



POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Moderator: Michelle Elbe, East Carolina University

Teaching Wordless Instructions in a Technical Writing Course: Suggested Resources and Projects

Natalia Matveeva, University of Houston–Downtown

In order to reduce the costs of products and increase profits when targeting multicultural and multilingual consumers, companies search for new ways of designing instructional materials and assisting target audiences in performing certain procedures required for assembly. Translation costs can be indeed a burden. According to several different sources, the cost of transition can range from 30 to 60 cents per word depending on language, technicality, number of words, and other factors (Markel 294; Horton 683). This is one of the numerous reasons why some companies turn to wordless instructions or instructions that are mainly visual.

The field of technical communication (and its curriculum) is affected by this global trend in procedural documentation. The number of conference presentations on the topic has increased in recent years, and some writers discuss visual instructions in their technical communication textbooks. However, the resources and activities that would help students develop skills for creating effective wordless instructions are still limited. In my poster presentation, I will first discuss various purposes of wordless instructions and some of the available guidelines for creating procedural graphics. I will then offer resources and activities that can help teachers introduce wordless instructions to students in their technical writing courses.

How Do Service-area Populations Shape Program Design and Delivery?

Susan Feinberg and Laura Batson, Illinois Institute of Technology

Social institutions such as museums, public schools, and universities all provide services and need services. When service area populations come together to work on projects, they can create a sense of community that leads to understanding and "mutual valuing." (Rollo May) For this reason, such projects are to be encouraged and should shape program design and delivery. Our students benefit greatly from these service area projects.

This poster and 5-minute presentation will present a model program design and delivery for service area projects based on a case-study. The poster will describe

- the changes to program design and delivery to accommodate such projects.
- the interaction within and between the institutions: university, museum, public schools.
- the benefits to all the populations: students, teachers, administrators, funders.
- the obstacles to succeeding with such projects and achieving "mutual valuing."

Around the Table: 35 Years of CPTSC Proceedings

Tracy Bridgeford, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Despite its 35-year oral and written existence, very few histories account for the Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC). Aside from Tom Warren and Tom Pearsall's article

about CPTSC's beginnings published in the *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* in 1986, little if any accounts of this vibrant organization can be found. Perhaps this lack of record attests to the underlying characteristic valued most by members about the CPTSC: its focus on discussion. With discussion as *the* conference program objective, five-minute position statements about a programmatic issue structure member presentations in roundtable formats after which follows at least 30 minutes of discussion.

I don't think it's a stretch to argue that CPTSC's history reflects more of an oral tradition of historical stories than a traditional, linear timeline of important events, especially when considering CPTSC's emphasis on conversation—a key characteristic of its annual meetings—as opposed to the isolated presentation style of many other academic conferences. Although proposals for merging with or holding annual meetings concurrently or in conjunction with organizations like the Associate of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) have been proposed periodically over the years, this idea has yet made much headway beyond the proposal. The most-cited reason for this lack of progress toward a dual assembly continues to focus on the kinds of discussions afforded by smaller conferences. These program discussions—preserved almost verbatim in the proceedings—generally reflect the conversational style of the presenter and the dialogic characteristic of the annual meetings despite the print format of the proceedings. Although some members submit expanded records of their position statements for the proceedings in order to continue conversations begun during the annual meeting.

My poster will present a visual history of these discussions (proceedings topics) from the first record (1974) to the most current (2007). Using the familiar roundtable metaphor, my poster will capture the conversations recorded in the proceedings from the last 35 years. This conceptual record can show us the forces, directions, and changes that affected CPTSC as well as create opportunities for new influences.

Programmatic Perspectives: An Interactive Community Engagement

Karla Saari Kitalong, Michigan Technological University, and Bill Williamson, Saginaw Valley State University

Last year, the CPTSC membership approved a proposal for creating an official journal for its organization. This journal, focused on programmatic and administrative issues, marks a significant moment for this neglected area of research. As the editors, we support the CPTSC community's high standards and high expectations for scholarship and community.

We view this journal not only as a space for scholarship but also as a space for teaching and learning about scholarship. As teachers, and with a stellar review board, we mentor new colleagues about the field, its practices, and especially its values. Particularly, we connect what's already valued by CPTSC members—community, both the intellectual scholarly content collected in more traditional print spaces as well as the personal, face-to-face, roundtable conversations encountered at the annual meeting. As learners, we approach the arguments, reviews, and comments we encounter as editors in this important position with a passion for both traditional and new ideas.

Our poster will depict our editorial vision as well as identify opportunities for publication in the journal, including articles, emerging scholars forum articles, program showcases, memorials, editorials, audio or video presentations when/if available (e.g., keynotes), commentary, blogs, and perhaps visual arguments. Particularly, we want to make this poster more interactive by encouraging viewers to add to or comment on our ideas. We will provide post-it notes, a suggestion box, or other mechanism.



Report of CPTSC-Sponsored Research on Certificate Programs in Technical Communication

Jim Nugent, Oakland University

In 2006, the Council generously provided support for my research into the status of certificate programs in technical communication. With this support—and with additional support provided by the Michigan Technological University Department of Humanities—I was able to perform a mailed survey of certificate program administrators to determine their instructors' status as full time, part-time (adjunct), tenure-track, or non-tenure track employees. I also collected data regarding instructors' qualifications, specializations, and work experience. Finally, I gathered additional programmatic data, such as the size of programs, the age of programs, the length of program completion, and information about parallel bachelors programs. In this poster session, I present the results of this research, and I offer some conclusions and theoretical reflections on the situation of certificate programs in our field.

These findings should be of considerable interest to administrators of existing certificate programs, or to those interested in developing new certificate programs. This research also begins to speak to a number of larger issues and important questions for technical communication:

- Do certificate programs evidence a shift toward vocationalism, and does that matter?
- What are the implications of certificate programs for academy/industry collaboration?
- What are the implications of certificate programs for professionalizing the field?
- What curricular and theoretical models can help us to situate and to make sense of certificate programs?