

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN SHORTHAND SPEED: TRAIN THE SAME DICTATION MANY TIMES...IS THIS GOOD OR BAD?

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A question that is often asked by those who train shorthand speed is:

To train the same dictation many times, isn't it a waste of time, since the stenographer practically "memorizes" the text?

And this is the answer:

If it were true that the student "memorizes" the text, meaning, to "learn by heart or retain in memory" (including "memorizing" all movements and shorthand signs referring to that text - especially the words with difficult shorthand signs), this would be a spectacular victory. Imagine: repeat a dictation ten, twenty times and assimilate - deeply - all existing shorthand signs contained in it! The most obvious conclusion would be then: *it would not be a waste of time to train again and again the same text. By contrast, the repetitive training of a single dictation would be very desirable!*

The truth, however, is that the student has only the *illusion* that he/she "memorized" the text, because if we dictate this same text at a higher speed (e.g. at 80ppm, for those who are training at the speed of 60ppm), the difficulty of writing in shorthand, this "supposedly memorized" text, will be huge - especially when dealing with a text where there are many words with difficult shorthand signs.

It is necessary to also note that - contrary to what it may seem - every moment of writing in shorthand is a unique experience that has a complicated mechanism that triggers the hearing of the sound, encoding it into shorthand signs (work that is performed by the brain) and then sending the encoded signs, through the nervous system being first the arm, then the hand and finally the paper". It is worth mentioning that all this process is performed in fractions of seconds... fractions which decrease as the speed increases.

Therefore, it is easy to deduct that, even if the text in the common writing is “memorized”, the shorthand text will not be. This is because there will always be the important and complex work of drawing shorthand signs by the brain neurons every time writing in shorthand is involved.

What in fact happens, to conclude the reasoning, is that, by repeatedly training the same dictation, the same phrases and especially, the same words, you are enabling the brain (by virtue of repetition) to, little by little, perform the "encoding operation" much faster, with greater facility and more fluency in the most instantaneous way possible.

Only with this repetitive training of words using the same dictation is when the elimination of *mental doubt and hesitation as well as the uncertainty and vacillation* (especially with regard to words with difficult shorthand tracing) can be gradually achieved. This is the main delay factor and the consequent loss of words when writing in shorthand.

Undoubtedly, through repetition, mental hesitation is eliminated when writing shorthand signs and it also trains the brain to increasingly work with greater agility, self-assurance and automation. Here, the Latin proverb fits like a glove: “*Repetitio studiorum mater est*” - **Repetition is the mother of all studies.**

Therefore, REPETITION is the safest and most efficient method to acquire shorthand fluency and speed.

It is of paramount importance to also **mature** at each speed before moving up to the next speed, which is achieved through a lot of training and a lot of repetition.

Regarding the "method" (unfortunately quite widespread) of jumping from dictation to dictation, without a lengthy and in-depth study of each dictation, will bring us what result? It will bring us:

UNSURMOUNTABLE DIFFICULTIES, NO CONFIDENCE, A QUESTIONABLE PROGRESS, A MEDIOCRE SPEED, NO MATURING OF THE SHORTHAND WRITING AND A HUGE FRUSTRATION.
