

September 21, 1964

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Dear Dr. Waskow:

Thank you for your recent letter and I am sorry that I have not had an opportunity to answer you sooner, but I returned from my holidays within the last two weeks. As you know, the subject of language measures as an index of behavioral change with psychotropic drugs has interested me for a number of years. This summer, prompted in part by some of the discussions held by the Clinical Committee with Jonathan Cole, I asked a medical student and a member of my staff to repeat the T.T.R. measures with LSD. They were able to complete the examination of seven schizophrenic patients, each of whom have received an oral administration of 60-70 gamma LSD in our EEG laboratory. Speech samples were taken prior to drug administration and hourly up to four hours.

The tapes were transcribed in two sections, an unstructured and a structured portion. In the structured portion, the student had been encouraged to administer the proverbs test, selected from the WAIS. A sufficient sample of record was transcribed to provide a minimum of 16 twenty-five word samples for T.T.R. and time measurements. The technique of T.T.R. followed the description by Jaffe.

So far, we have analysed four measures--the T.T.R. and the average time for a twenty-five word sample and standard deviation for each of these measures.

Using non-parametric statistics and visual review of the data, it appears that the effect of LSD in these subjects was to increase the mean T.T.R. (increase variability) and increase the duration of twenty-five word speech samples. The other two measures were not significantly different from the resting level. These observations were consistent in the unstructured portion of the interview only, for the amount of variability and change in the structured portion was very small.

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I have encouraged my associates to examine a few more records and carry out a few more such interviews so that we might determine if these observations are consistent in another group of ten subjects. Also, we are now examining our data for the correlation between the language measures and the EEG changes.

With regard to your own study, I am optimistic that if the measures of vocal dimension are reliable, that they should change with drug intake. At the time that we began our interest in speech measures, Joe Jaffe explored the possibility of using pitch and volume as measures of affect change. Because of the technical problems or perhaps the drugs did not effect this dimension, we were unable to observe consistent changes in our study groups. It was partly because of the failure in the measurement of these dimensions that we sought for more objective scores and Dr. Jaffe extended his interest in the T.T.R. and such other formal measures of speech.

I plan to be in Washington at the forthcoming meeting of the Clinical Committee on October 15-16, 1964 and again for the A.C.N.P. on October 23-24, 1964. I would be pleased to have an opportunity to meet with you and Martin Katz to discuss your work and our observation as well.

Thank you very much for your letter and I am looking forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Director

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