

Deaf Culture Question of the Week – May 14-18, 2012
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Which communication facilitation technique listed below relies on an interface between a human being and technology?

- a) Text Interpreting
- b) ASL Interpreting
- c) Cued Speech Interpreting
- d) Oral Interpreting

Answer “a” – Text Interpreting also known as C-Print Captioning is a system developed at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). It is a communication facilitation technology for presenting real time caption displays of what a speaker is saying. Text Interpreting (C-Print Captioning) is used primarily in educational settings.

Another similar technology used for communication facilitation is called CART. CART stands for Communication Access Realtime Translation. It too presents real time caption displays of a speaker’s words. It is used most frequently for conferences where a word-for-word presentation in captions is appropriate.

What’s the difference between Text Interpreting and CART?

A CART operator uses a stenograph machine of the type used for court reporting with a special stenographic code. A computer attached to the stenograph translates the code into captioning which appears almost instantly on a display. The display can be a large screen behind the speaker when CART is being used for a conference presentation. Often CART will be used in conjunction with live ASL interpretation.

Text Interpreting (C-Print Captioning) uses a laptop computer with a special software developed at NTID that allows the C-print captionist to capture the main ideas being expressed by a speaker in language that can be more readily understood and processed by the deaf student in real time.

A nice feature of Text Interpreting is that a transcript of the captions can be saved and printed off later for students as class notes. At the Rochester Institute of Technology, where NTID is located, deaf students can request Text Interpreting or ASL Interpreting when they take classes with hearing students. Hearing students often register for classes where they know deaf students have registered because they like the access to printed transcript of class lectures. Transcripts are not made available directly to hearing students but let's just say deaf students in these classes become very popular.

Text Interpreting can also be provided to students in remote areas. The C-Print captionist does not need to be physically located in the classroom. As long as they can establish a connection to the classroom to hear the speakers they can use C-Print technology to caption the speech and send it to a deaf student's laptop in the class.

It is important to point out a significant downside to C-Print or Text Interpreting. It is "one-way." That is, unlike ASL or other forms of speech-to-sign interpretation Text Interpreting cannot easily allow the deaf student to contribute to the class discussion, answer questions etc. This is a significant downside for students who prefer ASL. It can be an excellent choice for students who prefer to read English rather than ASL and who can use their speech skills to participate in class.

To provide some additional perspective, the Dean of Access Services at RIT, Dr. Rico Peterson, provided me with the following statistics for the 2011-12 school year.

RIT employed 125 full-time ASL Interpreters and used an additional 100 on-call interpreters to cover 135,000 hours of interpreting.

For Text-Interpreting (C-Print Captioning), RIT employed 55 full-time captionists and hired CART captionists for major events like graduation and occasionally to cover classroom real time captioning needs. They provided 20,000 hours of C-Print captioning in classrooms.

Find out more about C-Print Captioning (Text Interpreting) here:
http://www.ntid.rit.edu/cprint/how_cprint.php

See a short video explanation in ASL of C-Print Captioning here:

<http://www.deafterp.com/cprint.html>

Find out more about CART at the Communication Access Information Center sponsored by the National Court Reporters Foundation: <http://cart-info.org/>

Deaf Culture Questions of the Week are archived at: <http://www.wsd.wa.gov>