

FORKNER SHORTHAND IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, CANADA

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether Forkner Shorthand, offered as a one-year course of instruction at colleges and vocational centres in Alberta, Canada, resulted in students obtaining vocational shorthand skills. The study determined if high attrition rates and low student performance rates prevailed. Also, the study determined if Forkner Shorthand could be recommended as an alternative to symbol system shorthand courses.

Survey questionnaires were mailed to all colleges and vocational centres in the Province of Alberta, Canada offering Forkner Shorthand instruction as a one-year course. From the 8 colleges and vocational centres surveyed, 116 student questionnaires and 10 instructor questionnaires were received by return mail.

Most Forkner Shorthand classes were scheduled between 5 and 8 hours per week. Responses showed over 90% of the students felt they gained a vocational skill in shorthand and they would be able to use it in their jobs. All instructors surveyed indicated most students would be able to take dictation at a rate considered quick enough for vocational or office use within one year or less of instruction. Nearly 90% of the students felt the course was long enough to achieve their goals. The majority of students (59.48%) expected to be able to record dictation at more than 80 words a minute before graduating. A surprising 113 of 116 students would recommend Forkner Shorthand to others. No instructor experienced attrition rates of more than 20%.

Students were able to obtain a vocational skill within one year or less if they enroll in classroom instruction of Forkner Shorthand. Low attrition rates prevailed; high student performance rates existed, and both students and instructors were satisfied with achievements in the one-year Forkner Shorthand course. Students and instructors enthusiastically recommended Forkner Shorthand.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Shorthand has had a history of high attrition rates and low performance rates.

In a review of research studies pertaining to shorthand achievement, Ruth Anderson reported the following (Vanhuss, 1980, 6):

"Recent research studies continue to support the conclusions of previous investigations that students with only one year of shorthand do not, in most cases, utilize shorthand on the job. These studies also show that very few students are able to take dictation at 80 words per minute for 3 minutes with 95% accuracy at the completion of one year of instruction."

Yet, in light of the above statement, the results of shorthand systems which present evidence of being able to be written at 80 words per minute and transcribed accurately by the majority of students within one year of instruction are serious candidates for adoption (Lambrecht, 1976, 20).

In Alberta, Canada, most colleges and vocational centres offer one-year programs in shorthand instruction. Forkner Shorthand is a relatively new alphabetic shorthand system being used in some one-year programs. In colleges and vocational centres presently

offering a symbol shorthand system, Forkner Shorthand is being considered for adoption.

The impact of Forkner Shorthand on students and instructors was examined in this research project.

### Statement of the Problem

Presently, some colleges and vocational centres in Alberta, Canada are teaching Forkner Shorthand. The merits of Forkner Shorthand instruction as a one-year course are vague. The purpose of this study considered two audiences, the students and the instructors of Forkner Shorthand. The purpose of the study was to determine if students gained vocational competencies after completing a one-year course of Forkner shorthand; if high attrition rates and low performance rates prevailed; and if instructors of other shorthand systems should be encouraged to adopt Forkner Shorthand.

### Need for the Study

Most people interested in shorthand skills are aware of symbol shorthand systems such as Gregg or Pitman. Both systems have been closely associated with vocational use. Gregg or Pitman Shorthand systems have been taught for a number of years in one-year courses. The results in Alberta colleges and vocational centres have been

mixed. Many innovative teachers have switched to teaching Forkner Shorthand to solve the following problems:

1. Lack of time to obtain a vocational skill.
2. To stifle high attrition rates.
3. To lower failure rates.
4. To insure high student success rates.
5. To offer a marketable skill in one year or less.
6. To increase the confidence level in the use of shorthand in both personal and vocational settings.
7. To make shorthand instruction an enjoyable experience.

This study will examine the Forkner Shorthand system, and it is hoped the resulting conclusions and recommendations will be examined by educators, students, and others interested in shorthand.

#### Limitations of the Study

All students surveyed had completed at least 90% of the one-year Forkner Shorthand course. Only students who attended their respective shorthand classes on the day the student questionnaires were distributed were surveyed. All instructors teaching one-year Forkner Shorthand courses at vocational centres and colleges were surveyed.

The study was limited to colleges and vocational centres which offered a one-year Forkner Shorthand course in the Province of Alberta.

### Definition of Terms

Alphabetic system: a system of shorthand that utilizes predominantly letters of the alphabet. Some symbols are used for high frequency or difficult sounds. Other names given to alphabetic systems are ABC shorthand system and abbreviated longhand system (ALS).

Gregg and Pitman systems: these are symbol shorthand systems.

Office type dictation: is the dictation at specified rates per minute given by the instructor using materials such as letters and memoranda. Office type dictation is an alternative to listening to tapes or cassettes for speed building purposes.

Stenoscript: is an alphabetic system. It was originally published in 1950 and it is a system based on the letters of the alphabet, common punctuation symbols, and phonetic sounds.

Symbol system: a system of shorthand that is constructed by the use of straight lines, ovals, or circles written independently of each other or as combinations.

Vocational objectives: the ability to record dictation of material at a minimum rate of 80 wpm for at least three minutes and to transcribe this material with at least 95% accuracy describes vocational proficiency, competency, or skill.

### Summary

Forkner Shorthand is taught as a one-year course at eight colleges and vocational centres in Alberta, Canada. The results of shorthand systems which present evidence of being able to be written at 80 words per minutes and transcribed accurately by the majority of students within one year of instruction should be serious candidates for adoption. Therefore, the purpose of this study of Forkner Shorthand is to determine whether students gain vocational objectives after completing a one-year course of Forkner Shorthand and if instructors of other shorthand systems should be encouraged to adopt Forkner Shorthand.

### Organization of the Paper

Chapter I has defined the problem of the paper. In Chapter II a review of literature pertaining to shorthand covering several years was made. The procedures and methods of implementing the questionnaires were identified in Chapter III. Chapter IV presented, analyzed, and interpreted the responses to the questionnaires. Chapter V contained a number of recommendations and conclusions of the researcher.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter includes a review of literature considered relevant to Forkner Shorthand.

The review of literature consisted of the following areas: Shorthand systems, Origin of Forkner Shorthand, Advantages of Alphabetic Systems, Achievements in Alphabetic Shorthand Systems, and Summary.

#### Shorthand Systems

Shorthand is a very pragmatic secretarial skill. There are many different shorthand systems. Initially, there are two broad categories of shorthand skill development:

- a) Symbol System
- b) Alphabetic System (Abbreviated Longhand System--ALS)

Pitman and Gregg Shorthand are the best known symbol shorthand systems.

The outstanding feature of Isaac Pitman's invention was the phonetic principle--writing by sound; while the outstanding feature

of the Gregg Shorthand system is its adaptation to the natural movement of the hand. (VanHuss, 1980, 25)

Forkner and Stenoscrypt are examples of Abbreviated Longhand Systems (ALS) or Alphabetic Shorthand. Abbreviated Longhand Systems are generally characterized by the use of simplified longhand letters to represent sounds, words, and phrases. Although longhand letters are used, symbols are also used for word beginnings, high-frequency words, past tenses, and capitalizations. The systems are based on phonetics, but most involve writing dominant sounds, usually consonants and often omitting vowels. (Crank, 1982, 18)

The Alphabetic System or Abbreviated Longhand System to be investigated in this chapter gravitates around Forkner Shorthand.

#### Origin of Forkner Shorthand

Dr. Hamden Forkner, Sr., who was born in Montana in 1897, was the inventor of the Forkner system. Dr. Forkner learned Pitman Shorthand in high school and eventually became skilled in Gregg Shorthand. After researching teaching methods and shorthand systems, Dr. Forkner developed his own shorthand system which is a combination of alphabet letters with symbols. The symbols are used for speech sounds that occur frequently. (Zelter, 1980, 20)

Forkner Shorthand was developed in the 1940's and made its debut, designed as a one-year program, in 1952. (Crank, 1982, 20) It has been heralded that speeds of from 80 to 100 words a minute have been achieved in approximately 90 forty-five minute periods, or in one semester of evening classes that meet four hours a week. (Lamb, 1961, 3)

Today, there are an increasing number of educational institutions testing Forkner Shorthand.

#### Advantages of Alphabetic Systems

The authors and publishers of Abbreviated Longhand systems have stated many advantages of the systems. The advantages they have cited include some of the following statements: (Crank, 1982, 20)

1. The familiarity of the longhand alphabet reduces learning difficulty and learning time.
2. Reading and transcription of notes is apt to be more accurate because the notes are derivatives of already familiar longhand.
3. Above-average students can usually write at double their longhand speed in from 20 to 30 hours of instruction and at triple their longhand speed after the first semester of study.
4. No special training is required to teach the systems because teachers can learn the system as they teach them.
5. The simplicity of alphabetic systems makes self-teaching possible.

6. Because these systems are easy to learn, they can be taught to students of all ability levels.
7. The systems are ideal for teaching in adult education classes where students cannot meet daily and must achieve a skill within a relatively short time.

Further claims made by Abbreviated Longhand system representatives to promote their shorthand system as to learning time, speeds attained, and transcription ease are: (VanHuss, 1980, 23)

1. The system for abbreviating longhand is logical, practical, familiar, easy to use, and easy to learn.
2. The entire theory can be mastered in a fraction of the time it takes to learn a symbol shorthand system.
3. Employable dictation speeds are readily achieved in one year or less because of the simplicity of some of these systems.
4. The system is easily transcribed because few special symbols are used.

The preceding statements have been questioned over the years. Independent research studies have been made to substantiate the preceding claims as well as to make comparisons among other shorthand systems.

#### Achievements in Alphabetic Shorthand Systems

In Arizona, shorthand teacher Rhonda R. Bank at Sabino High School in Tucson, felt that a significant variance between reading speeds of her two classes--one Gregg class and one Forkner class--was evident. She observed that the less capable students in Forkner

classes were able to read their shorthand outlines quickly and confidently from the very start, whereas the Gregg students appeared slower and more insecure.

A second difference existed in dictation rates. After the same material was dictated to Gregg writers and Forkner writers, 100 percent of the Forkner students successfully transcribed one-minute dictation material with 95 percent accuracy, whereas only 30 percent of the Gregg students experienced such success (Bank, 1977).

At a seminar entitled ABC SHORTHAND--Alternative Seminar held at the University of Mississippi in June 1975, Dr. Forkner stated that with a second semester of speed development the average student could expect to be in the 80 to 100 words a minute range (Harwood, 1977, 372).

Vocational proficiency within one year is the goal of most shorthand classes. Some researchers feel it is possible to develop a vocational proficiency with an alphabetic system in far less time than is required by a symbol system (Anderson, 1974, 190).

Anderson, an instructor of both the symbol and alphabetic systems, suggests that there are obvious advantages to the alphabetic system for vocational objectives. They are:

1. The use of the alphabet rather than symbols reduces the time commitment and the learning load.
2. The ease of learning would probably reduce the drop-out rate.

3. The alphabet system offers reduction in time that may be used for other course offerings.

Judith J. Lambrecht has written much in the area of shorthand. In one of her studies involving achievement of Century 21, Forkner, and Gregg Shorthand students, after one and two years, she notes that first-year dictation achievement was highest for Forkner Shorthand students (Lambrecht, 1978, 12).

Specific findings of Lambrecht's studies relating to middle of first-year shorthand dictation tests at 50, 60, and 70 words per minute were:

"Significant differences tested at all dictation speeds with Century 21 Shorthand having the highest percent of English errors (lowest achievement) and no difference in testings between Gregg and Forkner Shorthand."

Lambrecht's end of first-year achievement data identified Forkner students as having the fastest dictation rates at each dictation speed.

Lambrecht's conclusions and recommendations from the above data included the following:

1. Forkner Shorthand students achieved significantly higher percentage of accuracy and dictation rate scores consistently during the first year of instruction. It is therefore recommended that for students who are able to devote one year or less to shorthand instruction, Forkner Shorthand should be offered because it is likely to result in higher achievement for the majority of students in this amount of time than will Gregg shorthand.

2. The findings of this study have confirmed those of several earlier studies (Smith, 1966; Hadfield, 1975; Cross, 1976; and Whitman, 1977), that Forkner Shorthand students had higher achievement results at the end of one year of instruction compared with Gregg Shorthand students.

Hadfield's 1975 comparison of the learning achievement in Gregg Diamond Jubilee Symbol Shorthand and selected Abbreviated Longhand systems identified that (Hadfield, 1978, 355):

1. Students taking Forkner Shorthand developed higher skills than Gregg (DJ) Shorthand.
2. Results showed that Forkner Shorthand is better suited for students of any ability level, that is, below average, average, and above average than is Gregg Shorthand.
3. Results indicated that for a one-year course the Forkner Shorthand system is superior to the Gregg Shorthand system.

E. R. Smith (1966), comparing the learning difficulty of Forkner Alphabet Shorthand and Gregg Shorthand summarized the following (Smith, 1967, 72):

1. The Forkner group achievement was higher than the Gregg group at each speed level, in each grade point average level and in each set of dictation.
2. The average achiever in the Forkner group achieved the same or higher than the Gregg above average achievers at each speed level in each set except for the following:
  - speeds of 80, 90, 100 words per minute.
3. The above average achievers in Forkner correctly transcribed 89 percent and less of the standard words at the speed of eighty and higher whereas the Gregg above average achievers transcribed 69 percent and less at the speed of eighty and higher.

Patricia Whitman studied the achievement in shorthand of students--Century 21, Forkner, Gregg, and Landmark--at the end of one year of instruction. Her conclusions were (Whitman, 1977):

1. Forkner appears to be the better alternative than the other three systems based on the results of the analysis of the data.
2. There is sufficient evidence to support the statement that for the students in this study, the Forkner system allowed low-ability students to perform at a higher level than did the other three systems.

The study by G. A. Oross in 1975 -1976 at selected Florida High Schools suggests that at each dictation speed, Forkner students outperformed students in Gregg and Century 21 (Oross, 1976).

The preceding paragraphs give ample evidence that Forkner Shorthand is obviously an alternative to learning shorthand skill.

However, studies as to whether achievement in Forkner succinctly demonstrates vocational skill and competencies are general in their conclusions. Some studies produced findings that are vague as to vocational competencies.

#### Vocational Skill

"Many people are using shorthand. Today it is estimated that over ten million people use shorthand and thousands more are learning the the basics every year," so says an article in the October 1979 edition of Today's Secretary.

However, the trend of national shorthand enrollments shows that fewer students are taking beginning shorthand in the high school and that an even smaller proportion of these students are continuing with the second year of high school instruction. During the 1960-61 school year there were approximately 394,000 students in the first-year course and 154,000 in the second-year course (Tonne & Nanassy, 1970, 20). In 1970-71, first-year enrollments were 514,15 and second-year enrollments were 128,114 (Gertler and Barker, 1973, 16). Projections for total shorthand enrollment in 1980 are less than the total in 1960 (Nanassy, Malsbary, & Tonne, 1977, 37), 533,200 students for both year combined (Lambrecht, 1978, 12). Therefore, vocational skills must be achieved within one year.

In one of Judith Lambrecht's studies (Lambrecht, 1979, 230) relating to the use of alternative shorthand systems, she concluded that one-year Forkner students were more likely to agree that they currently possessed a useable skill. If they did not feel they had the shorthand skill currently, Forkner students felt they would be able to attain a useable skill at graduation.

Hadfield in his 1975 study (Hadfield, 1976, 47) concluded that the ability to take dictation at 80 words per minute followed by transcribing notes with 95 percent accuracy is considered the necessary requirement for initial employment. Hadfield went on to state that none of the three shorthand systems (Gregg; Forkner; or

Stenocript) can provide most students with the ability set forth above in one year of classroom instruction.

Oross, in her 1975 - 1976 study of student performance in Gregg, Forkner, and Century 21 Shorthand in selected Florida High Schools concluded that only 26 percent of the Forkner students passed the 80 words a minute test at the end of the year. Even though this was less than the majority of the students taking the one-year course, the results for the Forkner group were much better than the class of Century 21 students.

Moreover, in Timpany's study (1974) only one Gregg student (11.11%) passed at 80 words per minute while eighteen (54.54%) Forkner students passed. At a lower rate of 60 words per minute 96.97% of the Forkner students passed while only 66.77% of the Gregg students passed (Timpany, 1974).

Timpany's study showed that the majority of Forkner students (54.54%) succeeded at passing the 80 words a minute rate. Timpany's study was done on the comparison of speed and transcription achievement between Gregg and Forkner Shorthand students at a post-secondary level whereas the study done by Oross was performed at the high school level.

If the vocational competency is to be expressed in terms of achievement below 90 words a minute, perhaps an alphabetic system is best (Pullis, 1976, 208).

Achievement for vocational or job use seem to be very elastic. Standards vary from business to business. High writing speeds in shorthand are not firmly established and thus are difficult to define.

In 1975, schools and community colleges in Ontario, Canada were surveyed concerning the results of teaching Forkner Shorthand. Besides finding that there were increased enrollments in Forkner classes, the researcher, K. Lucas, discovered high writing speeds in performance by students. She identified the high writing speeds as "averaging 60 to 80 words per minute in one year" (Lucas, 1979, 24).

W. Ritchey, in a comparative study of the job entry skill development in two semesters of ABC shorthand and two semesters of symbol shorthand in the high school reported that Job Entry I was 60 words a minute achievement for dictation of five minutes and Job Entry II was 80 words per minute for dictation of three minutes (Ritchey, 1974, 44).

In Canada, federally administered shorthand tests are given to clients on request. These tests are based upon three minute dictations at rates of 80 words per minute. Upon successful achievement of the shorthand test, the client is given the opportunity to be interviewed for government stenography positions. The prospective employee for Federal Government stenography positions must achieve at least 80 words a minute on a Federal Government

Shorthand test to qualify for employment with a Government agency.

The preceding paragraphs included a number of variables affecting vocational standards of shorthand. In many cases, the research findings neglected to define the minimum vocational objectives required of students and summarized their findings in general terms such as the following:

"The main advantage of offering the Forkner program was that students could attain employable rates of speed in a course within a short period of time."  
(Wenger, 1977)

Such comments are quite common. Another conclusion read:

"The achievement of the average and above average Forkner students indicate that the Forkner system can be mastered by more students and hence can provide more students with a marketable shorthand skill."  
(Schmidt, 1976)

### Summary

Forkner Shorthand was taught for the first time as a one-year course in 1952. Many advantages of Forkner Shorthand to students and instructors are noted by various researchers. Research findings of student performances and achievements in symbol and alphabetic shorthand systems were reviewed in this chapter. Researchers found that Alphabetic Longhand Systems were more profitable to the student than Symbol Systems when the shorthand course was offered over a short period of time such as one year. Throughout the review of

literature, Forkner Shorthand tended to demonstrate positive results. Some of the research findings did not define what vocational objectives students of shorthand had to perform to demonstrate their competencies.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES

A student questionnaire and an instructor questionnaire were designed to collect relevant data. The student questionnaire (see Appendix A) was categorized into four areas of concern. The four areas of concern were: background of student, methods of instruction, student evaluation of Forkner Shorthand, and other data.

The student questionnaire was designed so students filling out the responses could either answer Yes, No, or N/A (not applicable).

The instructor questionnaire was formatted to contain a variety of questions. Some questions required Yes, No, or N/A (not applicable) responses whereas other questions required numeric answers, still others required narrative responses (see Appendix C).

#### Sources of Data

The data of this study was obtained from students and instructors from the following colleges and vocational centres in Alberta, Canada: Alberta College, Alberta Vocational Centre--Calgary, Alberta Vocational Centre--Edmonton, Grant MacEwan Community College, Medicine Hat College, Mount Royal College, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, and Red Deer College. The students were enrolled in one-year Forkner Shorthand courses.

All instructors were currently teaching Forkner Shorthand. The Canadian publisher of Forkner instructional materials, Gage Publishing Company Limited, supplied the researcher with a list of all colleges and vocational centres utilizing and incorporating its materials in their courses of Forkner Shorthand programs.

Survey Instruments and Administration  
of the Survey Instruments

The survey instruments were developed by the researcher during the Summer of 1982, and revisions to the instruments were made during the Fall of 1982 and Winter of 1983. Assistance and encouragement were received from colleagues enrolled in the Master of Science in Business Education program at Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. Additional assistance was received from Dr. D. Hertz, Dr. F. Frost, and other faculty members of the Business Education and Office Systems Department at Montana State University. The Alberta post-secondary business representative of Gage Publishing Company Limited presented the researcher information of her concerns regarding Forkner Shorthand. Mr. R. Nau of Medicine Hat College also gave concrete suggestions to the researcher. The information supplied enabled better structure of the questionnaires. The rough draft questionnaires were critically read by fellow students at Montana State University, Dr. Frost, and fellow colleagues at Medicine Hat College. The benefits received from the objective

scrutiny of the rough draft questionnaires greatly improved the quality of the instruments.

The questionnaires and covering letter (Appendix C) were mailed to the various colleges and vocational centres on March 31, 1983.

The student questionnaires were distributed to the students involved in the study by their respective shorthand instructor. The instructor questionnaire was completed by the shorthand instructor. Each questionnaire was completed during a regularly scheduled shorthand class.

There was no need for a follow-up due to the excellent response of the initial distribution.

The researcher received 116 completed student questionnaires from students attending classes on the day the questionnaires were distributed for student responses, and 10 completed instructor questionnaires from 7 of 8 institutions surveyed. The following chapter will present further information on the results of the data collected.

#### Analysis of the Data

Each question on the student questionnaire was totaled as to the specific YES, NO, N/A (not applicable), and N/R (no response). The numbers were totaled and then converted to percentages. Appendix B summarizes the Yes, No, N/A, and N/R responses of the student questionnaire. The information gained from each question was

presented in table form (see chapter IV) followed by an appropriate narrative explanation. Additional student comments were noted in an itemized fashion (see Chapter IV).

Results of the instructor questionnaire were reported in a narrative format. Specific instructor responses were then itemized (see Chapter IV).

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA RECEIVED FROM 1983 FORKNER SHORTHAND STUDENTS AND FORKNER SHORTHAND INSTRUCTORS OF COLLEGES AND VOCATIONAL CENTRES IN THE PROVINCE OF ALBERTA, CANADA

Questionnaires were sent to all colleges and vocational centres in Alberta in which Forkner Shorthand was taught (see sample letter, Appendix D). The institutions receiving the questionnaires were:

Alberta College  
Alberta Vocational Centre--CALGARY  
Alberta Vocational Centre--EDMONTON  
Grant MacEwan Community College  
Medicine Hat College  
Mount Royal College  
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology  
Red Deer College

All instructor questionnaires from the above institutions were returned. Seven of the eight institutions returned student questionnaires.

The findings from the questionnaires will aid institutions considering teaching Forkner Shorthand a better basis for making their decision. The findings bear out the strength and weaknesses of offering Forkner Shorthand as an alternative shorthand system. The findings assisted in determining the feasibility of using Forkner

Shorthand as a vocational skill within one year or less. The findings assisted the researcher in obtaining corroborative evidence to substantiate the authenticity of his review of literature and also gave the researcher pertinent information on the reactions of students and colleagues to Forkner Shorthand.

### Student Questionnaire

The student questionnaire was broken down into four parts:

- a. background
- b. methods of instruction
- c. evaluation of system
- d. other data

The student questionnaire contained twenty-nine questions. Question 16 was broken down into 4 possibilities. Question 20 had several choices. Each question on the student questionnaire is presented and analyzed in this Chapter. A summary of the responses is presented as Appendix B.

There were a total of 116 student questionnaires and 10 instructor questionnaires returned to the researcher.

The data collected from questions asked of students was presented in table form, and other data was presented in narrative form. Each table is presented with an explanation following. The data, when presented as percentages in the tables of this Chapter, are rounded off to the nearest one-tenth of one percent. The data collected from the eleven questions asked of instructors is presented in narrative style.

TABLE 1  
STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A PREVIOUS SHORTHAND COURSE

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	26	22.41
N O	88	75.86
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	2	1.73
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 1 relates to question 1 of the questionnaire which read: "Did you take a previous course in shorthand (Pitman, Gregg, etc.) before enrolling in this post-secondary Forkner Shorthand course?"

Only 26 of 116 respondents (22.41%) answered "Yes" to the question. Three quarters of the respondents (75.86%) answered "No."

Table 1 clearly shows that the majority of students were taking a shorthand course for the first time.

TABLE 2  
STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A PREVIOUS ONE-YEAR SHORTHAND COURSE

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	13	11.20
N O	20	17.24
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	79	68.10
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>4</u>	<u>3.45</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 2, above, shows the results to question 2: "Was the previous course a one-year course?" Only 13 students (11.20%) answered "Yes."

Table 1 showed that 26 students (22.41%) took a previous course in shorthand (Pitman, Gregg, etc.) before enrolling in this post-secondary Forkner Shorthand course. The "Yes" responses in table 2 are exactly 50% of the "Yes" responses in table 1. Therefore, approximately 11% of the 116 students who responded to question 2 of the questionnaire had taken a previous shorthand course of more than one year in length.

TABLE 3  
PREVIOUS SHORTHAND COURSE A SYMBOL SYSTEM

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	13	11.20
N O	18	15.51
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	80	68.98
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>5</u>	<u>4.31</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 3 of the student questionnaire read: "Was the previous course a symbol system such as Gregg or Pitman Shorthand?" Table 3 shows the results to question 3. Thirteen students (11.20%) answered "Yes." Table 2 and table 3 "Yes" responses are exactly the same. Therefore, 11.20% of all students were previously enrolled in a one-year symbol system shorthand course such as Gregg or Pitman shorthand. Close to 90% of the students were never enrolled in a previous one-year symbol system shorthand course.

TABLE 4  
FULL-TIME STUDENTS

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	109	93.97
N O	6	5.17
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 4 of the student questionnaire asked: "Are you a full-time student?" Table 4 shows 93.97% of students enrolled in Forkner Shorthand were full-time students. Only 6 of the 116 students (5.17%) were not full-time students.

TABLE 5  
STUDENTS FLUENT IN A SECOND LANGUAGE

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	19	16.38
N O	94	81.03
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	2	1.73
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.86</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 5 shows 19 students (16.38%) answered "Yes" to question 5 which read: "Are you fluent in a second language?" The majority of students (81.03%) responded with a definite "No."

TABLE 6

FORKNER SHORTHAND PROGRAMS BASED UPON FIVE TO EIGHT HOURS PER WEEK

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	97	83.62
N O	17	14.66
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	0	0.00
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>2</u>	<u>1.72</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 6 of the student questionnaire read: "Did you spend at least 5 hours in class but no more than 8 per week?" Most Forkner Shorthand programs were based upon five to eight hours per week as shown in table 6. Ninety-seven students (83.62%) answered "yes" to question 6. Only seventeen students (14.66%) answered "no."

TABLE 7  
STUDENT APPRECIATION FOR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS  
USED FOR FORKNER SHORTHAND CLASSES

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	107	92.24
N O	8	6.90
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

The majority of students (92.24%) liked the instructional materials used for classes as identified in table 7. Only 8 students (6.90%) answered "no" to question 7 which asked: "Did you like the instructional materials used for the class?"

TABLE 8  
LEARNING FORKNER SHORTHAND FOR VOCATIONAL USE  
WITHOUT ATTENDING CLASSES

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	36	31.03
N O	71	61.21
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	8	6.90
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 8 of the student questionnaire asked: "Do you think you could have learned Forkner Shorthand well enough to obtain a vocational skill without attending classes within a one-year period?"

Table 8, above, summarizes the students' responses. Less than one-third of the students (31.03%) responded "Yes" to question 8. The majority of students (61.21%) responded "No" to question 8.

The majority of students seemed to feel that classroom instruction was necessary if they were to use Forkner Shorthand as a vocational skill within one year or less.

TABLE 9  
RESPONSES OF STUDENTS TO INSTRUCTION RECEIVED

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	98	84.48
N O	8	6.90
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 9 shows that 98 students (84.48%) were satisfied with the instruction received. Only 8 students (6.90%) answered "No" to question 9 of the student questionnaire which read: "Are you satisfied with the instruction received?"

TABLE 10  
 FORKNER SHORTHAND USED FOR NOTE TAKING

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	78	67.24
N O	33	28.45
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	5	4.31
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 10 of the student questionnaire asked: "Did you use Forkner Shorthand for note taking while attending other classes?"

Table 10, above, shows that more than two-thirds of the students (67.24%) used Forkner Shorthand for note taking. Table 10 shows that 28.45% of the students responded "no" to question 10.

TABLE 11  
BENEFITS FROM OFFICE STYLE DICTATION BY INSTRUCTOR

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	90	77.58
N O	19	16.38
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	6	5.18
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.86</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 11 shows the results to question 11 of the student questionnaire which read: "Did you benefit more from office type dictation from your instructor than from listening to tapes for speed building?"

Over three-quarters of the students (77.58%) responded "Yes." Nineteen students (16.38%) responded "No."

Therefore, the majority of students felt they benefited from active involvement of the instructor in the speed building segment of the Forkner Shorthand program.

TABLE 12  
 MASTERY OF FORKNER SHORTHAND FOR VOCATIONAL USE

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	107	92.24
N O	4	3.45
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	4	3.45
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.86</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 12 identifies that 107 students (92.24%) answered "Yes" to question 12 of the student questionnaire which asked: "Do you feel you have gained a vocational skill in shorthand and will be able to use it in your job?"

Only 4 students (3.45%) answered "No" to question 12 of the student questionnaire.

However, table 10 showed that 33 of the students (28.45%) did not use shorthand for notetaking in other classes whereas table 12, above, shows that only 4 of the students (3.45%) feel they have not gained a vocational skill and they will not be able to use shorthand in their careers.

TABLE 13  
 FORKNER SHORTHAND AS A REQUIRED COURSE FOR GRADUATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	86	74.13
N O	23	19.83
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	3	2.59
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>4</u>	<u>3.45</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 13 of the student questionnaire read: "Does the program you are enrolled in require shorthand to graduate?" Table 13, above, shows that nearly three-quarters of the students (74.13%) responded "Yes."

Table 4 identified 109 students (93.97%) were full-time students. The "No" response results of table 12, above, (19.83%) reflect some full-time students who do not require Forkner Shorthand to graduate.

TABLE 14  
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AS A RESULT OF LEARNING FORKNER SHORTHAND

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	107	92.24
N O	7	6.04
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.86</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 14 shows the results to question 14 of the student questionnaire which read: "Did you take Forkner Shorthand to enhance your career opportunities?" The "Yes" responses numbered 107 (92.24%) students.

Table 12 and table 14 both have the same results for "Yes" responses (92.24%). Therefore, over ninety percent of the students who enroll in Forkner Shorthand feel that they have gained a vocational skill and they will have better career opportunities as a result of taking the one-year course of Forkner Shorthand.

TABLE 15  
CANADA MANPOWER SHORTHAND TESTS

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	44	37.93
N O	45	38.79
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	20	17.24
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>7</u>	<u>6.04</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 15 of the student questionnaire asked: "Are you going to take one of the shorthand tests administered by Canada Manpower?"

Table 15 shows that nearly an equal number of students answered "Yes" and "No" to question 15. Forty-four students (37.93%) answered "Yes" while 45 students (38.79%) answered "No."

The minority of students, 17.24% considered the question not applicable.

TABLE 16  
STUDENTS EXPECTING TO RECORD DICTATION AT  
60 WORDS PER MINUTE BEFORE GRADUATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	32	27.59
N O	4	3.45
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	2	1.72
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>78</u>	<u>67.24</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

The majority of students (67.24%) did not answer whether they expected to be able to take dictation at the rate of 60 words per minute before graduation. However, 32 students (27.59%) answered "Yes." Only 4 students (3.45%) answered they did not expect to be able to take dictation at the rate of 60 words per minute before they graduated.

TABLE 17  
STUDENTS EXPECTING TO RECORD DICTATION AT  
70 WORDS PER MINUTE BEFORE GRADUATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	32	27.59
N O	4	3.45
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	2	1.72
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>78</u>	<u>67.24</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

It is only coincidental that the results of table 16 and table 17 are exactly the same. The majority of students (67.24%) did not answer whether they expected to be able to take dictation at the rate of 70 words per minute. However, 32 students (27.59%) answered "Yes." Only 4 students (3.45%) answered they did not expect to be able to take dictation at the rate of 70 words per minute before they graduated.

Again, table 16 and table 17 results are exactly the same and the researcher reexamined the collected data to insure the accuracy of both tables.

TABLE 18  
STUDENTS EXPECTING TO RECORD DICTATION AT  
80 WORDS PER MINUTE BEFORE GRADUATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	46	39.66
N O	6	5.17
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	2	1.72
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>62</u>	<u>53.45</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

The majority of students (53.45%) did not answer whether they expected to be able to take dictation at the rate of 80 words a minute as outlined in question 16 of the student questionnaire. However, only 6 students (5.17%) answered "No" as to whether they expected to be able to take dictation at 80 words a minute before they graduated. Table 16 and table 17, respectively, showed that 4 students (3.45%) responded that they would not be able to take dictation at either 60 or 70 words a minute. The total "No" result of table 18 is 2 students higher than the total "No" result of table 16 or table 17.

TABLE 19  
STUDENTS EXPECTING TO RECORD DICTATION AT  
MORE THAN 80 WORDS PER MINUTE BEFORE GRADUATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	69	59.48
N O	13	11.21
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	9	7.76
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>25</u>	<u>21.55</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Table 19 shows clearly the majority of students (59.48%) expected to take dictation at rates higher than 80 words per minute.

Table 19 shows 13 students (11.21%) expected not to be able to take dictation at rates higher than 80 words a minute.

Approximately 20% of the 116 students did not respond to whether they would be able to take dictation at rates higher than 80 words per minute.

Question 16 on the student questionnaire read: "Before you graduate do you expect to be able to take dictation at the rate of:

60 words per minute (Table 16)

70 words per minute (Table 17)

80 words per minute (Table 18)

More than 80 words per minute" (Table 19)

Because of the structure and importance of question 16 to the researcher, Table 20 is presented:

TABLE 20  
SUMMARY OF DICTATION RATES STUDENTS  
EXPECTED TO PERFORM BEFORE GRADUATION

PERCENTAGE OF 116 STUDENT RESPONSES

<u>TYPE OF RESPONSE</u>	<u>60 Words per Minute</u>	<u>70 Words per Minute</u>	<u>80 Words per Minute</u>	<u>More than 80 Words per Minute</u>
YES	27.59	27.59	39.66	59.48
NO	3.45	3.45	5.17	11.21
N/A (Not Applicable)	1.72	1.72	1.72	7.76
N/R (No response)	<u>67.24</u>	<u>67.24</u>	<u>53.45</u>	<u>21.55</u>
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

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Table 20 shows the majority of students (59.48%) answered "Yes," expecting to take dictation at the rate of more than 80 words per minute.

A little over 10% of the students (11.21%) responded to the "No" choice of being able to take dictation at the rate of more than 80 words per minute. The "No" responses to taking dictation at the rate of 60-, 70-, and 80-words per minute are significantly lower than at the rate of more than 80 words per minute as table 20 reports. However, the majority of students did not respond to categories 60-, 70- and 80-words per minute (67.24%, 67.24%, 53.45%). The majority of students (59.48%) responded to the "more than 80 words per minute" category. Only 21.55% of the students did not respond to this category as compared to much higher "no responses" in the 60-, 70-, 80-words per minute categories.

TABLE 21  
COURSE LENGTH

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	101	87.07
N O	13	11.21
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	0	0.00
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>2</u>	<u>1.72</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 17 of the student questionnaire asked: "In your opinion, is the course long enough to achieve your goals?"

Table 21 shows that 101 students (87.07%) responded "Yes" and 13 students (11.21%) answered "No."

Question 16 asked the question: "Before you graduate, do you expect to be able to take dictation at the rate of: 60 words per minute, 70 words per minute, 80 words per minute, or more than 80 words per minute." Table 20 showed (11.21%) answered "No" to the "more than 80 words per minute" category. The total "No" responses of Table 20 (11.21%) is exactly the same percentage as the total "No" responses of Table 21 above (11.21%).

Therefore, one of the objectives for students surveyed was to achieve a dictation rate of more than 80 words per minute in Forkner

Shorthand within one year or less. The course length was long enough for nearly 90% of the 116 students surveyed to meet their individual objectives.

Table 9 showed the responses of students to their satisfaction with the instruction received. There is a correlation between satisfaction of instruction and course length as the "Yes" responses in table 9 amounted to 98 students (84.48%) and the "Yes" responses in table 21 amount to 101 students (87.07%).

Question 12 of the student questionnaire asked: "Do you feel you have gained a vocational skill in shorthand and will be able to use it in your job?" Table 12 reports that 107 students (92.24%) answered question 12 with "yes." Table 21 reports there were 101 responses (87.07%).

Therefore, the students felt that length of the course was long enough to achieve a vocational skill.

Question 14 of the student questionnaire asked "Did you take Forkner Shorthand to enhance your career opportunities?" Table 14 shows 107 students (92.24%) answered "yes."

Therefore, the data indicated that the length of the course was long enough to be able to enhance career opportunities.

Questions 18 of the student questionnaire asked: "On the average, do you spend less than 1/2 hour per day outside of class time doing shorthand?" Question 19 read: "On the average, did you

spend more than one-half hour but no more than an hour a day outside class time doing shorthand?" Question 20 asked: "On the average, did you spend more than one hour per day outside of class time doing shorthand?"

Questions 18, 19, and 20 were constructed by the researcher to determine how much time was spent by students on actual learning and skill development of Forkner Shorthand through individual study.

Table 22 follows with a summary of the results to these questions.

TABLE 22  
 SUMMARY OF TIME SPENT BY STUDENTS  
 OUTSIDE OF CLASSES ON FORKNER SHORTHAND

PERCENTAGE OF 116 STUDENT RESPONSES

<u>TYPE OF RESPONSE</u>	<u>Less than 1/2 hour</u>	<u>Between 1/2 and one hour</u>	<u>More than one hour</u>
YES	52.59	33.62	20.69
NO	47.41	65.52	78.45
N/A (Not Applicable)	0.00	0.00	0.00
N/R (No response)	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.86</u>	<u>0.86</u>
	100.00	100.00%	100.00%

According to the data in table 22, approximately 50% of the students spent less than 1/2 hour outside class each day learning Forkner Shorthand. Of the remaining 50% of the students, approximately 30% of the students spent between 1/2 and one hour and 20% spent more than one hour outside class each day learning Forkner Shorthand.

TABLE 23  
STUDENTS INTERESTED IN A SECOND YEAR COURSE

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	45	38.80
N O	68	58.62
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	2	1.72
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.86</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 21 of the student questionnaire asked: "If the opportunity arose, would you take a second year course in Forkner Shorthand?"

Table 23 identifies the majority of students (58.62%) answered "No." This corresponds with the results shown on table 21 which showed the results to the question: "In your opinion, is the course long enough to achieve your goals?" Over 100 students (87.07%) answered "yes."

Therefore, the majority of responses indicated students would not be interested in a second year course.

TABLE 24  
 TIME SPENT LEARNING THE THEORY OF FORKNER SHORTHAND

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	27	23.28
N O	88	75.86
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

"Should more time be spent on learning the theory of Forkner Shorthand?" was question 22 on the student questionnaire.

Table 24 reports that less than one-quarter of the students (23.28%) responded "Yes." The majority of students (75.86%) responded "No." Therefore, the students felt that enough time was spent learning the theory portion of Forkner Shorthand.

TABLE 25  
USEFULNESS OF FORKNER SHORTHAND ABBREVIATED WORDS

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	112	96.55
N O	3	2.59
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

An astounding 112 students (96.55%) responded "Yes" to question 23 of the student questionnaire which read: "Did you find the majority of abbreviated words useful (invoice, business, and the like)?"

This correlates to the results of table 7. One hundred seven students (92.24%) appreciated the instructional materials used for Forkner Shorthand classes.

TABLE 26  
DIFFICULTY OF PHRASING WHILE RECORDING DICTATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	37	31.90
N O	79	68.10
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	0	0.00
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 24 of the student questionnaire asked: "Did you find phrasing to be difficult while taking dictation?" Table 26, above, shows that more than two-thirds of the students (68.10%) found no difficulty phrasing while taking dictation.

Therefore, the majority of students felt that it was easy to phrase Forkner Shorthand while recording notes.

TABLE 27  
TIME SPENT ON FORKNER SHORTHAND DICTATION

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	78	67.24
N O	37	31.90
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 25 of the student questionnaire asked: "In your opinion, should more time be spent on taking dictation?" Table 27, above, shows the majority of students (67.24%) responded "Yes."

Table 27 shows 37 students (31.90%) answered "No." Table 10 reported the data to the question: "Did you use Forkner Shorthand for note-taking while attending other classes?" Table 10 and Table 27 show similar results.

Table 24 showed the majority of students (75.86%) did not want to spend more time on Forkner Shorthand theory, but they felt more time should be spent on dictation.

TABLE 28  
RECOMMENDING FORKNER SHORTHAND TO OTHERS

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	113	97.41
N O	3	2.59
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	0	0.00
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>0</u>	<u>0.00</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Nearly all students, 113 of 116 (97.41%) answered "Yes" to question 26 of the student questionnaire which read: "Would you recommend Forkner Shorthand to students who are thinking about learning a shorthand system?" Only 2.59% or 3 students answered "No."

The 113 students (97.41%) who answered "Yes" to question 26 included many of the 26 students (22.41%) who had taken a previous course in shorthand as outlined in table 1.

Furthermore, of the 113 students who answered "Yes," a few students (11.20%) had taken previous courses in a symbol system such as Gregg or Pitman as shown by Table 3.

TABLE 29  
 USE OF MATERIALS OUTSIDE CLASSES  
 FOR SKILL BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	82	70.69
N O	29	25.00
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	1	0.86
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>4</u>	<u>3.45</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 27 of the student questionnaire asked: "Were you able to use different materials outside of class time for your skill building development? (e.g. cassettes, tapes, and the like)?" As indicated in table 29, above, the majority of students (70.69%) were able to use different materials outside of scheduled classes for skill building development. Table 29 shows 29 students (25%) were unable to use materials outside scheduled classes.

Question 28 of the student questionnaire asked: "Did you enroll in this Forkner Shorthand course after attending your last year of high school in: '82, years of '76 - '81, or years preceding '76?" Table 30, which follows, summarizes the results of question 28.

TABLE 30  
 LAST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDED BY STUDENTS

PERCENTAGE OF 116 STUDENT RESPONSES

<u>TYPE OF RESPONSE</u>	<u>'82</u>	<u>'76 - '81</u>	<u>Before '76</u>
YES	37.07	32.76	18.97
NO	11.21	12.07	12.93
N/A (Not Applicable)	5.17	7.76	6.90
N/R (No response)	<u>46.55</u>	<u>47.41</u>	<u>61.20</u>
	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

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Most students graduated in '82 (37.07%). The majority of students enrolled in Forkner Shorthand had attended high school within the last year. Nearly a third of the students had attended high school between two and seven years of enrolling in Forkner Shorthand. Close to 20% of the students surveyed said they attended high school more than seven years previous to enrolling in the present Forkner Shorthand course.

TABLE 31  
FUTURE USE OF FORKNER SHORTHAND

	ACTUAL RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Y E S	106	91.38
N O	9	7.76
N / A (NOT APPLICABLE)	0	0.00
N / R (NO RESPONSE)	<u>1</u>	<u>0.86</u>
T O T A L	116	100.00

Question 29 of the student questionnaire asked: "Do you see yourself using your shorthand skills in the future?"

Table 31 shows 106 students (91.38%) answered "Yes." Only 9 students (7.76%) answered "No."

The "Yes" responses of table 31, above, and table 12 are similar. Table 12 showed the results of the question: "Do you feel you have gained a vocational skill in shorthand and will be able to use it in your job?" A total of 107 students (92.24%) answered "Yes."

Table 14 correlates with information in table 31. Table 14 reported 107 students (92.24%) felt Forkner Shorthand would enhance their career opportunities. Therefore, Forkner Shorthand would be

used in the future.

The results of Table 31 show that regardless of competence in Forkner Shorthand, over 90% of the students expect to use their shorthand skills.

#### Comments of students

Students were encouraged to give additional comments in narrative form to answers they gave to questions 1 through 29 on the student questionnaire. Some of the various comments follow:

"I spent so much extra time learning at home because I had been out of school for so long. The course was very well setup, it would be almost impossible to not understand the theory behind it."

"Comes in handy for everything--(note taking)."

"I will probably go to university in the future and I feel that my shorthand will come in handy for taking notes. The only time I would take another Forkner Shorthand course would be if I felt I needed a refresher or if there was a course being offered for teaching the latest shortcuts."

"Shorthand has been very useful in all my classes and I have thoroughly enjoyed learning and using it."

"I enjoyed the course very much, however, more time should have been spent on dictation and building up our speed. I liked the course and found it challenging."

"Perhaps more dictation should have been transcribed because that is the most important aspect of the course. It's no good to do shorthand at 80 wpm and you can't transcribe it back."

"More short-cut forms could be incorporated into the textbook."

"When beginning shorthand, I found myself spending one and one-half hours (more or less) doing shorthand. After

becoming more familiar with the system, half hour was sufficient."

"I don't know if it is as easy to build up your speed with Forkner as with Pitman, but I think Forkner is easier to learn and remember if you don't use it for a while."

"I use Forkner Shorthand almost more than longhand when taking (or making) notes."

"I also found that some abbreviated phrases are real time-savers. (e.g. TL= thank-you for your letter; z= as soon as possible)"

"I make good use of the shorthand I have learnt; I find myself using my shorthand when I write personal letters."

"The tapes offered, or made available, did not interest me. Dictation from the teacher was much more effective."

"I try to spend at least one-half hour per evening on shorthand and I really love the course."

"I have not finished the course yet but I do have one negative comment--the abbreviations for the days of the week and months of the year are not consistent. I think the workbooks are very good except they need some small revisions. The tapes are excellent but you need personal dictation as well (when using the tapes, it is too easy to go backwards and therefore you are not really having dictation at a specific rate)."

"I think it is a good class and wish to take another class if possible."

The preceding paragraphs of this Chapter have reported the responses and comments of Forkner Shorthand students enrolled in one year courses at colleges and vocational centres in the Province of Alberta.

### Instructor Questionnaire

Instructor questionnaires were sent along with student questionnaires to all colleges and vocational centres where Forkner Shorthand was taught.

Ten instructor questionnaires were sent out and returned along with the student questionnaires.

An analysis of the instructor questionnaires shows all instructors (100%) had taught Forkner Shorthand for at least one year. Two instructors (20%) indicated they had taught Forkner Shorthand for 12 years.

Fifty percent of the instructors had taught Forkner Shorthand for less than 2 years and 50 percent of the instructors had taught Forkner Shorthand for at least 6 years.

Only three instructors (30%) had taken a formal course in Forkner Shorthand before teaching this shorthand system. Seven instructors (70%) indicated no previous study of Forkner Shorthand before teaching the course.

Furthermore, seven instructors (70%) taught Pitman Shorthand and one instructor (10%) taught Gregg Shorthand before teaching Forkner Shorthand.

All instructors (100%) answered "Yes" to question 4 of the instructor questionnaire which read: "Are you satisfied with student performance in Forkner Shorthand after a one year duration?"

Six instructors (60%) indicated their attrition rates were less than 20% but greater than 10%.

Only one instructor (10%) had an attrition rate of less than 10%. No instructor (0%) had an attrition rate of more than 20%.

Question 8 of the instructor questionnaire asked: "After a one year course do you feel most students will be able to take dictation at a rate considered quick enough for vocational or office use?" All ten instructors (100%) answered "Yes."

Question 9 of the instructor questionnaire read: "What are some of the shortcomings of Forkner Shorthand as a one-year course?"

Four different narrative comments were made as follows:

"The lack of a second book following the theory text which follows up, reviewing rules, short forms, etc. CORRELATED DICTATION AND TRANSCRIPTION, which uses the most familiar words approach is ok, but the letters are wierd and unbusinesslike (wordy and ridiculous). Also they are not suitable for speed building (no short, easy letters). We introduce alot of short-cuts developed ourselves."

"The study guide tests are poorly prepared, often repeating the same or similar words. These are textbook shortcomings. The system to us is just fine."

"Even the best students cannot reach high speeds--even with more time."

Question 10 asked the instructors: "What are some of the positive aspects of Forkner Shorthand as a one year course?"

The following comments were made:

"Good for note taking."

"Learning of the theory principles is followed very closely by transcription practice in the second semester."

"Students have a vocational skill after one year. I have had students write 120 words per minute after 9 months of Forkner."

"Can be learned quickly. Students can get up to 80 words per minute in the time allotted."

Learned quickly, gives students a feeling of accomplishment. New college materials challenging and interesting for students."

"The student can learn a vocational skill."

"Easy to learn. Easy to read back. Fairly efficient. Students like it."

"As an instructor, I had taught Pitman for several years. I was very apprehensive about learning a new shorthand system. I found Forkner very easy to learn and I use it all the time. I am glad I changed."

The last question on the instructor questionnaire solicited any additional comments, negative or positive. The responses were as follows:

"Students are able to appreciate the system because they can read back what they have written in Forkner Shorthand."

"Our Forkner Shorthand course is 8 1/2 months long. This includes speed development after completion of the theory course."

"We offer Forkner as a one semester course (covering theory and speed building to 80 words per minute)."

"I do not use tapes or cassettes in my Forkner shorthand classes. I find students find dictation by me (instructor) much more rewarding."

Question 5 of the instructor questionnaire which asked: "How many people were enrolled in Forkner Shorthand in: September 1982; in March 1983?" could not be used in reporting results. Some institutions did not begin Shorthand programs in September 1982. Therefore, the enrollment numbers in September 1982 did not serve any useful purpose to the researcher.

#### Summary

Student questionnaires were returned to the researcher from seven of the eight colleges and vocational centres surveyed. The data collected from the 116 returned student questionnaires was presented in table form and analyzed. More than ninety percent of the students were full-time students and felt that the Forkner Shorthand course of one year was long enough to achieve vocational skills. The majority of students also felt that classroom instruction was necessary to perform vocational objectives within one year and would recommend Forkner Shorthand to students who are thinking about learning a shorthand system.

Ten instructor questionnaires were distributed and all ten were completed and returned. The majority of instructors indicated no previous study of Forkner Shorthand before teaching the course and

they had taught a symbol system prior to instructing Forkner Shorthand. All instructors felt that vocational objectives were met within one year by most students enrolled in Forkner Shorthand.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine if Forkner Shorthand, offered as a one-year course of instruction at colleges and vocational centres in the Province of Alberta, Canada, would result in students obtaining vocational shorthand skills; if high attrition rates existed and low student performance rates prevailed; and if Forkner Shorthand should be recommended as an alternative to symbol system shorthand courses.

To collect the necessary data for this study, a survey of colleges and vocational centres in the Province of Alberta, Canada, offering one-year courses in Forkner Shorthand, was conducted.

Two types of audiences were surveyed. Student questionnaires were used to obtain relevant data from students and instructor questionnaires were used to gather pertinent information from Forkner Shorthand instructors.

From the data collected, an effort was made to evaluate the findings. The findings from the student questionnaire are summarized as follows:

1. Of the 116 students answering the questionnaire, only 26 (22.41%) had taken a previous shorthand course. Of these 26 students, half, 13 students (11.20%), had taken a one-year course learning a symbol system such as Pitman or Gregg Shorthand.
2. More than 90% of the Forkner Shorthand students were full-time students.
3. Most Forkner Shorthand classes (81.03%) were scheduled between 5 and 8 hours per week.
4. The majority of students, 107 of 116, 92.24%, appreciated the instructional materials used for instruction.
5. Less than a third of the students (31.03%) felt that they could learn Forkner Shorthand well enough to obtain a vocational skill without attending classes.
6. Ninety-eight of the 116 students, 84.48%, were satisfied with the instruction received.
7. More than two-thirds of the students (67.24%) used Forkner Shorthand for note-taking in other classes while enrolled in the one year Forkner Shorthand course.

8. For speed building, the majority of students (77.58%) indicated office type dictation from their instructor was more beneficial than listening to tapes.

9. A solid majority of students, 107 of 116, 92.24% felt they had gained a vocational skill in shorthand and would be able to use it in their jobs.

10. Approximately three-quarters of the students needed Forkner Shorthand to graduate.

11. More than 90% of the students (92.24%) felt that Forkner Shorthand would enhance their career opportunities.

12. Twenty students (17.24%) felt Canada Manpower tests definitely were not applicable as an instrument to test vocational objectives of shorthand in a one year Forkner Shorthand program.

13. The majority of students (59.48%) expected to record dictation at more than 80 words per minute before graduating.

14. A mere 3.45% of the 116 students felt they would not be able to record dictation at either 60 words per minute or 70 words per minute. Only 5.17% of the 116 students felt they would not be able to record dictation at 80 words per minute.

15. Nearly 90 percent of the students (87.07%) felt the course was long enough to achieve their goals of vocational objectives.

16. Just over one-half of the students (52.59%) spent less than one-half hour per day outside of class time doing Forkner Shorthand. One-third of the students (33.62%) spent between one-half and one hour doing Forkner Shorthand outside of class time and twenty percent (20.69%) spent more than an hour.

17. Close to 40% of the students were interested in a second year of Forkner Shorthand.

18. Three-quarters of the students (75.86%) felt less time should be spent learning the theory of Forkner Shorthand.

19. The majority of abbreviated words were useful to 112 of the 116 students (96.55%).

20. Nearly 70% of the students (68.10%) had no problem in phrasing Forkner Shorthand.

21. The majority of students (67.24%) indicated more time should be spent on dictation practice.

22. A surprisng 113 of 116 students (97.41%) would recommend Forkner Shorthand to others contemplating learning a shorthand system.

23. The majority of students (70.69%) were able to use different materials outside classes for skill building development.

24. Nearly 40 percent of the students (37.07%) commenced their Forkner Shorthand instruction within one year of attending high school. Approximately a third of the student (32.76%) attended

high school between 2 and 7 years before enrolling in the Forkner Shorthand course, while close to 20% of the students indicated they had attended high school more than 7 years ago.

25. Nine students (7.76%) felt they would not use their shorthand skills in the the future. Over 90% of the students (91.38%) indicated they would use their shorthand skills in the future.

Appendix B contains the student questionnaire and a percentage summary of results obtained from the student survey.

The findings of the instructors surveyed are summarized as follows:

1. All instructors had taught Forkner Shorthand for more than one year.
2. Only 3 of 10 instructors (30%) had taken a formal course in Forkner Shorthand before teaching this shorthand system.
3. Eight instructors (80%) had taught either Pitman or Gregg Shorthand before teaching Forkner Shorthand.
4. All 10 instructors (100%) were satisfied with student performance in Forkner Shorthand after a one year duration.
5. The majority of instructors (60%) had attrition rates of more than 10% but less than 20%. Only 1 instructor (10%) indicated an attrition rate of less than 10%. No instructor (0%) had an attrition rate of more than 20%.

6. All ten instructors (100%) felt most students would be able to take dictation at a rate considered quick enough for vocational or office use.

### Conclusions

Most students were full-time students.

Classroom instruction was necessary to obtain a vocational skill in Forkner Shorthand within one year or less.

For speed building, office type dictation from the instructor was better than listening to tapes.

Students were able to obtain a vocational skill within one year or less of instruction in Forkner Shorthand.

The students felt that Canada Manpower Shorthand Tests were not applicable to Forkner Shorthand programs.

The majority of students expected to record dictation at a rate of more than 80 words per minute before they graduated.

The results of the student questionnaire indicated that each day, no more than one-half hour of individual study, outside of class time, was necessary for the majority of Forkner Shorthand students.

The results of the student questionnaire showed that nearly 100 percent of the students surveyed would recommend Forkner Shorthand to others interested in studying a shorthand program.

The results of this study correlated closely with the research which was reviewed as part of this study.

Recommendations

1. All Forkner Shorthand courses be one year in length. There is no need for a second year to achieve a vocational level of performance.
2. Forkner Shorthand is an excellent shorthand system to obtain a vocational skill. Forkner Shorthand keeps students in classes. For these reasons Forkner Shorthand should be considered by all colleges and vocational centres.
3. Forkner Shorthand should only be taught through classroom instruction to achieve vocational skills within one year or less.
4. All Forkner Shorthand students should be encouraged to use shorthand for notetaking in all their classes.
5. Instructors should give more office style dictation practice in the one-year course.
6. Students should be given the Canada Manpower Shorthand Tests as an objective means to determine student performances.
7. Instructors are encouraged to spend less time on Forkner Shorthand theory.
8. All students who want to learn a shorthand system should be encouraged to learn Forkner Shorthand because Forkner Shorthand

ensures high student success rates within one year or less for the majority of students.

9. More access to materials for skill building development outside of classes is encouraged.

10. If a teacher has taught another shorthand system and is interested in teaching Forkner Shorthand, a formal course in Forkner Shorthand is not required before teaching the course.

11. A follow-up study of Forkner Shorthand graduates of colleges and vocational centres in Alberta is encouraged.

12. Because of the positive results obtained in this study, all educational institutions should consider Forkner Shorthand as a one-year course of instruction.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## APPENDIX A

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**Purpose:** This questionnaire is to assist in ascertaining the implication of using Forkner Shorthand as a vocational skill after one year of instruction.

PROCEDURE: Circle the correct response at the right.  
"N/A" means not applicable.

BACKGROUND

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 1. Did you take a previous course in shorthand (Pitman, Gregg, etc.) before enrolling in this post-secondary Forkner shorthand course? | YES NO N/A |
| 2. Was the previous course a one-year course?  | YES NO N/A |
| 3. Was the previous course a symbol system such as Gregg or Pitman Shorthand?  | YES NO N/A |
| 4. Are you a full-time student?  | YES NO N/A |
| 5. Are you fluent in a second language?  | YES NO N/A |

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 6. Did you spend at least 5 hours in class but no more than 8 per week?   | YES NO N/A |
| 7. Did you like the instructional materials used for the class?   | YES NO N/A |
| 8. Do you think you could have learned Forkner Shorthand well enough to obtain a vocational skill without attending classes with a one-year period? | YES NO N/A |
| 9. Are you satisfied with the instruction received?   | YES NO N/A |
| 10. Did you use Forkner Shorthand for note-taking while attending other classes?  | YES NO N/A |
| 11. Did you benefit more from office type dictation from your instructor than from listening to tapes for speed building?                           | YES NO N/A |

EVALUATION OF SYSTEM

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| 12. Do you feel you have gained a vocational skill in shorthand and will be able to use it in your job?    | YES NO N/A |
| 13. Does the program you are enrolled in require shorthand to graduate?                                    | YES NO N/A |
| 14. Did you take Forkner Shorthand to enhance your career opportunities?                                   | YES NO N/A |
| 15. Are you going to take one of the shorthand tests administered by Canada Manpower?                      | YES NO N/A |
| 16. Before you graduate do you expect to be able to take dictation at the rate of:                         | YES NO N/A |
| 60 words per minute  | YES NO N/A |
| 70 words per minute  | YES NO N/A |
| 80 words per minute  | YES NO N/A |
| More than 80 words per minute  | YES NO N/A |
| 17. In your opinion, is the course long enough to achieve your goals?                                      | YES NO N/A |
| 18. On the average, did you spend <u>less than</u> 1/2 hour per day outside of class time doing shorthand? | YES NO N/A |

. . . continue on the reverse side. . .

19. On the average, did you spend more than one-half hour but no more than an hour a day outside class time doing shorthand? YES NO N/A
20. On the average, did you spend more than one hour per day outside of class time doing shorthand? YES NO N/A
21. If the opportunity arose, would you take a second year course in Forkner Shorthand? YES NO N/A
22. Should more time be spent on learning the theory of Forkner Shorthand? YES NO N/A
23. Did you find the majority of abbreviated words useful (invoice, business and the like)? YES NO N/A
24. Did you find phrasing to be difficult while taking dictation? YES NO N/A
25. In your opinion, should more time be spent on taking dictation? YES NO N/A
26. Would you recommend Forkner shorthand to students who are thinking about learning a shorthand system? YES NO N/A
27. Were you able to use different materials outside of class time for your skill building development? (e.g. cassettes, tapes, and the like?) YES NO N/A

OTHER DATA

28. Did you enroll in this Forkner Shorthand course after attending your last year of highschool in:
- |                     |            |
|---------------------|------------|
| '82                 | YES NO N/A |
| Years of '76 - '81  | YES NO N/A |
| Years preceding '76 | YES NO N/A |
29. Do you see yourself using your shorthand skills in the future? YES NO N/A

Please feel free to elaborate on your yes, no, or not applicable answers below, or attach another sheet with additional comments if you wish. All comments would be greatly appreciated--both negative and positive.

APPENDIX B

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**Purpose:** This questionnaire is to assist in ascertaining the implication of using Forkner Shorthand as a vocational skill after one year of instruction.

**PROCEDURE:** Circle the correct response at the right.  
 "N/A" means not applicable.  
 (N/R means no response given)

	P e r c e n t			
	YES	NO	N/A	N/R
<u>BACKGROUND</u>				
1. Did you take a previous course in shorthand (Pitman, Gregg, etc.) before enrolling in this post-secondary Forkner shorthand course?	22	76	2	
2. Was the previous course a one-year course?	11	17	68	4
3. Was the previous course a symbol system such as Gregg or Pitman Shorthand?	11	16	69	4
4. Are you a full-time student?	94	5	1	
5. Are you fluent in a second language?	16	81	2	1
<u>METHODS OF INSTRUCTION</u>				
6. Did you spend at least 5 hours in class but no more than 8 per week?	84	15		1
7. Did you like the instructional materials used for the class?	92	7	1	
8. Do you think you could have learned Forkner Shorthand well enough to obtain a vocational skill without attending classes within a one-year period?	31	61	7	1
9. Are you satisfied with the instruction received?	84	7	1	8
10. Did you use Forkner Shorthand for note-taking while attending other classes?	67	28	5	
11. Did you benefit more from office type dictation from your instructor than from listening to tapes for speed building?	78	16	5	1
<u>EVALUATION OF SYSTEM</u>				
12. Do you feel you have gained a vocational skill in shorthand and will be able to use it in your job?	93	3	3	1
13. Does the program you are enrolled in require shorthand to graduate?	74	20	3	3
14. Did you take Forkner Shorthand to enhance your career opportunities?	92	6	1	1
15. Are you going to take one of the shorthand tests administered by Canada Manpower?	38	39	17	6
16. Before you graduate do you expect to be able to take dictation at the rate of:				
60 words per minute	28	3	2	67
70 words per minute	28	3	2	67
80 words per minute	40	5	2	53
More than 80 words per minute	59	11	8	22
17. In your opinion, is the course long enough to achieve your goals?	87	11		2
18. On the average, did you spend <u>less than</u> 1/2 hour per day outside of class time doing shorthand?	53	47		

. . . continue on the reverse side. . .

	<u>P e r c e n t</u>			
	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>N/A</u>	<u>N/R</u>
19. <u>On the average, did you spend more than one-half hour but no more than an hour a day outside class time doing shorthand?</u>	34	65		1
20. On the average, did you spend <u>more than one hour</u> per day outside of class time doing shorthand?	21	78		1
21. If the opportunity arose, would you take a second year course in Forkner Shorthand?	39	58	2	1
22. Should more time be spent on learning the theory of Forkner Shorthand?	23	76		1
23. Did you find the majority of abbreviated words useful (invoice, business and the like)?	97	2		1
24. Did you find phrasing to be difficult while taking dictation?	32	68		
25. In your opinion, should more time be spent on taking dictation?	67	32		1
26. Would you recommend Forkner shorthand to students who are thinking about learning a shorthand system?	97	3		
27. Were you able to use different materials outside of class time for your skill building development? (e.g. cassettes, tapes, and the like?)	71	25	1	3

OTHER DATA

28. Did you enroll in this Forkner Shorthand course after attending your last year of highschool in:				
	'82	37	11	5 47
	Years of '76 - '81	33	12	8 47
	Years preceding '76	19	13	7 61
29. Do you see yourself using your shorthand skills in the future?	91	8		1

Please feel free to elaborate on your yes, no, or not applicable answers below, or attach another sheet with additional comments if you wish. All comments would be greatly appreciated--both negative and positive.

APPENDIX C

## INSTRUCTOR QUESTIONNAIRE

## Forkner Shorthand

Note: N/A means "not applicable".

1. How many years have you taught Forkner Shorthand? (years and months) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Did you take a formal course in Forkner Shorthand before teaching it? Yes No
3. What other shorthand systems have you taught? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you satisfied with student performance in Forkner Shorthand after a one year duration? Yes No
5. How many people were enrolled in Forkner Shorthand in September 1982? \_\_\_\_\_  
In March 1983? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Examining your initial enrollment in September 1982: Is your attrition rate  
less than: 10% for the year Yes No N/A  
20% but greater than 10% Yes No N/A  
30% but greater than 20% Yes No N/A
7. Is your attrition rate greater than 30% for the year? Yes No N/A
8. After a one year course in Forkner Shorthand, do you feel most students will be able to take dictation at a rate considered quick enough for vocational or office use? Yes NO N/A
9. What are some of the shortcomings of Forkner Shorthand as a one year course?
  
10. What are some of the positive aspects of Forkner Shorthand as a one year course?
  
11. Any additional comments negative or positive would be greatly appreciated. Feel free to write on the back of this sheet or attach a sheet with your comments.

APPENDIX D

1983 03 31

☒

SUBJECT Forkner Shorthand Questionnaire

I am doing a study of the Implications of Forkner Shorthand as a one-year course offered by Colleges in Alberta.

Please find enclosed two different questionnaires:

1. Student questionnaire (approximately 30 copies)
2. Instructor questionnaire (one copy)

Would you please have the above questionnaires filled out at your earliest convenience and returned in the ADDRESSED ENVELOPE enclosed.

The results of the survey will be mailed to you.

Thanking you in advance.

Waiting in anticipation

P. Eliuk

Enclosures