



Editor's Corner

This new Department will contain brief items of interest to NALLD members, including abstracts of articles, new installations, quotes from other journals, helpful hints for lab operations etc. If you should have material for this department send it to: C. P. Richardson, Editor, NALLD Journal, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio 45701.

The October issue of *Today's Education* (Vol. 58 (7) :49-51, 1969) contains an interesting pair of reports under the title of "Static in the Language Lab." Authored by Philip Smith, and by Emma Birkmaier and Dale Lange, respectively, two opposing viewpoints are presented with respect to the recently reported Pennsylvania Study. Written in lay language for the non-specialist, both sets of authors cogently argue the pros and cons of the original, the replication, and the on-going study. Best read as a pair, these two articles balance the tendency to condemn or to condone the results of the Pennsylvania Project and lead the reader to ask, "why aren't language labs being used more efficiently?" rather than "why are labs being used at all?"

The October issue of the *Modern Language Journal* (Vol. 53 (6); 1969) is dedicated to a detailed discussion and probing of the Pennsylvania Project. Written in precise language for the informed specialist, the five papers—authored by John Clark of ETS, Rebecca Valette, Frank Otto, Elton Hocking, and Lawrence Aleamoni and Richard Spencer—take a long look at the following topics: the experimental design and controls, the testing program, the training and supervision of the participating teachers, the use of the language laboratory, and the statistical analysis. The primary conclusion one draws from these five critiques is that one must exercise caution in the implementation of broadscale research lest straw men be set up and one-legged hypotheses be tested, or the results may be no more valid or useful than a one-legged straw man. In the long run, although the results of the Pennsylvania Study run against the grain of the audio-lingual revolution, they are probably best viewed as diagnostic rather than definitive outcomes. Many ills beset application of the tenets and techniques of good fundamental-skill methodology. The *MLJ* symposium underscores the need to sort them out and to seek appropriate solutions.

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Characteristics and Behaviors of the Successful Foreign Language Teacher is the title of an April 1969 study by Robert L. Politzer and Louis Weiss published by the Stanford Center for Research and Development, School of Education (HEW project 5-0252-0103).

The main purpose of the study was to observe classroom behaviors of a group of teachers, to identify those who were successful in terms of student achievement, and to compare their behavior and characteristics with teachers identified as unsuccessful.

Those behaviors and characteristics which correlated significantly with student achievement were the use of free response drill, *the use of visual aids*, frequency of switching from one type of drill to another, residence abroad and high performance in aural comprehension.

Language Laboratory use was evaluated as well. A moderate negative relationship (-.44) was noted between an average number of minutes of lab work per week and auditory comprehension in French. The authors conclude that the type of lab activity implied in dialog memorization and pattern drill does little to increase listening comprehension and can have a negative influence if undertaken at the expense of other exercises.

These findings would seem to reaffirm the oft-stated need to make each tape-guided drill a more genuine communication experience and to "program" practice exercise tapes in logical sequences, with meaningful materials and suitable follow-up quizzes.

Two publications of interest to NALLD'ers available from ERIC Document Reproduction:

EDRS
4936 Fairmont Ave.
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

The Hidden Medium: A Status Report on Education Radio in the United States. New York: Land (Herman W.) Associates, Inc., April, 1967. (MF \$1.00; HC \$11.60) 230 pp. ED. 025 151.

Jansen, Walter, ed. *Audio-Visual Aids and Language Teaching.* International Audio-Visual Technical Centre, Antwerp (Belgium) Public Utility Establishment, 1967 (\$8.40), 207 pp. ED 024 288.

Papers dealing with AV methods and language teaching.

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One new publication from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development:

Allen, Edward D., Leona M. Glenn, Frank Otto. *The Changing Curriculum: Modern Foreign Languages*. Washington, D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum of the NEA., 1968. 47 pp. (\$2.00)

See especially the chapters on materials and equipment in FL instruction.

Articles: The *NALLD Journal* is particularly interested in receiving articles from readers concerning the successful use of materials in the language lab. There seems to be a great deal of negative comment currently and we feel that programs that are achieving their goals should receive publicity.

School Product News: Those of you who do not yet know this publication should make yourself familiar with it. *School Product News* contains a great deal of information concerning new products in the field of education. Although primarily concerned with hardware, software items are also included. A Readers Service Card provides easy access to many manufacturers. Information concerning *School Product News* may be obtained by writing:

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