The Shocking Costs of Inaccurate Transcripts

Law enforcement is one of many fields that use **transcription services** to record important information. In the legal sphere, the accuracy of transcripts is vital, and errors can lead to devastating results.

Wrongly Imprisoned Because of **a Faulty Transcript**

Carlos Ortega's tragic story illustrates some of the worst potential consequences of a transcription error. Ortega, a retired commercial pilot who once worked for Colombia's national aviation authority as the head of security, was mistaken for another man with a similar name. The faulty transcript led to Colombia extraditing Ortega to the US on charges for selling planes to drug dealers.

Eventually, US authorities realized Ortega was the wrong Carlos and dropped the charges, but not until the innocent man spent one year in jail and $300,000 in legal fees.

That story is not an isolated case of terrible consequences for a transcription error. Another incorrect transcript at an Albany, New York prison caused the medical staff to administer an inmate a **lethal dose of two medications**.

AI-Powered Transcription Causes Controversy in Law Enforcement

Law enforcement professionals' use of artificial intelligence-powered tools to transcribe inmate phone conversations is a point of controversy. Some fear that using AI will lead to misinterpretations and cause legal trouble for vulnerable populations.

Concerns over AI-produced error-ridden transcripts are legitimate. This reality is especially evident when the speakers are diverse or conversing in other languages or dialects, which the AI alone sometimes cannot accurately decipher. Studies indicate that human transcribers often similarly misinterpret minority voices and Black English speakers, specifically. One study found that court stenographers made errors in two out of every five sentences when transcribing Black English grammar patterns. A dual approach of utilizing AI + HI (human intelligence) is therefore best.

Creating a Better Transcript Through a Hybrid Approach

With so much at stake, creating an accurate transcript is extremely important. Interpreting diverse speech patterns is one of the focuses of modern AI-powered transcription technology. The more data that the software incorporates, including different accents or dialects, the better it will be at generating accurate results.

Still, everyone needs to be realistic about the current capabilities of even the best AI-powered automatic speech recognition technology. The most efficient, safe and cost-effective way to face this challenge is an approach with multiple fact-checking layers. With partners like Verbit, AI creates the initial transcription draft. Then, 1-2 human professional transcribers review and edit the transcript's content to ensure accuracy.

Verbit's hybrid approach offers 99%+ accuracy, and the transcription software continues to learn in the process to effectively decipher diverse voices. To learn more about how Verbit's transcription services are supporting law enforcement professionals, contact us.