at a time. When students have learned this process, the instructor can start

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APPENDIX 1

Buying My Condo by Clayton Valli

This tape was produced with funds from the U.S. Department of Education in a grant awarded to the Department of Linguistics and Interpreting at Gallaudet University. The grant is entitled "Interpreter Training for Deaf Individuals." The transcription is taken from the voice interpretation provided with the text.

Not too long ago I purchased a condo, which I had no intention of doing; I surprised myself, and I'm going to tell you about how the purchase came about.

I've been living in the D.C. metro area for the past ten years and during that time I've seen a lot of residences: houses, townhouses, condos. I've talked to some of my friends about their own purchases and just kind of gotten a feel for the market, what's out there, what houses, you know, different kinds of residences are selling for these days and just kind of checked out the whole market.

And during my travels around town I've gone to some open houses, just to get an idea, and I was on one particular street that I was really taken by. And I didn't know if there was ever going to be anything for sale on this street that I could afford, or if anything would ever come out of it. But this particular street stuck in my mind after I left the area.

So I continued my window shopping or just attending open houses for the enjoyment of it, to get an idea of the D.C. area, and perhaps find a location that I would be interested in settling down someday. And I also would peruse the newspapers and see what was out there. One day I noticed a condo for sale that was in the price range that I could afford, and I thought, you never know; take a look at it and let's see.

So I drove over to the address listed in the paper. When I got there I realized it was that street that I had been at some time before; it was the street that always stuck in my mind. So that was the first clue. And then when I went into the condo and looked around, it was a nice condo; I really liked it. So it started looking more and more like a real possibility.

So I talked to the real estate agent and asked him, "Well, you know, what's the actual price that this condo is selling for?" And he told me what the price was—he or she—and I said, "Well, you know, I could pay it but it's a little more than what I wanted to pay." I said, "Would you ask the owner if they would be willing to take ten thousand off the price?" The real estate agent didn't think that was very likely a possibility but said that they would give it a shot.