Northeastern University
Center for Atypical Language Interpreting

Collaborative Transcript Activity

Simple Instructor Guide & Rubric

For Use with CALI Language Sample Video Series

What Is This Activity For?

This activity helps students:

- Get better at **understanding signed communication**
- Practice **describing what they see** instead of judging it
- Notice when they understand and when they don't
- Ask good questions about meaning
- Talk respectfully about language differences

Students are **not interpreting** and **not being graded on perfection.**
The focus is on **noticing, understanding, and reflecting.**

What Students Should Be Able to Do by the End

Students will:

- Describe things they noticed (movement, facial expression, pacing, etc.)
- Recognize when they felt confident or unsure
- Point out moments that were confusing or interesting
- Create simple comprehension questions
- Talk about language differences respectfully

More advanced students may also:

- Suggest strategies that could help understanding
- Use more professional descriptive language
- Connect what they noticed to real-world interpreting situations

Before Class — What You Need

Choose a Video Clip

- 2–4 minutes long
- Look for natural pauses, repetition, or topic shifts
- If students are new, choose a shorter clip

Materials

- A shared document (Google Doc, Padlet, whiteboard, etc.)
- Timer or phone clock
- Optional: Language Analysis Team 2 (LAT2) Report
- Copies of the rubric if you plan to assess

Room Setup

Make sure students can **see clearly**:

- Good lighting
- Large enough screen
- Minimal glare
- Seats facing the screen

Why This Activity Uses "Phases"

This activity is divided into **phases** on purpose.
Each phase helps students practice a different skill.

Try not to skip phases.
If you are short on time, use a **shorter clip** instead of removing a phase.

What Each Phase Builds

- **Phase 1:** Comfort with not understanding everything
- **Phase 2:** Focus and group responsibility
- **Phase 3:** Noticing details and meaning
- **Phase 4:** Sharing ideas and building common language
- **Phase 5:** Talking about what helped understanding
- **Phase 6:** Creating questions for future learning

Activity Steps (45–75 Minutes)

Phase 1 — Watch Without Pressure (5 min)

Goal: Help students relax and just observe.

- Play the clip once.
- No pausing.
- No note-taking.
- Tell students:
  “It’s okay if you don’t understand everything.”

Phase 2 — Assign Segments (5 min)

Goal: Give each group something specific to focus on.

- Put students in small groups (3–5 people).
- Assign each group a short time range (10–30 seconds).
- Each group becomes the “expert” on that part.

Phase 3 — Rewatch & Notice (15–20 min)

Goal: Help students describe what they see and understand.

Groups replay only their assigned segment.

Ask students to:

- Write the **main idea or theme**
- Note facial expressions, movement, pauses, repetition
- Mark where they felt unsure
- Use neutral words (describe, don’t judge)

Helpful prompts you can say:

- “What are you noticing?”
- “What helped you understand?”
- “Where did it get harder?”

Phase 4 — Build a Shared Transcript (10–15 min)

Goal: Combine everyone's work.

- Each group adds their notes to the shared document.
- Model neutral wording if needed.
- Emphasize description, not correction.

Phase 5 — Class Discussion (10 min)

Goal: Talk about understanding, not mistakes.

Choose 2–4 interesting moments:

- Confusing parts
- Repetition
- Topic shifts
- Emotional moments

Ask:

- "What helped you understand here?"
- "What clues did you notice?"

Phase 6 — Create Comprehension Questions (5–10 min)

Goal: Help students think about meaning.

Each group writes 1–2 questions like:

- "What topic was being discussed?"
- "What emotion did you notice?"
- "What idea was repeated?"

You can save these questions for another class.

Adjusting for Different Student Levels

Newer Students

- Use very short clips
- Focus only on noticing
- Allow drawings or single words
- Do short reflections

- No strategy analysis required

More Advanced Students

- Use slightly longer clips
- Ask about strategies that help understanding
- Introduce professional descriptive language
- Connect to real-world interpreting situations

Quick Closing Reflection (5 min)

Ask students 1–2 questions:

- What helped your understanding today?
- What surprised you?
- What did you learn about how you watch signed communication?

Instructor Tips

- Focus on **process, not perfection.**
- If students judge language, gently redirect to description.
- Encourage curiosity.
- Reuse the same video later — students will notice more over time.
- The video stays the same; **student awareness grows.**

Simple Assessment Rubric (Optional)

Area	Beginning	Growing	Strong	Excellent
Noticing	Few details noticed	Some details	Many clear details	Notices patterns and relationships
Describing Language	Judgmental wording	Mostly descriptive	Neutral descriptive language	Precise professional wording
Self-Awareness	Little reflection	Acknowledges confusion	Clear awareness of understanding	Deep insight into own process
Participation	Rarely contributes	Contributes with prompting	Active participation	Helps others clarify

Area	Beginning	Growing	Strong	Excellent
Questions Created	Off topic	Partially connected	Clearly about meaning	Thoughtful and insightful
Respect & Reflection	Minimal reflection	Basic awareness	Thoughtful reflection	Strong awareness and growth mindset

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