



ALDAcon 2007—Rochester, New York

LOCATING AND CHOOSING A COMMUNICATION ACCESS REALTIME TRANSCRIPTION (CART) PROVIDER

PRESENTER: PAT GRAVES

PAT GRAVES: I do want to thank our interpreters today, and I want to thank our CART provider. Access is very important to have.

Here are the goals that I want to accomplish. I really want to hear from you on what is important from a CART provider. I also want to give you a couple of tools on how you can choose the right CART provider and then give you some of the secret tips that CART providers use so you will know how we are able to write all these words.

I wanted to start out with just a few definitions because I think it is really important to understand what it is that we are talking about. CART stands for communication access real-time translation. It is really not a very good word but it is the word that we have been using for many years. What it is is word-for-word translation, and we also include environmental sounds in our transcribing.

Captioning, a word you hear all the time, is two or three lines of text integrated with a video signal. You see "captioning" on your TVs all the time. CART software is a little bit different than captioning software. Again, CART and captioning are word for word. Everything that's said goes up on the screen.

Yesterday if you were at N.T.I.D., you heard Dr. Hurwitz say the term "C-Print." That's another way of supporting people with hearing loss, and it really is computerized real-time note taking. That is meaning for meaning. Where a CART provider or captioner do word for word translation, a C-Print or Typewell operator do meaning for meaning translation. They make decisions for you on what is or not important. A CART provider gives you all the words.

I just want to do a few more definitions so we understand who the people are in the communication access arena. A Court Reporter is a verbatim reporter. They take down everything that is said in a courtroom or in a legal setting. So when you hear the term "Court Reporter" you know that they are people who work in legal settings.

A realtime reporter is also in the court setting, but they have the ability to show their words instantly to the judge or jury or attorneys. When you hear the term "realtime" you know that it is happening immediately.

A CART provider is someone who also provides realtime services, but they also have had special training to work with people with hearing loss. They have sensitivity to people with hearing loss. They know how to support them in terms of their communication needs. CART provider's work in both the legal and nonlegal settings, such as meetings, teleconferences, conventions, religious settings, school, etc.

Are there any questions on those definitions?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How does CARTing differ between a realtime provider and a CART provider? How do you translate the words on the screen?

PAT GRAVES: The difference between a CART provider and realtime reporter? Realtime reporters are in the legal setting whereas a CART provider is focused on people with hearing loss, deaf and hard of hearing people in any arena. So a CART provider supports deaf and hard of hearing people. A realtime reporter makes it convenient for the lawyers and the judge to read what's going on in court. So a Court Reporter and a realtime reporter are focused on legal. A CART provider is focused on the deaf and hard of hearing community.

Thank you for that question.

Here is the question of the day. What do you look for in a CART provider?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Well, I belong to the Hearing Loss Association of America as well as ALDA and Cape Cod chapter. We get used to the same reporter each time and she is our friend and comes to our socials. So she knows the names of some of the 177 people. That's important to us. When we have somebody else, it helps, and we form a new bond with that one.

PAT GRAVES: So familiarity with your CART provider. Excellent.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I like that the CART reporter also transcribes the words that the audience says.

PAT GRAVES: That's really important. Otherwise, you only get half of the information. So you like the full support. That's excellent.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Good spelling pops into my head, but most of them -- we do get some laugh lines sometimes and that's all right. It comes out funny.

PAT GRAVES: We call them bloopers. We can't say we are proud of them, though.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I want a CART provider that really looks for what I need; one that does not just look to sell you something.

PAT GRAVES: Someone who is sensitive to what you need other than a sales job? Excellent.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I want to be made aware of environmental sounds.

PAT GRAVES: Environmental sounds are very important.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm curious not on our subject, but closed captioning on TV for me, does that work the same way?

PAT GRAVES: The question is: Does closed captioning work the same way as what we are seeing here on the screen? The answer is yes and no. The two programs are a little bit different. The program that will allow the words to go a full screen of text, CART, what you see here, as opposed to having a picture and the three lines of text underneath it. The hardware is a little bit different, too. But the thought process between CART and captioning is similar.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I notice sometimes we have what we hear in words is condensed.

PAT GRAVES: Sometimes we have to condense some of the words if it is going too fast. Or if there are a lot of names, we might substitute a name with a pronoun like "he" or "she." It depends on how fast people are speaking and it depends on if we know how the person's name is spelled.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I don't know how other people feel about it, but the speed of the transcriber, I think it is important that the speed of the words coming up here is as close as possible to what the speaker is saying.

PAT GRAVES: You like the words to be tracking with the sound and the lip movements as closely as possible. Excellent.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I might have one more. To give an expression with your face or hands as to what they are trying to say.

PAT GRAVES: The expression of your face and hands would be more directed to the interpreters as opposed to the CART provider. We are putting the words on the screen. I know that's something that the interpreters are very aware of.

Now I want to show you the list I made up of traits I think are needed from a good CART provider. Top on my list, and again this is not a comprehensive list but some things that I thought of, is skill. It is very important to have a high degree of skill. One of you mentioned good spelling. To me that is skill and accuracy. Those two are overlapping.

The way we accomplish skill and accuracy and good spelling are through education. In our training we have quite a bit of education on grammar and punctuation and vocabulary. These three things are taught to us so we are able to recognize and write and correctly spell any word that we hear. That's a very important part of our job.

When you think about it, we walk into a myriad of situations. It could be a meeting, a classroom setting, a convention, a doctor's visit. We just never know what we will walk into. Yet we are expected to recognize all the spoken words and we are expected to know how to spell them correctly. CART providers have a massive amount of words and definitions in our heads in order to facilitate communication.

Next is certification. You will immediately forget all of the details, but I will just tell you that there are different levels of certification. At the end I will tell you some of the letters that you might be looking for as you look for your CART provider.

The very basic level is called a Registered Professional Reporter, RPR. An RPR can write on a steno machine at 225 words per minute for testimony, questions and answers in court. An RPR can write at 200 words per minute for the instructions from the judge to the jury, known as jury instructions. An RPR writes at 180 words per minute for literary. Any speech or lecture or sermon would be considered literary. Again, it could be any subject. I'm talking to you in a literary mode about CART providers. A speed that is reasonable for literary is 180 words a minute. All three of these tests are not done in realtime. So the Court Reporter has 90 minutes to transcribe each of these three categories of steno test.

In addition, the RPR test has a fourth part and that is a written knowledge test. The written knowledge test consists of 100 questions about: grammar, punctuation, spelling, court procedures, technology, legal citations, word definitions, and steno theory.

The next certification is called a Certified Realtime Reporter. This also is focused in the legal setting. To attain this a person needs to be RPR certified. In addition, they need to pass a realtime skills test which is a realtime literary test at 180 words per minute. Thus to attain a CRR certification you need a combination of written knowledge and the skills both in realtime and non-realtime. This certification is still focused in the legal setting.

The third certification you will look for is called a CCP, Certified CART Provider. The CCP test has two components: A written knowledge test and a realtime skills test.

The written knowledge test consists of questions on: realtime software, realtime hardware, other types of technology, grammar, punctuation, spelling, deaf sensitivity issues, deaf culture, the role of interpreters, methods of realtime writing, how to prepare for CART jobs.

The skills test is a realtime test given at 180 words per minute on literary material.

So three designations you will look for and questions you will ask your CART provider are: Do you have your CCP? Do you have your CRR? Have you had any deaf sensitivity? Do you know how to use the hardware and software that allows the words to be shown on a big screen? Certification isn't everything but it is an indication of competency.

I will move on to experience. Experience is just invaluable. CART providers can gain experience in a variety of ways. The best way to do that is to have a person who can write in realtime, a person who has had some deaf sensitivity and deaf culture training sit side by side with a professional CART provider. This is the best way to get experience. It is not good to just take someone and throw them into a room and say, "go pretend like you are a CART provider." That's not the best way to do it. To gain experience, you have to sit down and write and practice under the guidance of a trained professional CART provider.

References are a wonderful way to find a CART provider. Ask around, ask your friends, contact other chapters, chapter leaders, contact ALDA and see who in the area generally provides CART. These are wonderful ways to get your CART provider.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think our way is to get in touch with MCDHH, Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard Of Hearing.

PAT GRAVES: Absolutely. Another way is to go through the state agencies. That's a wonderful way to find a CART provider who is qualified.

There are also places on-line where you can get references. Later on in the presentation I will give you those specific websites.

Technical knowledge, that's really important. There is nothing worse than having your CART provider walk in and not know how to hook up their equipment or run their program. That would be one indication that your CART provider does not have the experience that's needed.

At the National Court Reporters Association there are many seminars that cover all of these topics: how to hook up your computer, how to hook up your stenotype machine, audio acquisition, projectors, punctuation, realtime writing, etc. You want your CART provider to have the ability to be able to also troubleshoot. If something doesn't go perfectly, they need to know how to fix it. That's something that you can ask your CART provider about.

You want a professional CART provider. Sometimes very personal things are said in the meetings or an office visit to the doctor, and you need a professional CART provider who knows what their role is.

Sign language is not a prerequisite for a CART provider but it is very nice. Sometimes you need to communicate a little bit and sign language is a great option if you indeed use sign language yourself. Knowing sign language is not mandatory, but it is a nice thing if your CART provider knows a few signs.

You want a CART provider who is impartial. One thing mentioned earlier was that your CART provider works and sometimes will go to your social events. That's fine as long as the CART provider is released from her role as a CART provider and is invited into your social events as a human being, a friend. There is a distinction between our role of CART provider and when are a human being and friend. The CART provider cannot come out of role until it is appropriate or you as consumers give them that permission. You as consumers are the only people who can release a CART provider from their professional role. You will do that by inviting them into the social event as a friend.

Confidentiality. Everything that is said is confidential. We do not repeat what we hear to anyone. It is very important that you know whatever is said is private and will not be discussed elsewhere.

The other training that we receive is on deaf culture, deaf sensitivity. We learn how to get a person's attention by flashing the lights or briefly touching a shoulder or an arm, waving of the hand. In our association we have seminars on deaf sensitivity. Those seminars are often taught by either interpreters or by CART consumers to ensure we get the right information.

Do you have any questions on any of these right now?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How long is the training? It sounds very complicated to me. You need bright people.

PAT GRAVES: We learn the steno in a couple of years for speed and accuracy. To learn sensitivity is kind of like growing up. Lectures help, and I think support associations such as ALDA teach CART providers deaf sensitivity.

Yes, you do need a high level of intelligence and a broad base of knowledge. The reality is that people with hearing loss, deaf and hard of hearing people, are everywhere. And we need to go everywhere with you and support you. There is no reason why we can't do that.

Let me be sure I have all of your comments. You talked about familiarity with the members. That's really important. What CART providers often do is share information from one CART provider to another on such things as how you spell names and other basic information. If you tell us who your previous CART provider was, we can contact them and share that information so the continuity is there for you. This is total communication from our point of view.

You also asked about environmental sounds, and we do put those in. You will never find a Court Reporter putting in environmental sounds because that's not a verbatim transcript, but this is something that CART providers support you with.

One good place to go for information is ncraonline.org. That's our web page for our association. When you open up that home page, near the top there is a list of areas that you can go to. What you want to go to would be the "communities." We have various communities that are represented in this association. So if you go to "communities" and then click on "CART," what you will find there are articles about CART, how-tos, and just a wealth of information.

One of you mentioned you want to take information back to your groups. This is the best place to go to get information on CART providers in your area and articles about CART.

I want you to know if you click on "For The Consumer" you will come up with a list of drop-down boxes. The best one that is on there is the "Consumer Bill of Rights." We feel that as consumers you should have a Bill of Rights. My suggestion is that you do indeed go and read that Bill of Rights because this is a list of your rights as a consumer of CART. It is something that providers are taught and tested on. It is very important that we are serving you appropriately.

You will also see on this website a third option, which is to locate a CART provider. We have listings under this CART Provider Directory. They are by city, state, name of provider and their certifications. All of these are listed in this CART Provider Directory. It will show you the years of experience of the CART provider, areas of expertise, and references and training that we had. Again, this is a wonderful place to go find your CART provider.

Also be aware that there is an additional link that you can go to locate remote CART providers. Remote CART providers can support you from anywhere.

I encourage you to go online and look at this web site because it is a great place to find a CART provider and to give you information about them. Once you have picked someone in your area, or you have received a referral for a CART provider, what you need to do is ask this person questions about certification and experience levels. Remember that you don't have to just take anyone who volunteers. You have choices and rights as consumers.

The first question to ask is: "Do you do CART?" I will tell you; sometimes I have to look for other CART providers around the country for some of my clients. I look in a directory and perhaps find a court-reporting firm that says they do CART. I call and I will ask them if they have any CART providers. Nine times out of ten the answer is: "what's CART?" So I know that's not the firm that I want to hire to do a CART job, and so I politely hang up and move on. If the person doesn't know what CART is, it is just not a good match and I look for someone else. It is easy to put something in an ad and not be skilled at it.

But assuming you get someone who knows what CART is, then you ask them if they are certified? The best certification would be a CCP, Certified CART Provider. You know that person can write well, can write fast and has some training and experience working with deaf people.

If someone says they are a CRR, then you know that this person can write well and can write in a legal setting. So your next question should be: Have you ever worked with any people with hearing loss? Have you ever worked with the deaf and hard of hearing community?

If someone says that they are an RPR, you still can ask the question: What is CART your experience? There are wonderful CART providers who only have an RPR certification. However, they have a wealth of CART experience. That would also be a good match.

It is your job to quiz the CART provider and make sure you are getting what you are entitled to. Another question you can ask is: How long have you been doing CART?

My personal feeling is the more education, the more knowledge you have, the more empowered you are. That's why I'm happy to see you here today, because hopefully you can leave here and know what you are looking for in a CART provider. You do not have to take the first warm body that walks through the door and can sit in front of the steno machine. You have the right to have accurate, excellent communication access. That's your right. And I am giving you tools on how to find the communication access that's good for you.

A couple of other questions would be, if you are having a very large group or a small group, you can say to the CART provider: Do you have a projector? A lot of CART providers have their own projectors.

You can say: Do you have a screen? From a woman's point of view as a CART provider, carrying in a screen like this is very difficult. So we always appreciate when consumers say they have a screen. If you are having it in a library, generally they will have a screen. So very often you will hear us say, "I have a projector; can you provide the screen?"

Another thing to ask your CART provider before you work with them is: Do you have references? And then you should check them out. Check those references out. You can ask them what type of functions they have provided CART for such as large or small meetings, a religious setting or in a doctor's office.

These are very important questions, but the more knowledge you have, the better it is.

On the ncraonline.org website there is something called The CART Provider's Manual. It is "the bible" for CART providers at this point on how to do our job. So if you were to read that manual, you will be that much more educated on what you are looking for. If you say to your CART provider: "Have you ever read the CART Provider's Manual?" and the answer is "What's that," that clues you in that this person may not be as well rounded as you want them to be.

The next thing listed on the website are Guidelines for Professional Practice. We do not have a specific code of ethics written for CART providers, but we have guidelines for professional practice. There are two sections, CART in the legal setting and CART in the non-legal setting. These are guidelines that our association has set up and which we follow to provide you with good service.

There are other very specific questions to ask your CART provider. Yesterday I was in a session and one of the people in the session said that they get their CART providers for free from the local court reporting school and they just take students to do the job. The policy of our National Court Reporting Association is very specific. Only qualified CART providers should provide CART. If a qualified CART provider is not available, look at an alternative such as remote CART. There are alternatives. If you say there is no one in my area, we can set this up remotely. You will be surprised at how well it works.

I will say this very pointblank: Court reporting students should not be providing CART. Trainees may sit next to a professional CART provider in order to do an internship, but a court-reporting student should not go in and provide CART. Court reporting students have to have graduated from school and have trained to be a CART provider before being able to say they are a CART provider.

If all else fails and you can't get remote CART, if you can't find anyone else and you have to use a court-reporting student, you want to take a very high-speed court-reporting student. The very lowest speed you want is maybe 170 words a minute in the literary category. That would be your minimum, because people really do speak faster. Your very minimum would be a high-speed student at 170 words a minute.

According to NCRA, the National Court Reporters Association, neither a high speed court reporting student nor the owners of a court reporting school should receive any money for providing CART.

To repeat, you are not helping the deaf community or the CART profession if you do not expect excellent skills, high accuracy, certification and professionalism. If you do have to use a court-reporting student, they must be at least at a speed of 170 words a minute. And according to NCRA you are not to pay them. You can buy them a cup of coffee.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: It is practice for them.

PAT GRAVES: I don't know about you, but I don't want someone practicing to be a doctor working on me. I don't mind a doctor intern or a resident working on me as long as they are under the guidance of a professional. I'm not sure why you would want someone who is unsupervised providing your communication access. I understand sometimes it has to happen, but we don't want to encourage that kind of a service.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I want to know more about remote CART because we had one meeting down on the Cape where everybody was busy; all of the CART reporters were busy. I think we had a meeting without CART. I didn't know what else to do. In that situation I suppose we would have been happy for a student if there was one in the area.

PAT GRAVES: Remote CART should have been the solution, not a court-reporting student. Remote CART is a wonderful service and I will tell you that I know that hours and hours of remote CART are done across the country all the time.

As a brief overview, you have to have a way to get the audio from your meeting to the CART provider wherever that CART provider lives. You have to have a way to have the CART provider send the words back to you over the Internet. You have to grab those words on your computer and display them. It is really not that difficult to set up. There are lots of different services.

Last year I gave a presentation on remote CART. I asked our CART provider to go up in his hotel room. What we did was we had an Internet connection. He sent his words to us from his hotel room via the Internet. We sent the sound up to his hotel room. We supported the entire session remotely. It was great. That's the kind of lecture that you sometimes need to hear over and over again. In reality it is not that difficult. And again there are resources available to you at ncraonline.org in the section labeled CART Provider Resources. Remote CART providers are listed.

Let's talk about how we produce CART. When done with a steno machine, we write phonetically and syllabically. That means we write the way the syllables sound. So if it is a one-syllable word, our hands will go down one time. If it is a three-syllable word, our hands will go down three times to write that one word. Unlike a typewriter where you type letter-by-letter by letter, CART is done syllable by syllable by syllable. So remember, one stroke down on the steno keyboard equals one syllable.

The machine has 23 keys. Each key represents a different sound. There are eight keys on the left side which our left hand strikes. All of those sounds and keys are consonants. There are eight keys on the right side of the stenotype machine and our right hand hits those keys. All of those sounds and keys are consonants. There are two keys under each thumb. Our thumbs are what strike all of the vowel sounds: a, e, o, u, and i. The little finger on the right hand side also moves over to the right and can hit two other keys.

Each of the keys represents a sound in the alphabet. When two or more keys are hit at the same time that represents a different sound in the alphabet. So on the left hand side, if I hit the key of "T" it represents that sound. If I hit the "K" key, it represents a hard "C" sound, like "cat" or "kit." If I hit the "T" and the "K" together, it equals the "D" sound. It is just an arbitrary combination. So in steno the word "Dog" would look like "TKOG."

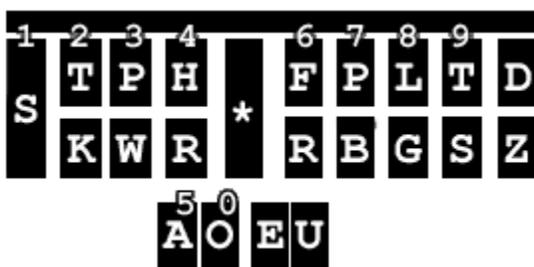
Now remember, even though we have 26 letters in the alphabet, there are not 26 different sounds. For instance, the word “cat” has the same beginning sound as the word “kit.” In steno, the word “cat” would look like “KAT” and the word “kit” would look like “KEUT.” “EU” together equals the sound of a short “I.”

Every time our hands go down on the steno keyboard, that represents the sounds of one syllable or one word.

When you think about different words, the word "starts" is one syllable yet it has six letters. We have to get all those sounds in one stroke down. So we have consonants that begin the word “Starts.” Remember that it is only one syllable. We have consonants that end the word “starts.” In the middle we have the vowel. All vowels are taken care of by our thumbs.

So again, the word "starts" is one syllable, one stroke down. The word "Started" is two syllables, “start” and then a final “d” which puts on the “ed.” It is two strokes.

I am sure this is just as clear as mud! But here is a keyboard and what it looks like.



AUDIENCE MEMBER: How do they do “start” and then “starts?”

PAT GRAVES: “S” and “T” are consonants and they begin the syllable. In the middle we have the vowel, which is an "A." And the syllable ends with “RTS.” All six of those sounds and keys are pressed at the same time.

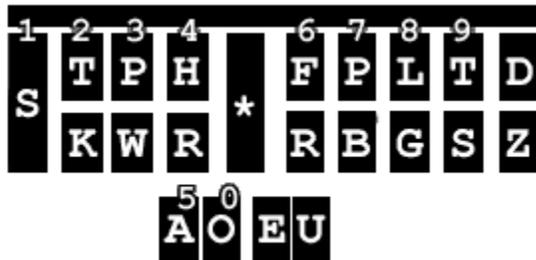
It is kind of like a piano keyboard. If you hit two white keys on the piano, you have one sound. If you hit three keys, a different chord, then you have a different sound coming from the piano. If you hit ten keys down on the piano keyboard, you have yet a different sound. It is the same philosophy for us. If we hit "starts" we have all the sounds of that one syllable in one stroke down.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm talking about "start" without the S and then "starts," with the S.

PAT GRAVES: Because it is all one syllable? The S is very conveniently located on our final finger on the right hand. We simple hit the crack between the final “T” and the final “S” on the right hand and that puts the plural onto the word “Start.” Sometimes to do a plural or past tense ending, even if it is one syllable, we will disjoin that suffix.

Numbers are at the top.

Again, this is what the keys stand for.



I find these numbers fascinating. In general if someone is speaking at a fairly rapid pace, the hands are going down 240 to 300 strokes per minute, and the average times a CART provider's hands go down every hour are somewhere between 14,000 and 18,000. That's a lot of repetitive movement.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Can I back up a minute? The one sound for "cat," the K and C, how does the machine know?

PAT GRAVES: I neglected to mention this. The program, in order to get these to show up immediately in proper English, we have a dictionary that matches our steno strokes to the properly spelled English word. We call that our dictionary. And how we set that up may vary from one CART provider to another, but the way I write "kat" equals "cat." We have thousands and thousands of these programmed into our dictionary. I have about 85,000 words programmed into my dictionary. Woody will have either more or less than that. It depends on how we write. So we do have to remember how we write the words in steno and the computer has to remember how to spell all the words correctly.

AUDIENCE: Back to the dictionary. Can you explain that a bit?

PAT GRAVES: The dictionary is in the CART/captioning software that we are running. Just as you run Microsoft Word, a program you may be familiar with, we are running software that will allow us to write the words in realtime in steno and our software will translate that steno into English words. The program says: Oh, this steno stroke equals this word in English. Or these two steno strokes equal this word in English.

The dictionary is personal to every CART provider. So if I sat down and wrote on another CART provider's machine it would look like gibberish probably because we have our dictionaries set up differently

Here is an example. There is not enough letters and you only have four fingers. How can you have four fingers do all the initial consonants in words? It makes no sense. So we combine letters. For example, a "G" such as in the word "go," that hard G sound, we have to hit four keys at the same time, one stroke down, to get that letter to be recognized in the dictionary by the software program. So the sound of a hard "G" equals "TKPW."

And J, and if you had the word "joke," it is one syllable, a J sound, a long "O" sound and a hard "K" sound on the end. We would hit 8 keys at one time to write the sound of the word "joke." It is one stroke down.

We cheat and have some brief forms because there are a lot of words and phrases that are said over and over. So high frequency phrases we will program in one stroke in order that the words can come up quicker.

For this conference we would make a short form for Association of Late-deafened Adults, which is 11 syllables. We do a brief form for that. Sometimes you will see a whole phrase pop up and you will think: How can that CART provider write that fast? That's just a way of putting in a brief form to help us write faster and more accurately.

Sometimes mistakes are made. CART consumers may at times think we don't know how to spell. There are three main reasons: One is that the word, though I have 85,000 words in my dictionary, it may be a word I'm unfamiliar with and it just is not in my dictionary. It just doesn't translate.

The other reason is that the CART provider just has a bad day. I call them "fat finger days," and we just hit the wrong key. Again, it is like hitting the wrong key if you are playing the piano.

A third reason is that sometimes the software program decides that two syllables equal a word and it will grab them together and translate it into English. Think about the words "you're invisible." The software program may grab the two syllables and decide that they equal an English word. So it could come out as "urine visible." We call them word boundary problems.

So mistakes happen because we just don't know a word, or we are having a fat finger day, or the program just decided to grab it differently than we wanted it to.

We never want you to see steno up on the screen and so we have a setting in our program that will do its best to make sensible words out of the steno strokes. You might have "olympic" as a full word. However, if the CART provider has never written that word, it may come up as: "oh limb pick." Remember it is a three-syllable word and so you will see three words! If you ever see something that looks like this, you just know that the writer didn't have the word in the dictionary. Sometimes you have to read through it. It is not that they don't know how to spell the word; it just did not translate properly.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Summarize a little bit. Four consonants for the letter "G."

PAT GRAVES: It is an arbitrary stroke or pushing down on these four keys that equals G. It is totally arbitrarily and only because we don't have enough fingers or keys on the keyboard. Yes, four keys equals the sound of "G."

AUDIENCE MEMBER: When you say "arbitrary," was it the founder of this method who created it this way?

PAT GRAVES: Yes. The people who created this made it up and created it that way. It has not changed.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What do you do with the word “five?” I don't see anything for the vowel “I” as in the word “Five.”

PAT GRAVES: The sound of long "I" is a combination of “AOEU.” Again, it is arbitrary. I wouldn't get bogged down on what a “G” equals but it is four keys, arbitrary. We learned another language, just another language.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I am curious. You talk about software. So this is the same for everybody on the initial software and then you add words you need?

PAT GRAVES: This is the same for everybody. Everybody knows that an initial G equals “TKPW.” The word "go" is a long O. Woody may write "go" as just “G” and “O.” There is also a way that we can do the vowels so we can know if it is a short O or a long O. So I may write "go" as “TKPWOE,” which is a long “O.” That's where we differ. Two CART providers have the same theory and we know what will come out of the machine, but we may hear things differently. For example, "data." I write "data" as DAT, one syllable, and the second syllable is “TA.” I double that “T” sound. Some CART providers will write “DAT” and the second stroke is only “A.” They hear it differently. So that's where we differ. That's where I may not be able to sit down in front of someone else's machine and use their dictionary and write, because we write words differently. That's a personal preference.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: How about the number 5 and zero?

PAT GRAVES: We have a straight bar at the top. We hit the number bar at the crack and the numbers come up. The number 5 and the number zero need to be hit on that straight top bar with another key.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What's a crack?

PAT GRAVES: You can look at his machine and it will make more sense. The cracks are the spaces between the keys.

These are funny little bloopers that I have placed here. These are bloopers from the "sank chew wary." You can read these. My favorite is the last one, donated by a friend of mine. The pastor said, "give generously and God will bless you with a bun dance." Some of these are funny, though we try not to make mistakes.

I will leave this up on the screen a little bit. This is the reference I was talking about for the National Court Reporters Association. Please research this website so that you can educate yourselves as CART consumers.

In closing, I hope you have come away with some knowledge about CART and how to choose a CART provider. We have touched on what you, as consumers, feel is important from a CART provider. We talked about this website as a place for you to go for help and guidance as you choose the right CART provider. I have talked – probably a bit too extensively – about the steno machine and how the process works. And I gave you some secret tips that CART providers use so you will know how we are able to write all these words.

Thank you for your attention. Please feel free to ask me any questions privately. Enjoy the rest of the conference.

Patricia K. Graves is president, CEO and lead writer of Caption First, which was established in 1989. She currently serves on state and national boards and committees serving in the areas of court reporting, certification, and legislation for people who are Deaf and hard-of-hearing, and speech to text. Pat is certified as an IL-CSR, CRR, RDR and CCP. She has taught both on the local and national levels for CART and captioning for Court Reporters, CART providers, captioners and consumers. In 2000, Pat was listed in Today's Chicago Woman as one of the 100 Women Making a Difference. Pat loves to take walks in the woods, spend time with her family and sing!