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## A Study to Determine why Forkner Shorthand Students do or do not Enroll in the Intermediate and Advanced Levels of Shorthand at Utah State University

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A STUDY TO DETERMINE WHY FORKNER SHORTHAND STUDENTS  
DO OR DO NOT ENROLL IN THE INTERMEDIATE  
AND ADVANCED LEVELS OF SHORTHAND  
AT UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

by  
Mary Diskin

A report submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of  
MASTER OF SCIENCE  
in  
Business Education  
Plan B

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1976

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Mary Diskin

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## Introduction

Shorthand plays a very necessary part in preparing our office education students. There has been much discussion as to which type of writing system is more efficient. Some authorities in the field feel that abbreviated longhand systems can be learned more easily than symbol systems.

According to Wagoner:

The usual advantages claimed for various abbreviated longhand systems are: the ease of converting from longhand to an abbreviated longhand system, a shorter learning period than a symbol system, and the ease of transcription. (1960, p. 21)

Since the Forkner system is based largely on what the learner already knows, the alphabet, it is felt that students will be able to develop a skill more readily than with a symbol system. The time necessary to learn the Forkner writing system is claimed to be much less than that of symbol systems (Forkner Publishing Corporation, Mimeographed).

If this is true, Forkner students should not hesitate entering the more advanced levels of shorthand available to them. Being able to compete with Gregg writers should not pose a threat to the Forkner writers.

Utah State University currently has a significantly smaller percentage of Forkner students who are enrolled in the intermediate and advanced levels of shorthand as compared to the Gregg students. There does not seem to be the initiative on the part of the Forkner students to continue with their skill building process. However,

according to the Forkner Corporation, their system of writing shorthand simplifies many of the problems of remembering shorthand symbols. Students have progressed through this system with exceptional ease and without undue stress. The results of studies indicate that student's morale is much higher and there are fewer dropouts (Forkner Shorthand 4th Edition, Mimeographed).

This study will attempt to determine why students do or do not continue with the advanced levels of shorthand.

#### Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to determine why beginning Forkner Shorthand students do or do not continue with the intermediate and advanced levels of shorthand offered at Utah State University.

More specifically, the questions to be answered are:

1. After beginning with Forkner Shorthand, why do students fail to register for intermediate and advanced shorthand.
2. After beginning with Forkner Shorthand, why do students register for intermediate and advanced shorthand.

#### Importance of the Study

Many students avoid shorthand because the course is difficult and demanding. This is particularly true of the average and of the less able students (Forkner Publishing Corporation, Mimeographed).



They find that the Gregg system of writing shorthand requires a great deal of memorization so that brief forms and characters can be written fluently. Thus, this system discourages them. Through the use of an alphabetic system, however, the opportunity of a choice between the more difficult symbol system and the more familiar alphabetic system is provided for all students. As a result, more students can become involved in the stenographic skills area.

Various studies have been conducted which indicated that nonsymbol shorthand can be learned faster than symbol shorthand, thus, creating a definite place in vocational use of nonsymbol shorthand (Forkner Publishing Corporation, Mimeographed). The Forkner Alphabetic System has both personal-use and vocational value, since it is designed for recording dictation up to 120 words per minute; but the training time required is much less than that required for symbol systems (Lamb, 1961, p. 6).

The demand for secretaries and stenographers who can write shorthand is strong even in times when jobs are scarce (Forkner Publishing Corporation, Mimeographed). By using Forkner Shorthand, it has been discovered that a greater number of your beginning shorthand students will be able to attain entry-level stenographic skills.

The fact that the Forkner system is based mainly on the use of the alphabet allows for the students to gain a high level of writing speed in less time. Transcription is also more accurate since there are fewer look-alike outlines than found in symbol systems.

Successful completion of one quarter of beginning shorthand at Utah State University requires that the student be able to take dictation at a minimum of 50 words per minute for two minutes and transcribe within a 5 error limit. This speed level constitutes an average grade for the beginning student. In a study conducted by E. Ray Smith during the 1965-66 school year, achievement of speeds up to 100 words per minute was more easily accomplished by students as compared to Gregg students in the same amount of learning time. The results were determined after a comparison was made through standard words correctly transcribed (Smith, 1971, p. 44).

Many of the students who enroll in the beginning Forkner Shorthand course at Utah State University plan to use their skills in the vocational area upon completion of their program. Thus, Forkner students should continue with the intermediate and advanced levels of shorthand in order to reach the writing speed necessary to obtain a salable skill.

From all indications, students using the Forkner system can become just as successful at writing and transcribing shorthand as students using the Gregg system. Thus, there is need to determine the main reasons for the low enrollment of Forkner students in the intermediate and advanced levels of shorthand offered at Utah State University.

### Methods and Procedures

The participants for this study were students who enrolled in the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of Forkner Shorthand at Utah State University, Logan, Utah, during the 1974-75 and the 1975-76 school years. The population for the study consisted of 64 students.

Class lists were obtained to determine the names of all students who had taken Forkner Shorthand. Once these names were noted, addresses were then found.

Questionnaires were personally handed and/or mailed to the participants to determine why students did or did not enroll in the intermediate and advanced classes of shorthand.

The results of the questionnaires were then summarized and reported according to the number of responses to each question on the information gathering instrument.

### Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the 1974-75 and 1975-76 beginning Forkner Shorthand students at Utah State University. Some Forkner students presently enrolled in the advanced classes of shorthand were those who started their program during the 1974-75 school year. An effort was made to use all Forkner students in the study.

This investigation was based on student's responses as to why they either continued or did not continue with shorthand upon the completion of the beginning Forkner class.

### Definition of Terms

Abbreviated longhand systems--makes use of letters of the alphabet written either by hand or by machine (Richards, 1966, p. 3) and sometimes used synonymously with the alphabet system.

Forkner shorthand--a scientific combination of longhand letters and a few symbols to form a system of rapid writing (Forkner, Brown, & Forkner, 1968, p. iii).

Gregg shorthand--a particular symbol system using a combination of characters and symbols to represent letters, words, and phrases.

Symbol system--uses various characters and symbols to represent individual sounds (Richards, 1966, p. 3).

### Review of Related Literature

Since a persistent problem in business education is the difficulty of developing adequate job competencies with shorthand students (Crank, Crank & Hanrahan, 1972, p. 153) this review will be concerned with shorthand literature dealing with job competency. Reasons for the high dropout in shorthand, possible solutions to the dropout problem, and various studies that have been done regarding alphabet and symbol systems will be discussed.

Research in which the transcription of first-year shorthand has been analyzed shows that students can learn the shorthand outlines in one year, but that there is not sufficient time for students to acquire skill either in the taking of dictation or the complex transcription process which will enable the student to successfully fill an initial stenographic position (Crank, Crank & Hanrahan, 1972, p. 153).

According to Wanous, the number of students enrolled in shorthand has increased steadily since 1926. Even so, shorthand teachers are disturbed because the third and fourth semesters of shorthand are considerably smaller than the number of students enrolled in the first-year course of shorthand.

### Studies Related to Dropout Rate

One of the problems facing business educators is to determine the reasons why there is such a high percentage of first-year

shorthand students who do not choose to continue into the second-year course (Crank, Crank & Hanrahan, 1972, p. 153). The following studies attempted to determine reasons for the high rate of dropout between the first and second years of shorthand.

Crank, Crank and Hanrahan study. In April 1970, Crank, Crank, and Hanrahan (1972, p. 154) conducted a study in Illinois to attempt to determine the reasons for such a great ratio between beginning shorthand and advanced shorthand enrollment. Forty-nine schools that offered advanced shorthand classes participated. A questionnaire was distributed to the beginning shorthand students. The three most significant reasons given for failure to enroll in the advanced classes were:

1. A feeling of lack of success in beginning shorthand.
2. A lack of interest in shorthand on the part of the beginning students.
3. The students felt discouraged by grades they received in the beginning shorthand class.

Students lack of success in beginning shorthand likely triggers the lack of interest on the part of many students. Business education teachers have the challenge of motivating the student and stressing the importance of shorthand to obtain secretarial positions (Crank, Crank, & Hanrahan, 1972, p. 153).

Anderson study. In this study conducted by Ruth Anderson in the Denver, Colorado area, an attempt was made to determine why students drop shorthand.

In this study, Anderson surveyed high schools in the greater Denver area to investigate whether methods of teaching shorthand helped to create problems with further advancement by beginning shorthand students. The I.Q. scores of those students participating in this study were also conducted.

The largest percentage of dropouts were reported in those classes using a combination of the Functional and Manual methods of teaching shorthand. Regardless of the teaching method used, the greatest percentage of students dropped at the end of the first semester (Anderson, 1950, p. 142).

I.Q. scores were obtained for only 180 of the 375 dropouts. The average high school grade for the students was "C," indicating that there was little correlation between grades and dropouts in beginning shorthand (Anderson, 1950, p. 142).

The reasons that the dropouts had originally enrolled in shorthand ranked in the following order: first, deferred vocational aim; second, personal-use; third, parental influence; fourth, mystery of the subject; and fifth, vocational objectives (Anderson, 1950, p. 143).

Reasons students indicated for dropping shorthand were: needed at home, marriage, transferring to another school, moving, ill health, failure, too difficult, and no further need for shorthand (Anderson, 1950, p. 143).

While the investigator was unable to determine the best method of teaching shorthand, it was concluded that elements of students background and their reasons for enrolling and dropping are far more important (Anderson, 1959, p. 143).

Research studies further indicate that only a small percentage of students who complete a one-year shorthand course are vocationally competent. Less than half of the students completing two-year shorthand programs are able to produce vocationally acceptable transcripts (Moskovis, 1969, p. 252). Therefore, it seems quite apparent that shorthand students who are vocationally inclined must continue with further shorthand training so that they may develop a salable skill.

#### Study Related to Solutions to the Dropout Problem

Research regarding solutions to the dropout rate has been done in the past. The Johnson Study suggests possible solutions to the problem of the high dropout rate of beginning shorthand students. This study recommends ways to overcome the dropout problem.

Johnson study. Johnson conducted his study in seven Los Angeles Metropolitan High Schools and discovered that 20% of the first semester beginning shorthand students drop the course. Only 23% of the students taking first-year shorthand enroll in the advanced class (Johnson, 1962, p. 297).

In considering the reasons given by the teachers for the high mortality rate of shorthand students, the conclusion was reached that phonetics, reading, and spelling are closely correlated to reasons for dropouts in shorthand classes (Johnson, 1962, p. 298).

Through a summary of the results, it was concluded that if phonetics tests could be given in advance to the beginning shorthand students, the students could then be divided into shorthand classes



according to their ability (Johnson, 1962, p. 298). This may help to eliminate the problem of discouragement encountered by the slower learner who finds himself competing with the more able learner.

Many researchers indicate that some of the problems of dropouts could be solved through the offering of an alphabetic or abbreviated longhand system. More students might easily achieve success with shorthand through the learning of an abbreviated longhand system rather than through the symbol system that is so popular in most schools today.

#### Research Studies Related to Alphabet Systems

An increasing amount of research regarding the use of the alphabetic systems of shorthand has been conducted in recent years. Studies by Foster, Hadfield, and Smith have discovered that abbreviated longhand systems or alphabet systems have proved to be superior to symbol systems.

Foster study. In a study conducted by Foster in a high school in Nyack, New York, the alphabet system of writing shorthand proved to be far superior to the symbol system (Foster, 1966, p. 259).

While the school was using the symbol system, it took three years to bring students up to levels of skill acceptable to the business world. After the adoption of the alphabetic system, it was found that the skill could be developed in one year. The one-year course in an alphabetic system also provided time to teach the transcription skill necessary to the student (Andersen, 1974, p. 191).

The first year the system was taught, it was taught to dropouts of the conventional symbol system. Within 12 weeks these same students were able to take dictation up to 60 words per minute (Andersen, 1974, p. 191).

Foster, Perkins, and others have pointed out that it is possible to develop a vocational proficiency with an alphabet system in far less time than is required by a purely symbol system (Andersen, 1974, p. 192).

Some advantages of using an alphabetic system for vocational objectives are as follows:

1. The use of the alphabet system rather than symbols reduces the time commitment and the learning load.
2. The ease of learning would probably reduce the dropout rate.
3. The alphabetic system offers savings in time that may be used for other course offerings.
4. The ease of learning increased the potentiality for the "upgrading" of adult education students who have a limited amount of time for further education (Andersen, 1974, p. 192).

Hadfield study. A study was conducted by Arthur Hadfield comparing the learning achievements of students using the Gregg (DJ) symbol shorthand and two abbreviated longhand systems, Forkner Shorthand and Stenoscrypt ABC Shorthand. Hadfield concluded that students were able to achieve higher speeds of writing through the use of the Forkner system.

The study measured dictation speed and standard words correctly transcribed at the end of two semesters. The study includes 11th and 12th grade high school students (Hadfield, 1975, p. ix).

A total of nine public high schools were included in the study of which three high schools were chosen for each of the three shorthand systems (Hadfield, 1975, p. ix).

A language achievement test was administered to determine the student's ability level (Hadfield, 1975, p. viii). The Forkner students in each ability level achieved higher than the students of corresponding levels in the Gregg and Stenoscript groups (Hadfield, 1975, p. 101).

The Gregg and Stenoscript students achieved their highest achievement in the 60 word per minute level while Forkner students achieved their highest achievement in the 80 word per minute speed level with a mean of 181.75 correctly transcribed words. This achievement is a difference of nearly 19 words over the highest achievement of the Stenoscript group and of nearly 34 words over the highest mean achievement of the Gregg group. The study was very favorable toward the Forkner Shorthand system (Hadfield, 1975, p. 104).

Smith study. E. Ray Smith also conducted a study to determine the student achievement in Forkner and Gregg Shorthand. The results determined that Forkner students performed better than did the Gregg students regardless of the manner of comparison. The difference in achievement was significant in favor of the Forkner group. This study concludes that the Forkner Shorthand system is easier to learn,

is superior to the Gregg (DJ) shorthand system for a one-year course and is better adapted for all grade-point average groups (Smith, 1971, p. 47).

This study was conducted in eighteen schools throughout the United States during the 1965-66 school year. Of the 18 schools selected, 8 taught Forkner and 10 taught Gregg. A sample of 180 students' transcripts was selected at random and used for statistical analysis (Smith, 1971, p. 44).

A comparison by system was made at speed levels varying from 50 to 100 words per minute. The terminal test revealed that the Forkner group achieved higher than the Gregg group at each level of speed. The Forkner group correctly transcribed more words at the speed of 100 than did the Gregg group at the speeds of 80 and 90 (Smith, 1971, p. 46).

A second comparison was made by comparing the systems and the grade-point average at speed levels of 50 to 100 words per minute. At each speed level, it was determined that the Forkner above-average, average, and below-average achievers achieved higher than did the Gregg above-average, average, and below-average achievers in the number of standard words correctly transcribed (Smith, 1971, p. 46).

#### Other Studies

Other studies have concluded that Forkner Shorthand cuts shorthand attrition and enables more beginners to succeed in shorthand--in class and on the job. The Forkner system of writing shorthand enables the student to learn shorthand in two semesters instead of

the usual four which are required for Gregg shorthand writers. The one-year Forkner graduates are able to take dictation on the job and to transcribe it to the satisfaction of the employer (Dotson, 1966, n.p.).

Little research has been done concerning the dropout ratio of Forkner and Gregg Shorthand students. At the present time, no information regarding this topic is available at the Utah State University library.

#### Summary of Review of Literature

Attitudes of the student as well as that of the instructor seem to be factors which influence the success of taking shorthand (Curley, 1974, p. 37). Results determined through various studies that have been done indicate that in choosing a system of shorthand, the educators should have the objective of the student as their paramount concern rather than adhering to a system that may require the investment of an excessive amount of time and academic effort. Perhaps too much emphasis is being placed in the use of shorthand systems that have a greater potential for the development of high speeds. Perhaps we sacrifice excellency of transcription which is far more essential as we spend time on speed development (Andersen, 1974, p. 192).

### Methods and Procedures

This chapter is designed to detail all procedures used in conducting this study. The methods and procedures will be described in six divisions: (1) participants of study, (2) class lists obtained, (3) student addresses obtained, (4) pilot study conducted, (5) questionnaire administered, and (6) results reported. A summary will conclude the chapter.

#### Participants of Study

The participants for this study were students who enrolled in the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of Forkner Shorthand at Utah State University, Logan, Utah during the 1974-75 and the 1975-76 school years. Since Forkner Shorthand has only been taught at Utah State University since the fall quarter of the 1974-75 school year, all students taking Forkner Shorthand were a part of this study. The population for the study consisted of 64 students. In order to send a questionnaire to the participants, it was necessary not only to find out the names of all students who had taken Forkner Shorthand but also their current addresses. After consulting departmental records, it was decided the best way to obtain the names of the participants would be to obtain the class lists from university records.

#### Class Lists Obtained

The class lists of those students who took Forkner Shorthand during the 1974-75 school year were obtained through the cooperation of the Office of Admissions and Records at Utah State University. The class lists of those students who took Forkner Shorthand during the 1975-76 school year were obtained from the instructor of the Forkner class. Class lists were reviewed and the names of those students who were enrolled in the beginning Forkner classes during the 1974-75 and 1975-76 school years were noted. Once these names were obtained, addresses for the participants had to be found.

#### Student Addresses Obtained

Addresses for those students who were no longer attending Utah State University were obtained as a result of the cooperative efforts of the Alumni Association. The addresses of those individuals still attending the university were procured from the Blue Book, the school's publication for currently enrolled students.

#### Pilot Study Conducted

In order to determine if the questionnaire would be an effective survey instrument, the questionnaire was administered to ten Forkner writers who were enrolled in the BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand class during the winter quarter, 1976. As a result of the pilot study, it was decided that no changes or revisions needed to be made to the survey instrument. The questionnaires were then administered to the participants.

### Questionnaire Administered

The questionnaire was administered during the 1976 spring quarter to those students who had taken the beginning class of Forkner Shorthand during the 1975-76 school year and chose to continue with the intermediate and advanced classes. The questionnaire was handed personally to the participants in the intermediate and advanced classes of shorthand. The questionnaire was mailed to those individuals who took beginning Forkner Shorthand during the 1974-75 and 1975-76 school years but did not choose to continue with Forkner Shorthand by taking the intermediate or advanced classes of shorthand. All students who did not return the questionnaire were contacted by a follow-up letter or by telephone in order to obtain the needed information.

### Results Reported

The results were summarized and reported according to the number of responses to each question on the questionnaire. On April 13, 1976, 64 questionnaires were mailed or personally handed to students who took Forkner Shorthand. Approximately 66% (65.6) (42 questionnaires) were returned by April 27, 1976. A second mailing as well as personal telephone calls was made on April 29, 1976, resulting in the return of six additional questionnaires by May 7, 1976. This increased the total number of responses to 48 or 75% of the questionnaires mailed or personally handed out.

Of the 48 responses received, two respondents reported that they did not complete the BE 121, Beginning Forkner Shorthand class and one respondent indicated she was never enrolled in Forkner Shorthand;



thus, the information received from these respondents is not included in the analysis of data and the total usable questionnaires returned was 45.

#### Summary of Methods and Procedures

Students who were enrolled in beginning Forkner Shorthand classes during the 1974-75 and 1975-76 school years at Utah State University, Logan, Utah, were the participants in this study.

In order to send a questionnaire to the participants, class lists were obtained to determine the names of all students who had taken Forkner Shorthand. Once these names were noted, addresses were then found.

A pilot study was conducted using the Forkner students who were enrolled in the winter quarter, 1976, BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand class to determine if the questionnaire was an effective survey instrument.

The questionnaire needed no changes and was then either personally handed or mailed to the participants. The results were summarized and reported according to the number of responses to each question on the questionnaire.

### Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine why students who enroll in Beginning Forkner Shorthand do or do not continue with the intermediate and advanced levels of shorthand at Utah State University. The findings of this study resulted from a questionnaire that was mailed to all students who enrolled in the Beginning Forkner Shorthand course during the 1974-75 and 1975-76 school years.

The findings are presented as follows: (1) why students did not continue with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand, (2) why students did not continue with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand, (3) why students did not continue with BE 124, Dictation and Transcription, (4) why students did continue with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand, (5) why students did continue with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand, and (6) why students did continue with BE 124, Dictation and Transcription. A summary of findings concludes this chapter.

The questionnaire used for this study was designed to obtain responses from students regarding why they did or did not continue in the Forkner shorthand program. Therefore, percentages reported in Tables 1, 2, and 3 may total more than 100% due to respondents selecting more than one reason for either continuing or not continuing in the shorthand program.

#### Why Students Did Not Continue With BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand

Of the 45 responses, all 45 or 100% of the respondents completed the BE 121, Beginning Forkner Shorthand class. However, of these 45 respondents, 18, or 40%, chose not to continue with Forkner Shorthand by not taking BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand.

Of those respondents that completed BE 121, eight, or 44.4%, did not continue with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand due to leaving Utah State University. Four, or 22.2%, of those students completing BE 122 did not enroll in BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand due to not having a specialized class of Forkner Shorthand for those Forkner students continuing with the intermediate and advanced classes of shorthand. Three respondents, or 16.7%, reported not continuing with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand because of the lack of confidence in their ability to continue with Forkner Shorthand. In addition, three respondents, or 16.7%, reported not continuing with Forkner Shorthand because of not being able to schedule the BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand class. The data in Table 1 illustrates the reasons given by BE 121 students for not continuing with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand.

#### Why Students Did Not Continue with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand

The data in Table 2 illustrates the reasons given by BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand students for not continuing with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand.

Table 1

Reasons Given by BE 121, Beginning Forkner Students for  
not Continuing with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand

Number of Students not Continuing with BE 122 N = 18	Percent of Responses	Reasons Given for not Continuing with BE 122
8	44.4	Left school
4	22.2	No specialized class for Forkner shorthand
3	16.7	Lack confidence in ability to continue
3	16.7	Could not schedule continuing shorthand class
2	11.1	Failed beginning Forkner course
2	11.1	Disliked Forkner shorthand
1	5.5	Lack confidence in knowledge of Forkner shorthand
1	5.5	Changed job intention
1	5.5	Not adequately prepared in beginning Forkner course
1	5.5	Enrolled in beginning Forkner course only for personal use

Table 2

Reasons Given by BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand Students for  
not Continuing with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand

Number of Students Not Continuing with BE 123 N = 26	Percent of Responses	Reasons Given for not Continuing with BE 123
12	46.1	Left school
3	11.5	Lack confidence in ability to continue
3	11.5	Not adequately prepared in the intermediate class of shorthand
3	11.5	Too much work involved
3	11.5	Changed job intention
3	11.5	Could not schedule con- tinuing shorthand course
2	7.7	Instructor did not appear to be enthusiastic about Forkner shorthand
2	7.7	Not required as part of the shorthand sequence for Forkner Shorthand
1	3.8	No specialized class for Forkner Shorthand

Of the 27, or 60%, respondents completing BE 122, Inter-  
mediate Shorthand, only 1, or 3.7%, continued with BE 123, Advanced  
Shorthand; therefore, the total number of those not continuing was 26.

Twelve, or 46.1%, of the 26 respondents did not continue with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand because of leaving Utah State University.

Four, or 15.4%, of those students completing BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand are currently enrolled in BE 123, Advanced Shorthand.

#### Why Students Did Not Continue with BE 124, Dictation and Transcription

Of the 45 responses, 1, or 2.2%, of the respondents completed BE 123, Advanced Shorthand. The respondent chose not to continue with BE 124, Dictation and Transcription for the following reasons:

1. Lacked confidence in ability to continue.
2. Instructor did not appear to be enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand.
3. No specialized class for Forkner Shorthand.

#### Why Students Did Continue with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand

Of the 45 responses, 27, or 60%, of the people returning the questionnaire had completed BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand. The data in Table 3 illustrates the reasons given by BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand students for continuing with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand.

Of those respondents completing BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand, 23, or 85.1%, continued with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand because of their job future. Eighteen, or 66.7%, continued with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand because of the success gained in BE 121, Beginning Forkner Shorthand course. Confidence in Forkner Shorthand was given as a reason for continuing by 15, or 55.6%, of those people responding to the questionnaire. Fourteen, or 51.8%, of the respondents

Table 3  
Reasons Given by BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand Students for  
Continuing with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand

Number of Students Completing BE 122 N = 27	Percent of Responses	Reasons Given for Continu- ing with BE 122
23	85.1	Enrolled because of job future
18	66.7	Success in beginning Forkner course
15	55.6	Confidence in Forkner Shorthand
14	51.8	Instructor was enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand
13	48.1	Interest in Forkner Shorthand
2	7.4	Curiosity about Forkner Shorthand
1	3.7	Encouraged by major advisor

continued with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand because of the enthusiasm about Forkner Shorthand displayed by the instructor of the BE 121, Beginning Forkner Shorthand course. Interest in Forkner Shorthand was another reason given by 13, or 48.1%, of the respondents continuing with BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand.

#### Why Students Did Continue with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand

Of the 45 responses, 1, or 2.2%, of the respondents completed BE 123, Advanced Shorthand. The respondent chose to continue with BE 123, Advanced Shorthand for the following reasons:

1. Enrolled because of job future.
2. Encouraged by major advisor.

#### Why Students Did Continue with BE 124, Dictation and Transcription

Of the 45 responses, 1, or 2.2%, of the respondents completed BE 124, Dictation and Transcription. At Utah State University, BE 123, Advanced Shorthand is not required as part of the shorthand sequence for Forkner Shorthand students. The respondent who did complete BE 124, Dictation and Transcription chose to advance from BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand to BE 124, Dictation and Transcription.

The respondent chose to complete BE 124, Dictation and Transcription for the following reasons:

1. Enrolled because of job future
2. Encouraged by major advisor.

#### Summary of Findings

The results of the study showed that of the 45 usable questionnaires returned all 45 completed BE 121, Beginning Forkner Shorthand. Of those 45, 27 completed BE 122, Intermediate Shorthand, 1 completed BE 123, Advanced Shorthand, and 1 completed BE 124, Dictation and Transcription. Therefore, it was determined that over one-half of



the Forkner Shorthand students did go on to intermediate shorthand but did not continue with the advanced shorthand classes. The reason given by the majority of the students for not continuing with the advanced classes was that they left Utah State University.

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This concluding chapter is designed to summarize the study. This chapter also presents the conclusions and recommendations.

#### Summary

Some studies conducted in the past have concluded that the Forkner Shorthand system is easier to learn and allows the student to achieve as well or better than other students using a symbol system. However, regardless of the system used, the percentage of dropouts from first-year to second-year shorthand is very high. This study was conducted to determine why students who enroll in Beginning Forkner Shorthand do or do not continue with the intermediate and advanced levels of shorthand offered at Utah State University.

More specifically, the questions to be answered were:

1. After beginning with Forkner Shorthand, why do students fail to register for intermediate and advanced shorthand.
2. After beginning with Forkner Shorthand, why do students register for intermediate and advanced shorthand.

Students enrolled in the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of Forkner Shorthand at Utah State University during the 1975-76 school year as well as those who were enrolled in these classes during the 1974-75 school year were the participants in this study.

A questionnaire consisting of seven questions was developed to determine the reasons why students who enrolled in Forkner Shorthand

do or do not continue with the advanced levels of shorthand at Utah State University. The questionnaire was personally handed or mailed to the sixty-four students who enrolled in Beginning Forkner Shorthand during the 1974-75 and 1975-76 school years.

### Conclusions

The data analyzed in this study has led to several conclusions regarding the role Forkner Shorthand might play as a part of the shorthand program at Utah State University. These conclusions are presented as follows:

1. Several negative comments were made on the questionnaire regarding correlated classes of Forkner and symbol shorthand writers. If these correlated classes of Forkner and symbol shorthand writers are absolutely necessary, a teacher familiar with Forkner Shorthand should be responsible for teaching these classes.

2. Many respondents indicated the need for better advisement regarding shorthand. Therefore, major advisors for students in the secretarial training, office administration, or teacher education programs in Business Education should advise students of the options available in the shorthand area.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings resulting from this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Further research should be conducted comparing Forkner classes at other institutions. This research should be concerned with determining if other institutions have a minor proportion of their Forkner Shorthand students continuing with the intermediate and advanced classes, and if so, why or why not.

2. Research should be undertaken to determine if individuals completing Forkner Shorthand have adequate entry-level skills in shorthand to allow them to be successful on the job.

3. Research should be conducted to determine if Forkner Shorthand students need to take three or four quarters of shorthand to gain the necessary skills needed to competently take and transcribe shorthand.

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Appendixes

Appendix A. Cover Letter





## UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF  
BUSINESS EDUCATION

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
UMC 35, LOGAN, UTAH 84322  
Phone (801) 752-4100 Ext. 7988

April 13, 1976

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Will you help us with the shorthand program at Utah State University? Since you are one of the students who took Forkner Shorthand, we need your assistance. We are conducting a study to determine why students who took Forkner Shorthand do or do not choose to take the advanced classes of shorthand at Utah State University.

Please take five minutes of your time to fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. A prompt reply will be greatly appreciated.

Your reply will be kept in strict confidence.

Respectfully yours,

Miss Mary Diskin  
Graduate Student, USU

Dr. Edward Houghton, Associate Professor  
Department of Business Education

Enclosures:

Questionnaire  
Envelope

Appendix B. Follow-up Letter



## UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF  
BUSINESS EDUCATION

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
UMC 35, LOGAN, UTAH 84322  
Phone (801) 752-4100 Ext. 7988

April 29, 1976

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

About two weeks ago you were sent a letter asking you to complete a survey in connection with a research report being done in this department.

As I need to obtain as many returns as possible from students who took Forkner Shorthand, I am taking this opportunity to ask for your help again.

Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to me by May 7, 1976.

Thank you for your assistance.

Respectfully yours,

Miss Mary Diskin  
Graduate Student, USU

Enclosures:

Questionnaire  
Envelope

Appendix C. Questionnaire

Since you are one of the students who took Forkner Shorthand, we are requesting your help. We are trying to find out why Forkner Shorthand students do or do not continue with the advanced shorthand classes.

Please answer only the questions which apply to you and return the questionnaire. Question 1 indicates the question(s) which apply to you. If you wish to make any additional comments, please turn to the last page of this questionnaire. An immediate return of this questionnaire would be greatly appreciated.

1. What class of shorthand did you last complete?

- ☐ A. BE 121 Beginning Forkner - Please answer question 3.  
☐ B. BE 122 Intermediate Shorthand - Please answer questions 2 and 5.  
☐ C. BE 123 Advanced Shorthand - Please answer questions 2, 4, and 5.  
☐ D. BE 124 Dictation and Transcription - Please answer 2, 4, and 6.

2. Please check one or more of the reasons why you chose to continue with Forkner Shorthand by taking BE 122 intermediate shorthand.

1. ☐ Enrolled because of job future  
 2. ☐ Interest in Forkner Shorthand  
 3. ☐ Confidence in Forkner Shorthand  
 4. ☐ Success in beginning Forkner course  
 5. ☐ Instructor was enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand  
 6. ☐ Curiosity about Forkner Shorthand  
 7. ☐ Encouraged by major advisor  
 8. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please check one or more of the reasons why you chose not to continue with Forkner Shorthand by not taking BE 122 intermediate shorthand.

1. ☐ Enrolled in beginning Forkner course only for personal use  
 2. ☐ Lack confidence in ability to continue  
 3. ☐ Lack confidence in knowledge of Forkner Shorthand  
 4. ☐ Not adequately prepared in beginning Forkner course  
 5. ☐ Failed beginning Forkner course  
 6. ☐ Left school  
 7. ☐ Disliked Forkner Shorthand  
 8. ☐ Discovered no future use for Forkner Shorthand  
 9. ☐ Too much work involved  
 10. ☐ Changed job intentions  
 11. ☐ Could not schedule continuing shorthand course  
 12. ☐ Instructor did not appear to be enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand  
 13. ☐ No specialized class for Forkner Shorthand  
 14. ☐ Was not advised to continue with Forkner Shorthand  
 15. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Please check one or more of the reasons why you chose to continue with Forkner Shorthand by taking BE123 advanced shorthand.

1. ☐ Enrolled because of job future  
 2. ☐ Interest in Forkner Shorthand  
 3. ☐ Confidence in Forkner Shorthand  
 4. ☐ Success in the intermediate class of shorthand  
 5. ☐ Instructor was enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand  
 6. ☐ Encouraged by major advisor  
 7. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please check one or more of the reasons why you chose not to continue with Forkner Shorthand by not taking BE 123 advanced shorthand.
1. ☐ Lack confidence in ability to continue
  2. ☐ Not adequately prepared in the intermediate class of shorthand
  3. ☐ Failed intermediate course
  4. ☐ Left school
  5. ☐ Too much work involved
  6. ☐ Discovered no future use for Forkner Shorthand
  7. ☐ Changed job intentions
  8. ☐ Could not schedule continuing shorthand course
  9. ☐ Instructor did not appear to be enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand
  10. ☐ No specialized class for Forkner Shorthand
  11. ☐ Not required as part of the shorthand sequence for Forkner Shorthand
  12. ☐ Was not advised to continue with Forkner Shorthand
  13. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

6. Please check one or more of the reasons why you chose to continue with Forkner Shorthand by taking BE 124 dictation and transcription.
1. ☐ Enrolled because of job future
  2. ☐ Interest in Forkner Shorthand
  3. ☐ Confidence in Forkner Shorthand
  4. ☐ Success in the advanced class of shorthand
  5. ☐ Encouraged by major advisor
  6. ☐ Instructor was enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand
  7. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

7. Please check one or more of the reasons why you chose not to continue with Forkner Shorthand by not taking BE 124 dictation and transcription.
1. ☐ Lack confidence in ability to continue
  2. ☐ Not adequately prepared in the advanced shorthand course
  3. ☐ Failed advanced course
  4. ☐ Left school
  5. ☐ Too much work involved
  6. ☐ Discovered no future use for Forkner Shorthand
  7. ☐ Changed job intentions
  8. ☐ Could not schedule continuing shorthand course
  9. ☐ Instructor did not appear to be enthusiastic about Forkner Shorthand
  10. ☐ No specialized class for Forkner
  11. ☐ Was not advised to continue with Forkner Shorthand
  12. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Please feel free to add any additional comments you may have.

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Vita

Mary Diskin

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Report: A Study to Determine Why Forkner Shorthand Students Do  
or Do Not Enroll in the Intermediate and Advanced Levels  
of Shorthand at Utah State University

Major Field: Business Education

## Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born at Ticonderoga, New York, July 12, 1949,  
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