

## **Accuracy Over Immediacy: Why Interview Transcripts Should Remain Manually Done, Not Automated**

It is remarkably the height of technological convenience when interview transcription services have also become the effortless job of an automation software, rendering human intervention almost unnecessary, if not an absolute non-necessity.

But while that contention is true in the sense that a transcription software outshines the manual transcriptionist in a certain aspect, this is not wholly so.

Doubtless, interview transcriptions produced through automation could boast of speed and ease than a manual production with a human specialist. But if immediacy or instantaneousness are the only factors that a client is taking into account, he is inadvertently risking the most crucial part of a transcription service: accuracy.

It doesn't have to be that way.

For starters, manual transcriptions through a specialist can both achieve accuracy and speed. While it would pale in comparison to an Artificial Intelligence (AI) software's immediacy of creation, the former can be fast enough, but not to the precarious point of rendering the work done inaccurate, erroneous, or simply unreliable.

Take auto-generated subtitles on YouTube as an example. The automation is stranger to strong accents. More so, it can't recognize certain names that are not considered mainstream. In consequence, words do get misidentified as another, and the mention of actual names become vague, meaningless verbs in a supposedly meaningful sentence. Transcription service seekers don't have to risk this in exchange of optimal immediacy, which is in fact only secondary to the primary factor clients have to be looking most for, as mentioned above.

Case in point, contrary to the claim initially made, human intervention is an absolute necessity in the acquisition of an error-free interview transcription, where the transcriber could pay attention even to the smallest details, from capitalizations to impeccable usage of punctuation marks, that would gain clients the complacency they deserve for a service not only sought but also paid for.

### **Manual transcriber vs. an AI transcription tool**

For a more detailed view of how manual transcriptions work better than its machine-generated alternative, here are more pointers to consider.

If it's a lengthy interview, all the more reason to seek a transcription specialist over a machine-generated alternative. Why? As is often the case, lengthy interviews contain complicated content. Complicated in the sense that there are exchange of conversations between two or more people, simultaneously; the potentially audio-altering background noises; as well as the mere fact that it is lengthy: the lengthier the interview recording, the more the errors are likely to be committed.

**Punctuations are powerful.** A simple erroneous usage in an automated software can render your interview transcription unreliable. And you don't want that. Double-checking the automated transcription for errors? You don't want that either. You

paid for the service, and a faulty service ultimately becomes a liability. Just as when you thought you are paying less with a software, you actually pay more, exacerbated by worries of failure to meeting a specific deadline.

**Transcriptional inaccuracies can be really embarrassing if publicly exposed.** For example, if it is to be televised as a subtitle for a show, you don't want "pennies" be [mis]spelled as a male reproductive organ, just because of an unintended and different accent from the speaker. Funny as that may seem, but it could happen.

But be that as it may, it doesn't seem right to paint an automation software entirely for its red flags. Because simply put, it has its own advantages, the best being the immediacy, as repeatedly emphasized; low-cost; and an accuracy that is still worthwhile if you are not too much bent on it becoming a hundred percent spot-on.

In the final assessment, it all boils down to accuracy as the most crucial factor in a transcription service. 'Fast' is not always tantamount to an 'excellent' work; as it can also mean 'rushed' and therefore second-rate, for the mere sake of instant gratification for the services that we seek assistance for. Whereas the work of a manual transcriber is rest assured to be far more accurate and of quality.

And isn't that what we always look for, in an interview transcription or otherwise?