TECHNIQUES FOR IMPROVING TRANSCRIPTION PRACTICES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Transcription, the developing of typed material from shorthand notes, could not come into being until the touch system of typing was used and until the development of the Gregg system of shorthand, which is simpler to teach and easier to learn than the older systems.

Transcription is one of the latest subjects to be introduced to the business curriculum. Leslie pointed out that:

> Transcription, in fact, is so recent a problem that it was not until 1937 that the first full-semester transcription text appeared. The teacher's handbook to that text was the first extensive printed treatment of methods of teaching transcription other than articles in the periodicals and yearbooks. The first book devoted exclusively to methods of teaching transcription appeared only in 1949. Now over one-half of the schools in the nation are teaching transcription as a separate subject. The teaching of transcription is based upon the three existing skills of shorthand, typewriting, and English. Transcription cannot be taught effectively until a reasonable mastery of these skills is attained.[1]

College curricula have not as a rule taught the commercial education student how to teach transcription. The writer's experience in practice teaching in the commercial area was in typing--not in shorthand and transcription. In order to improve teaching techniques in these areas, it seemed imperative that a broader acquaintance with the methods, techniques, and aids necessary for improving the ability of the students in the area of shorthand and transcription be gained.

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[1]Leslie, Louis A., Methods of Teaching Gregg Shorthand, New York: Gregg Publishing Division, 1953, p. 38.

Statement of the Problem

The problem in this study was: How can transcription skills of high school commercial students be improved? The problem would be resolved to answering these basic questions:

1. What are the accepted methods of introducing transcription?
2. What are the basic transcription techniques?
3. What methods exist for improving component areas within transcription?
4. What the general devices are for improving transcription skills?

Procedures

Procedures have been centered in a analysis and evaluation of the present shorthand and transcription methods. The study has been based upon a review of literature pertaining to transcription methods. The commercial staff at Montana State College were used as consultants.

Limitations

The review of literature was restricted to the Library of the Montana State College. The Montana State College commercial staff were consulted to determine the current trends in transcription.

Chapter 2 deals with the purpose and objectives of business education.

CHAPTER II

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

At all times business education should promote the general objectives of education. Most authorities were in agreement with this statement. The Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association has defined the general objectives of education as:

1. Self-Realization.
2. Human Relationship.
3. Economic Efficiency.
4. Civic Responsibility.[2]

Within the field of business education, authorities[3] believed business education promotes these general objectives of all education in the following ways:

1. Business education helps develop the student in accordance with his abilities.
2. Business education teaches students to work co-operatively.
3. Business education helps students into the vocation or profession for which they are fitted.
4. Business education helps students understand our economic system.

Tonne, Popham, and Freeman have stated that business education promotes these general objectives in the following manner:

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[2]Albertly, Harold, Reorganizing the High School Curriculum, New York, The McMillian Company, 1953, p. 34.

[3]Tonne, Herbert A., Popham, Estelle L., and Freeman, Herbert M., Methods of Teaching Business Subjects, New York, Gregg Publishing Co., 1949, pp. 6-7.

1. Obviously, one of the major objectives of education is the development of the individual in accordance with his potentialities. Often "finding himself" vocationally is the beginning of such growth, and certainly business education can contribute its part to education for self-realization. It should foster the development of an inquiring mind. It should increase the pupil's facility in speaking, reading, and writing the mother tongue effectively and in making necesary arithmetic computations accurately.

2. The prospective worker in business should know that only 15 per cent of employees who lose their positions do so because of inability to do their work and that the other 85 per cent are dismissed because of personality defects or inability to maintain satisfactory human relationships. Business classes would be conducted in such a way that students learn to work co-operatively, to accept criticism thoughtfully and appreciatively, and to observe the rules of courtesy at all times.

3. Business education should, of course, contribute most to the development of economic efficiency. The vocational business student should know the satisfaction of good workmanship. He should understand the requirements of, and opportunities in, various jobs so that he can make a wise vocational choice. He should see his place in the total occupational picture. The business student should also beccme prepared to plan the economics of his own life and develop standards for guiding his expenditures, so that he will be an informed and skillful buyer who can safeguard his interests as a consumer of goods and services.

4. Business education can contribute to the development of civic responsibility through helping the student understand the complex social structure in which he lives. A worthy objective of the business courses is to help to develop educated citizens who are economically literate.[4]

Business education has made the greatest contribution to the general objectives in the achievement of the economic efficiency objective. The following breakdown of the economic efficiency objective by Enterline demonstrated this point:

1. Work. The educated producer knows the satisfaction

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[4] Tonne, Popham, and Freeman, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

of good workmanship.

2. Occupational information. The educated producer understands the requirements and opportunities for various jobs.

3. Occupational choice. The educated producer has selected his occupation.

4. Occupational adjustment. The educated producer maintains and improves his efficiency.

5. Occupational appreciation. The educated producer appreciates the social value of his work.

6. Personal economics. The educated consumer plans the economics of his own life.

7. Consumer judgement. The educated consumer develops standards guiding his expenditures.

8. Efficiency in buying. The educated consumer is an informed skillful buyer.

9. Consumer protection. The educated consumer takes appropriate measures to safeguard his interests.[5]

Specific Objectives of Business Education

Specific objectives within the field of business education are a major concern to the commercial teacher. In regard to specific objectives of business education, Colin has listed the following eight objectives of high school business education:

1. The Deferred Vocational Objective--the school should make it possible for the pupil to get sufficient business information and a degree of proficiency in the use of one or more of the business skills to enable him to prepare for a beginning position in a store or an office with a minimum of additional preparation after he leaves the high school.

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[5]Enterline, H. G., "Business Education in General Education," Balance Sheet, January, 1958, p. 197.

2. The Vocational Objective--the school should make it possible for pupils to get all of the information and skills that are required to qualify them for beginning positions such as billing machines operators, calculating machine operators, clerical bookkeepers, transcribing machine operators, duplicating machine operators, filing clerks, general office clerks, posting machine operators, retail sales persons, stenographer, or typists.

3. The Exploratory Objective--the school should provide an opportunity for the pupil to explore and try out his interests and abilities in the field of business education in short units of exploratory experiences.

4. The Occupational Information Objective--the school should give the pupil an opportunity to gain useful information about business occupations, encouragement in selecting an occupation, and help in discovering and appreciating the social significance of the different business occupations.

5. The Personal Use Objective--the schools should give the pupil and opportunity to develop a satisfactory degree of proficiency in the use of one or more of the business skills to meet his non-vocational, personal needs.

6. The General Business Principles Objective--the school should enable the pupil to gain better understanding of the agencies, the functions, the methods and practices, and the organization of our American system of business enterprise.

7. The Business Ethics Objective--the school should help the pupil gain a philosophy of business and a desire to improve business practices generally that would carry over into his adult life and result in better ethical practices and the improvement of the services of business.

8. The Consumer Education Objective--the school should provide certain consumer information and skills that will be useful to the pupil in his personal economic planning, in his buying for consumption, and in the safeguarding and protection of his interests as a consumer.[6]

Textbooks and periodicals revealed that most business education authorities were in agreement with the specific objectives of business education outlined here.

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[6] Turille, Stephan, Principles and Methods in Business Education, Virginia, McClure Printing Company, 1949, pp. 3-4.

Specific Objectives of Transcription

In order to improve transcription practices, the objectives of the course should be clearly understood. Harmes stated that these were:

1. Production of mailable letters and other materials from dictated notes.
2. Output in sufficient quantity to meet business requirements.[7]

These two objectives summarized what should be accomplished in transcription. However, they were not as simple as they appeared, for employers often have different ideas on what is mailable. According to Leslie,[8] the following items should be considered in determining mailability of typed material:

1. The letter should have the proper form, which is usually determined by the employing company.
2. It should be centered properly.
3. The component parts of the letter such as the heading, salutation, body, and complimentary close should be placed properly.
4. There should be no omissions or translations that would change the meaning from that which the dictator intended.
5. The spelling, division of works, and punctuation must meet the proper standards of English.
6. Typing errors that can be neatly erased would be considered acceptable. Otherwise, a new letter should be started.

In the business world, time is very valuable. That is why many

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[7] Harms, Harm, Methods in Vocational Business Education, Cincinnati, South-Western Publishing Co., 1949, p. 156.

[8] Leslie, Methods of Teaching Shorthand, pp. 117-127.

letters and other materials must be prepared to meet a certain mailing time and speed of production has been an important factor in this process.

Transcription may be summarized as producing, from shorthand notes, mailable letters with enough speed to meet business requirements.

The techniques of introducing transcription to a class in the secondary school are presented in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCING TRANSCRIPTION IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

It has been the general custom of shorthand teachers to have their classes transcribe in longhand during the first semester.[9] This enabled the teacher to test the learner's developing knowledge of the theory of shorthand. The speed and accuracy with which the learner transcribed in longhand provided a fairly good measurement of his learning progress.

Prerequisites to Typewritten Transcription

If conditions are ideal, the student should have had two semesters of typing and two semesters of shorthand before entering the transcription class. It would also be desirable if the learner had some pre-transcription training within these courses. The pre-transcription training needed, according to Leslie, is "merely the best possible teaching of shorthand and typing."[10]

The transcription teacher will have had a knowledge of the ability of the students if he has had them in typing and shorthand classes previously. However, there are usually some students in the class with whom the instructor is unfamiliar, or a teacher may be new in a school. In such cases, it is appropriate to use a pre-test in shorthand and

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[9] Ibid., p. 234.

[10] Leslie, Louis, Methods of Teaching Transcription, New York, The Gregg Publishing Company, 1949, p. 88.

typing. These pre-tests can be of several forms--straight copy tests, shorthand speed tests, or dictation.

According to Leslie,[11] the purposes of the tests would be as follows:

1. A few straight-copy tests can be used to determine the students' typing speed and ability.
2. Shorthand speed tests can be given to determine their shorthand speed and ability.
3. An idea of their ability to set up a letter, to erase, to punctuate, and to use English correctly can be gained by dictating a few business letters directly.

Students should not be enrolled for transcription training until they have certain minimum skills in typing, shorthand, and English. Lamb[12] has outlined these mimimum skills as:

1. Recording material of average difficulty dictated for five minutes at 70-80 words a minute.
2. Copying straight matter of average difficulty on the typewriter for ten minutes with a net score of at least 40 words a minute.
3. Setting up letters on the typewriter in acceptable form.
4. Applying the rules of English composition to letter writing.

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[11] Leslie, Methods of Teaching Shorthand, p. 231.

[12] Lamb, Marion M., Your First Year of Teaching Shorthand and Transcription, Cincinnati, South-Western Publishing Co., 1950, pp. 95-96.

The First Step

According to Leslie,[13] the first step in the introduction to transcription would be to have the learner transcribe something that did not require a high degree of skill and that almost guaranteed a successful result, but which emphasized the use of correct transcription techniques. A short letter could be selected from the shorthand textbook plates. The letter should be read in class first; any spelling or punctuation that could cause difficulty should be discussed.

The teacher can introduce the idea of typewritten transcription to learners in these words:

> You have been transcribing so well in longhand these last few days that today we are going to begin typewritten transcription. In order to be sure that everybody gets a good typewritten transcript the first time, we are going to use letter 77 from last night's homework. Turn to letter 77, and let us read it together.[14]

The teacher should also explain the form to be used for the letter. It was suggested that the students do not use an eraser in the beginning stages of transcription since it would slow down the transcription process--the students should merely encircle the errors after the letter is transcribed.[15]

The first few transcriptions should not be timed. The students should be allowed to type at an even and unhurried pace, and should

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[13]Leslie, Methods of Teaching Transcription, pp. 103-105.

[14]Leslie, Louis A., Zoubek, Charles E., and Strony, Madeline S., Teacher's Handbook for Gregg Dictation Simplified, New York, Gregg Publishing Company, 1955, p. 27.

[15]Leslie, Methods of Teaching Transcription, pp. 103-105.

keep the carriage moving.[16]

After two or three untimed transcription, the student should be ready for a timed transcription. The same letter that was used for the untimed transcription should be used for the timed transcription.[17]

The Second Step

The first step was taken to give the learner confidence. The next step would be to assign a short letter from the shorthand text for the student to copy. The next day, the same letter would be dictated slowly by the teacher to the class. They would be given a chance to reread their notes. Then they would go to the typewriters and transcribe the letter several times from their own notes at an unhurried pace.[18]

After they have transcribed the letter several times, they are ready to be timed on the same material. With each successive timed-transcription, they should try to increase their speed.[19]

According to Leslie, Zoubek, the Strony,[12] the only difference between the first and second step would be that the learner transcribes from his own notes of practiced, preread material in the second step.

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[16] Ibid., p. 103.

[17] Ibid., p. 103.

[18] Ibid., p. 104.

[19] Ibid., p. 104.

[20] Ibid., p. 105.

The learners are assured that the transcription will not be made the basis of any school grading, and little or no emphasis is placed on accuracy at this level. This stage of transcription training should not continue for more than one or two weeks.

The Final Step

The final step was a transition between introducing transcription and using procedures that would be standard for the rest of the year.

The students should, at first, take notes in shorthand and transcribe them unhurriedly at the typewriter without prereading them.[21] They would take shorthand notes, have a timed transcription immediately afterwards, and then make pencil corrections of their errors.[22]

The teacher should read the letter and have students correct their work and hand it in. The teacher should grade the papers and make suggestions for improvement.[23]

The authorities held that the teacher should give a blackboard preview of difficult words before dictating the shorthand assignment and that the material should gradually increase in difficulty.[24]

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[21] Leslie, Zoubek, and Strony, op. cit., p. 30.

[22] Ibid., p. 30.

[23] Ibid., p. 31.

[24] Ibid., pp. 31-32.

Letterheads should be used for transcription, if possible. The students should soon learn to place the letter by eye-judgement rather than by computation. It was held to be important that the learner type directly from his shorthand notes without previously reading them through.[25]

Alternate Method

The literature revealed that two basic methods of transcription are in use. One was the three step method outlined previously. The other method basically differed in the following two ways:

1. Students start transcribing at the typewriter without prereading.
2. The teacher dictates the words as the students transcribe.

Russon suggested the following method of transcription:

> Start the class transcribing from the textbook. Work at a typewriter with the class, saying the words as you typewrite with them, pacing the class at the students' speed. Give the students the placement, the punctuation, paragraphing, and the spelling of hard words. When they can transcribe this material fairly well, dictate a familiar letter slowly and repeat the process.
>
> After the class has recovered from the shock of being introduced to transcription, start building the transcription skill. But remember, keep it simple! Use only one letter form, such as modified block; use the same company name and address for several weeks; over-simplify the English rules; permit optional punctuation. Do not test yet; the class is still in the formative stage.[26]

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[25] Ibid., p. 32.

[26] Russon, Allien, "Are We Meeting Transcription Standards," Business Education Forum, Vol. 14, October, 1959, p. 31.

When using either method of transcription, the teacher would use one letter style, would over-simplify the English rules, would tell the students the correct placement, punctuation, paragraphing, and would not test until the students had learned the basic techniques of transcription.

The division of time in transcription class is discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER IV

DIVISION OF TIME IN TRANSCRIPTION CLASS

Every shorthand teacher has a way of dividing the alloted time for transcription into specific component parts. In this chapter the methods of two leading authorities in shorthand are discussed.

According to Barnes,[27] most high schools organized on a 45 minute period basis utilize two periods for transcription--a combination of the shorthand period and the typing period. She held that it is desirable that the same teacher be in charge of the entire transcription process.

Ten to 15 minutes would be needed to preview and dictate business letters for transcription. Enough material should be dicatated so that the transcribing would take most of the typing period.[28]

Approximately 15 minutes should be spent in building shorthand speed. The pyramid plan, or similar speed-building devices, can be used.[29] According to Lamb, the pyramid plan is building speed in short, intensive spurts.[30]

About five minutes should be spent on remedial work in English usage. This can usually be done by going over the errors of the previous day's lesson.[31]

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[27]Personal Interview with Leona Barnes, Professor Commerce, Montana State College, Bozeman, Montana.

[28]Leslie, op. cit., pp. 122-125.

[29]Ibid., pp. 122-125.

[30]Lamb, op. cit., p. 87.

[31]Leslie, op. cit., pp. 122-125.

Ten minutes should be used to read back the transcripts from the previous day while the students check them.[32]

One day a week should be reserved for shorthand speed tests. The students should be showing some improvement, due to the 15 minutes spent in speed-building each day.[33]

Most of the typing period should be spent in transcribing the material dictated in the first ten minutes of the shorthand period of the transcription.[34]

Leslie[35] stated that the procedure described here should remain fairly constant throughout the year, although, the amount of work to be accomplished should increase.

Leslie suggested that the transcription period be divided as follows:

> Ten Minutes. Preview and dictate for transcription business letters containing approximately 600 words. As learners should be transcribing approximately 15 words a minute gross at this time, after eight or ten weeks 600 words will suffice for the 40-minute transcription period at the typewriter. This figure will have to be adjusted to the individual class. Time is saved here by having names and addresses in the learner's hands in mimeographed or printed form.
>
> Fifteen minutes. Dictate for speed practice thoroughly previewed material in repetitive one minute takes at gradually increasing speeds with very little reading back. Finally

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[32]Leslie, Methods of Teaching Transcription, pp. 122-125.

[33]Ibid, pp. 122-125.

[34]Ibid, pp. 122-125.

[35]Ibid, pp. 122-125.

join the separate minutes into a five minute dictation at a speed slightly lower than the best speed attained at the one minute takes but higher than the learners can write on new five minute takes. Use a few minutes each day for brief-form drills or for shorthand penmanship practice, but only a few minutes. Fifteen minutes a day is very little time for shorthand speed development, and every second of this time must be used effectively. During these 15 minutes some of this time, not more than two or three minutes, must be given to checking the performance of the previous night's homework by having learners read from the assignment in the text.

Five minutes. Give remedial work on errors in the conventions of written English observed in preceding transcripts. Occasionally give help in advance on any unusually difficult problem in the conventions of written English that may occur in the letters just dictated for transcription. Great care must be taken to prevent this part of the period from encroaching on the other work. Five minutes seems like a very small allotment of time, but it is the maximum that can be devoted to the work if there is to be any possibility of attaining the vocational objectives.

Ten minutes. Read back transcripts from the preceding day while learners check them and learners enter the scores on the weekly record blank. This checking and proofreading is reserved for the end of the period in order to make it impossible for the learners to waste class time by quibbling about points of English or punctuation. The actual checking time required for 600 words of transcription should be about seven minutes with three minutes allowed for entering the figures on the report blank. Here, as in the other divisions of the work, however, as the number of words increases, the learner's skill and speed in handling the material should also increase. The time divisions shown here, consequently, remain substantially unchanged regardless of increases in the amount of material.[36]

Harms[37] disagreed somewhat with this method. He advocated dictating for speed first and then dropping down to a comfortable speed for transcription purposes. He held that this gave the student a

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[36]Leslie, Methods of Teaching Transcription, pp. 121-122.

[37]Harms, op. cit., p. 191.

chance to warm up and concentrate better on the material for dictation.

Methods that have been successful in improving component areas within transcription are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER V

IMPROVING COMPONENT AREAS WITHIN TRANSCRIPTION

The problem of improving accuracy in transcription is primarily one of diagonosing the component areas within transcription and finding the reasons for errors.[38]

According to Lamb,[39] the component areas within transcription are typing, shorthand, English, spelling, and proofreading.

In this chapter, the objectives of each of these component areas are discussed.

Typing

Most Teachers would agree that typing speed should not be allowed to drop while taking transcription. However, if no provision is made to keep it up, typing speed will drop. Lamb[40] held that it would be advisable to give a couple one or two-minute speed tests from printed copy every day.

A five-minute speed test should be given at least once a week. Keeping the typing speed at a high level should increase the speed of transcription enough to make time available for these short speed tests.[41]

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[38] Lamb, op. cit., p. 113.

[39] Ibid., p. 113.

[40] Ibid., p. 114.

[41] Ibid., p. 114.

Shorthand

In the transcription class, typing speed must be maintained. Shorthand speed, however, must be increased. Along with the increase in speed, there must be an increase in shorthand vocabulary.[42]

The material dictated for transcription must be within the speed level of the class. At least 15 minutes of each class should be devoted to techniques designed to increase speed.[43] As discussed previously, the pyramid plan is an effective device for speed building.

English

Although many students are required to take the twelfth year of English in order to graduate from high school, a big percentage of those entering transcription classes have a very poor understanding of the language. The transcription teacher can assume that he will have to incorporate English usage into the transcription class.[44]

At least five minutes a day should be devoted to correcting errors in language usage in the previous day's transcripts. The errors should be corrected and English rules relating to the errors should be made whereby errors in the English transcripts could be given a fuller treatment in the English class. This would give a practical application of English usage in the English class also.[45]

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[42] Ibid., p. 113.

[43] Ibid., p. 113.

[44] Ibid., pp. 112-114.

[45] Ibid., pp. 112-114.

Punctuation is one of the most important areas stressed in English. A large portion of this five-minute period should be devoted to correction and improvement of punctuation. This area is very important because misuse of punctuation marks can result in misinterpretation of the material dictated.[46]

Spelling

Spelling could, perhaps, be handled as a part of English but it seems significant enough to handle separately in the transcription class. Many employers are quite critical of the spelling ability of office workers. Since transcription students are preparing for these jobs, they should be trained properly.[47]

A survey was made of eighty business men by Armstrong[48] to determine common errors that make letters unacceptable in business offices. A questionnaire, consisting of five letters, was sent to businessmen. The businessmen were asked to circle errors which would make the letter unmailable according to the standards in their offices. The letters contained thirty different factors which would be considered errors by business teachers. Of the 58 businessmen who replied, 56 circled the misspelled words. Most businessmen consider a letter with misspelled words as unmailable.

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[46] Ibid., p. 111.

[47] Ibid., p. 111.

[48] Armstrong, Ruth D., "What Is A Mailable Letter?" Journal of Business Education, Vol. 34, No. 3, December, 1958, pp. 129-130.

One way to improve spelling, with a minimum amount of time spent in the classroom, would be to have the teacher prepare a mimeographed list of spelling errors made on the transcripts and hand them out to the class to study for homework.[49]

A test could be given about every two weeks; the teacher could dictate the words and have the students type them on their typewriters. A nominal amount of time would be needed for this purpose. Proper syllabication of words could be learned in a similar manner--word divisions could be studied by the students for their homework; a test on them could be given in conjunction with the spelling test.[50]

Proofreading

Every transcript that is handed in by the student should be proofread because it is of utmost importance to proofread all material in the office. The student should develop this habit in the shorthand and typing classes before he enrolled in a transcription class. To promote a proper proofreading habit, the students should be penalized less for a self corrected error than for an uncorrected error.[51]

Leslie emphasized the importance of proofreading--the teacher could collect several actual business letters and have the class analyze them for error content.[52]

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[49] Lamb, op. cit., p. 111.

[50] Ibid., p. 111.

[51] Leslie, Methods of Teaching Transcription, p. 94.

[52] Ibid., p. 95.

He suggested that the class can be divided into several groups, with each group receiving a letter to analyze, thus emphasizing the desirability of proofreading and the need for co-operatively trained office workers.[53]

If the students are given several extra minutes in the typing period of the transcription class, they are more apt to proofread their material.[54]

Devices for improving transcription are presented in Chapter 6.

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[53] Ibid., p. 95.

[54] Ibid., pp. 95-96.

CHAPTER VI

DEVICES FOR IMPROVING TRANSCRIPTION

Some of the devices for improving transcription which have proved successful are the use of a workbook, motivaticn, timesaving device, increasing dictation speed, direct dictation drill, and transcription speed drills. Each of these is treated in this chapter.

Use of A Workbook

According to Zoubek,[55] a workbook in transcription classes can be a valuable asset, especially for homework use. He further stated that important improvements could be made in the general mailability of student transcripts, in punctuation, and in spelling through the use of a workbook.

The workbook has helped to improve letter mechanics, corrections, synonym usuage, proofreading qualities, paragraphing, and word division.[56]

Motivation

Several devices have been used to motivate the students and at the same time establish better teacher-parent relationship. As an

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[55] Zoubek, Charles E., "Workbook Improves Letter Mailability," Business Teacher, November, 1958, p. 27.

[56] Ibid., pp. 27-28

example of one of these, Hallam[57] proposed an interesting technique. He would dictate the following letter to be transcribed, taken home, and shown to the parents, signed by one of them, and then returned to the teacher.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. _____.

This letter is a sample of the work your daughter (or son) is doing in shorthand and transcription. This letter was dictated to (name) at the rate of (speed) words a minute, and (name) was to transcribe it so that you could see how well she (or he) is doing.

I have indicated with red marks any items that keep this letter from being mailable. (Name) had only one chance to transcribe it, having been given only one letter and one envelope.

I hope that you have enjoyed seeing and reading some of the work by (name). So that I may know that you have seen this, please sign or initial it below; then (name) will bring it back to me. Feel free to visit our class any time.

Sincerely yours,

(Parent's signature)[58]

Daetz [59] stated that another excellent motivation device is to give each student the same letter for timed typing. As soon as the letter is mailable, the students take it to the teacher to have the time recorded. Each mailable letter is given points--ten points for three minutes; five points for four minutes; and three points for five.

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[57] Hallam, James A., "Tell Their Parents About Their Work," Business Teacher, December, 1959, p. 27.

[58] Ibid., pp. 27-28.

[59] Daetz, Marie, "Timed Typing Contest For Mailable Letters," Business Teacher, September, 1959, p. 27.

minutes. A bonus of five points is given to perfect letters with no erasures. The letters are planned so that second-year students have to type sixty words per minute, first-year students would type fifty words per minute, and beginners would type forty words per minute in order to finish the letters in three minutes.

Timesaving Device

Time is a very important factor in transcription as was pointed out in Chapter 4. According to Marie,[60] the "POSTEM" approach is an effective time saving device for the teacher and the student.

When using this device the teacher can stamp the word POSTEM in vertically arranged letters at the top of the letterheads. When the transcripts are corrected, each error is makred according to the symbols: P, punctuation; O, omission; S, substitution; T, typing error; E, erasure; M, misspelled words. The errors can then be counted, and the total of each can be placed next to the appropriate symbol at the top of the letterhead. This device not only saves time; it also stressed the importance of eliminating common errors.[61]

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[60]Marie, Edith, "Kill Two Birds, But Use One Stone," Business Teacher, January, 1959, p. 29.

[61]Ibid, p. 29.

Increasing Dictation Speed

Anastasia[62] reported that the teacher should dictate three new letters for transcription each day, one at 70, one at 60, and one at 50 words per minute (or any other speed range that suits the ability of the class). All students try to transcribe the 70 word dictation, but the student that is unable to handle the 70 words per minute dictation tries the 60 words per minute dictation and if they fail to handle that, they will try the 50 words per minute dictation. The 50 words per minute letter is worth 90; the 60 words per minute letter is worth 95; and the 70 words per minute letter is worth 100 on a 100 point scale. Under this system the student would be penalized one point for each error. The score are averaged for the grading period.

Direct Dictation Drill

Direct dictation drills are also used to improve transcription techniques. Lamb[63] suggested the teacher dictate practiced material to typists to be recorded directly on the typewriter. It is re-dictated at increasing rates of speed in the same class hour. This drill increases the transcribing rate of the students because it requires a co-ordination of typing and English skills. When the students type from dictation, they must follow the thought of the material in order to select correct spelling of similar-sounding words, and they must be able to punctuate the material as they type it.

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[62] Anastasia, Rose M., "3 Letters, 3 Speeds, 3 Classifications," Business Teacher, March, 1959, pp. 26-27.

[63] Lamb, op. cit., pp. 109-110.

Transcription Speed Drills

In the "call-the-throw" drill to improve transcription skills, the students are provided with mimeographed sheets of sentences in shorthand arranged so that each line is slightly longer than the preceding line. The teacher calls a time signal every 15 seconds. At this signal, the students returns the carriage of the typewriter. When the student can transcribe the first line within the time limit, he moves on to the next line. This technique has been successful in gradually increasing the student's rate of typing from shorthand copy.[64]

Weekly tests can provide comparisons between typing from printed copy and typing from shorthand notes. First the students copy a test from printed material and compute their rate of speed. Later, they type the same material from shorthand notes and compute their rate of speed. The objective is to achieve a transcription rate that is two-thirds of the copy rate.[65] For example, a student who types at 60 words per minute should transcribe at 40 words per minute.

The summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study are presented in Chapter 7.

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[64] Wanous, Samuel, and Whitmore, Trol, Effective Transcription Procedures, Monograph 57, Cincinnati, South-Western Publishing Co., 1942, p. 13.

[65] Ibid., p. 13.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was made to determine how transcription skills of high school commercial students could be improved. Answers to these were sought through a review of literature and through interviews with members of the commercial staff at Montana State College.

Summary

The review of literature and interviews with professional people revealed the following:

1. The four purposes of education as defined by the Educational Policies Commission have been applied to the field of business education.

2. The objectives of transcription were to produce mailable material with speed enough to meet the needs of businessmen.

3. There were two basic methods of introducing transcription. Leslie supported the three--step method while Lamb prefered the alternate method.

4. There are specific methods for division of time in transcription and most authorities are in agreement as to the way the time should be alloted. The authorities held 15 minutes should be spent in building shorthand speed, 15 minutes would be needed to preview and dictate business letters for transcription, 5 minutes should be spend on remedial work in English, and 10 minutes should be used to read back the transcripts from the previous day.

5. The problem of improving accuracy in transcription is primarily one of diagnosing errors in the component areas within transcription and attempting to eliminate the causes of the errors.

6. Use of a workbook, motivation, time saving devices, increasing dictation speed, direct dictation drills and transcription speed drills have proved to be successful devices for improving transcription skills.

Conclusions

As a result of the study, the following three conclusions were drawn:

1. Transcription should be offered in a double period; half devoted to shorthand and half devoted transcription.

2. Only students who have demonstrated at least average ability in English, typewriting, and shorthand should be considered eligible for advanced shorthand and transcription training.

3. Transcription techniques are best taught and established in a step-by-step procedure.

Recommendations

It is recommended that an investigation be made concerning the requiring of future business education teachers to take a course in methods of teaching business education in all teacher training institutions.

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