

# Realtime Not Reserved for Superstars

When the speaker prophesied, "The future of court reporting is realtime," he was not preaching to the converted. To my left I heard an adamant "I'll retire before I let them make me do realtime." From my right came a panicky "I'm not young enough to retire. I'll have to adapt, but how?"

It's not hard to understand the fear and worry. You can write by sound, get everything down, and be overwhelmed by common conflicts like there\their\they're. Your notes can look perfect, but two strokes invisibly overlap to confuse the computer. And numbers! Go to a realtime writing seminar, and you're told that you'll have to change the way you write. It's not a pretty picture.

**Many reporters fear they, not their computers, will be obsolete if realtime keeps requiring superhuman skills.**

"Computer compatible theory" is a good idea, but what about "reporter compatible software"? With **Total Eclipse**, it's not science fiction; it's reality. **Total Eclipse** knows how to cope with my far-from-perfect, real-world writing, thanks to Artificial Intelligence.

**Artificial intelligence** is not Mr. Data from *Star Trek*. It is not a built-in grammar teacher that will write "isn't" when the witness said "ain't." It does not dictate how you write. Instead, with **Total Eclipse** it's thousands of lines of conflict logic that quietly tune in to *your* writing and learn how words and phrases fall together in sentences.

After more than 10 years of using this system as a full-time deposition reporter, I've noticed several ways this system has let me get **great realtime results without significantly changing writing style**. It can work for you, too.

**1. Word conflicts.** A few CAT systems now try to resolve conflicts like **TKOG=dog\doing**, but they usually track in a very word-specific way whether "hot" came before "dog." Where **other systems just memorize**, **Total Eclipse truly learns** through grammar-general analysis. Every time you select a conflict choice, it gets smarter.

**2. Punctuation.** When the words fly fast, punctuation gets inconsistent. I make conflicts like **yes\yes,\,yes,\,yes** and let **Total Eclipse** tune in to whether I only need "yes" because I wrote the comma or whether the "yes" needs a comma before, around, or after it, depending on where it falls in the sentence. Because the system picks so accurately, my editing time is greatly reduced.

**3. Exhibit No. or exhibit number.** It sounds the same, but other CAT systems require that you

write these differently. I write it one way, create a dictionary conflict, and let **Total Eclipse** learn what to choose. Conflicts like **on the job\on-the-job** -- again, amazing accuracy.

**4. "Stacked" steno strokes** are a common problem for many steno machines today. With **Total Eclipse**, conflicts like "was\with as" or "to do\ed to" resolve beautifully. Also, prefixes and suffixes hook on intelligently, even when they're part of a conflict. That means I don't have to add dozens of variant entries to my dictionary to double or drop or modify the boundary letter(s) for root words.

**5. Intelligent globaling.** How do you say what your steno means? **Total Eclipse** lets you "**Global at a Glance**." It reads your steno, uses intelligent phonetics, understands dragged/dropped keys and stacking problems, detects the need for additional job globals. Then it offers an amazingly accurate short list of words/phrases so that you can just pick the right choice, with an absolute minimum of typing. It can also suggest all kinds of variant entries to protect you against untrans.

**6. Automatic number processing.** Best of all, **Total Eclipse** lets me write numbers as I hear them. As it translates, it follows my rules, knowing when to use digits, when to write out numbers, putting in all the zeros and commas in huge numbers, putting the dollar sign and decimal point where they belong, and much, much more. Reporters see this and say "With this on my side, I could do realtime, too." That's the point.

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**Sophisticated simplicity.** Having worked on other CAT systems, I appreciate **Total Eclipse's** elegant simplicity. Every feature is instantly accessible, even in realtime. Dozens of quick-fix features are right where they're easy to reach and remember for novices, yet "power users" and CART writers and captioners never get "no" when they challenge the system or ask for new features. Superb proofing tools and automatic indexing, unmatched conversion of jobs for working with colleagues on other CAT systems -- I haven't told you the half of it.

I agree that realtime is the future of court reporting. That's why I'm glad **Total Eclipse** is doing everything it can to keep that future alive for regular reporters and scopists, not just for superstars.

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