THE EDITOR'S DEPARTMENT

This report is excerpted from my presentation to the LSA Executive Committee at its annual meeting in Chicago in January 2000. Nineteen ninety-nine was the fifth year of my seven-year term as editor of *Language* and fairly quiet, free of editorial, redactional, or technological change for the first time since I took up the position in 1995. For the most part, the overall shape of the journal and the mix of articles, book reviews, and book notices have stabilized at realistic proportions, as evidenced by Table 1, which provides the relevant figures for the six years since 1994, the year before I became editor.

- The number of pages per volume has remained constant at about 900, a number that has been mandated historically by the society and that is dictated largely by the costs of paper and mailing.
- In the past year, approximately 65% of this annual allotment of pages was devoted to articles and 35% to book reviews and book notices, which I believe to be the proper ratio.
- We published 50 full reviews and 205 notices in 1999, again about the right number.
- In the December issue, we published the book reviews and book notices that were submitted between February and April of the same year. As explained in some detail in last year's report (published in the June 1999 issue), this lag of six to nine months between submission and publication of book reviews and book notices is about what we should expect, given our editorial and production schedule.
- The number of articles published in the last year is still somewhat short of the goal of 25 that I originally set, which I nonetheless believe to be reasonable.

I will attempt to hold to approximately these numbers for the remainder of my term and I suggest that the executive committee endorse them as guidelines for future editors, not as a straitjacket, but rather as a way of making the editor's job simpler and clearer.

Technologically, after a flurry of changes in the preceding two years, there were no innovations at all in 1999. We have continued to enjoy the benefits of our long-term relationship with both our typesetters (Maryland Composition) and our printers (Cadmus) and we expect to maintain them. For the near future, the Postscript typesetting environment seems to be reasonably stable as does printing from disk.

The one area of technology that we have not succeeded in addressing directly is the Internet, though not for want of trying. The Association of Research Libraries, which has been working for some time to fight the high cost of scientific journals, especially those published by the larger for-profit publishers, has set up an initiative called SPARC (Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition), designed to combat the increasing cost of scholarly journal publication (especially the runaway cost of for-profit scientific journals). Early in 1999, SPARC put out a request for proposals for a program to encourage web-based science publishing ventures, the Scientific Communities Initiative Grants. The LSA (together with Stony Brook) responded with a preliminary proposal for linking on the web the activities and publications of the LSA, the more specialized societies that meet annually with the LSA, and the regional organizations that sponsor annual meetings and publications. The LSA/Stony Brook proposal did not make it to the final round, apparently because linguistics was not viewed as a core

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YEAR	ARTICLES PP.	# OF ARTICLES	REVIEW/NOTICES PP.	# OF REVIEWS	# OF NOTICES
1994	540	16	299	46	124
1995	517	17	322	53	136
1996	572	19	301	48	130
1997	487	23	403	65	185
1998	535	21	337	53	244
1999	565	23	314	50	205

TABLE 1.

scientific discipline, especially with regard to the journals crisis. We will pursue other such opportunities as they arise. Members of the society are especially encouraged to let both the editor and the executive director know of any developments in this area that they become aware of.

A related topic is that of indexing. For some time, our planned solution to the indexing problem has been to make the back issues of *Language* available in a digital format that would be searchable with Adobe Acrobat or some equivalent program. I made contact some time ago with JSTOR, an organization devoted to just this sort of project, with the goal of adding linguistics to the list of disciplines covered by JSTOR. Though I was not successful in this endeavor, I still feel that there will eventually some sort of digital solution to the indexing problem.

Also stable in 1999 were the numbers and areas of submission, as shown in Table 2. We had almost the same number of submissions as in 1998 and there were very few changes in the nature of the submissions. The average time to process manuscripts also remained identical to that in 1998, four months, despite our best efforts to improve. The tardiness of referees remains the most vexing problem we have.

To this picture of almost complete stability I will add only one disruptive factor: the

	NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS		
CATEGORY	1997	1998	1999
Syntax	23	30	33
Phonology	13	21	26
Semantics	18	11	15
Morphology	7	11	9
Discourse analysis	2	8	6
Sociolinguistics	5	6	5
Grammaticalization	0	0	4
Psycholinguistics	2	1	4
First language acquisition	5	7	2
Historical linguistics	4	3	2
Writing systems	0	0	2
Metatheory	2	4	1
Other	0	0	1
Phonetics	2	4	0
Pragmatics	1	4	0
Language and literature	0	2	0
Second language acquisition	0	2	0
Typology	1	2	0
Neurolinguistics	2	1	0
Field reports	2	0	0
TOTAL	89	116	110

TABLE 2.

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question of a second term as editor. Both the previous editor, Sally Thomason, and I have lived under a new regime, according to which the term of the editor is understood to be seven years, renewable once (although formally the editor stands for election every year). Since my initial term ends at the end of 2001, it is now time for me to declare whether I wish to serve for a second seven-year term. I have decided not to, for a variety of reasons.

- If both of the first two editors under the new regime serve for only one term, then this practice will be established as normal, which I believe to have been the intent of the committee (of which I was a member) that established the new regime.
- It is in the best interests of the society and the field for the editor of *Language* to serve only one term. What makes *Language* stand out over every other important journal in the field is its catholicity. We publish good linguistics, period. To me, this is *Language's* greatest virtue, especially in an era where the field has become seriously fragmented not only by area but also by ideology. It is impossible for any editor, no matter how dispassionate, to remain neutral (nor should one be). The seven-year term is the society's greatest assurance that *Language* will not lose this most precious of its values.
- The job of editor of *Language* is very rewarding, but also very time-consuming. If it is understood that serving a single seven-year term is the norm, then it will be easier for the society to recruit the best candidates for the position in the future.
- I have managed, just barely, to continue my scholarly research during my time as editor of *Language*. Continuing past the initial seven-year term would severely jeopardize anyone's prospects for a meaningful research career after the second term.

This year, my administrative responsibilities at Stony Brook made the work of the *Language* staff all the more important. Led by Rita Bhandari, who took over such crucial duties as supervising proof reading and collating proofs, the crew came through superbly. Many thanks are due to Rita Bhandari, Huiling Jin, Eun Jeong Oh, and Yan Zhang. Ed Battistella has been a rock, as always. Our trusty copy editors, Frances Kelley and Mary Niebuhr, have settled into a great groove and our proof-reader, Kate Fenton, never ceases to amaze us with her eye for every detail. At the typesetters, Maryland Composition, I have enjoyed a very productive and stable relationship with Jim Sollers. The LSA staff in Washington, Liz Hogan, Mary Niebuhr, and Maggie Reynolds have been as helpful as always and Maggie's phone calls to the Grand Poobah have been especially appreciated. Our new secretary-treasurer, Sally McConnell-Ginet, has lived up to the high expectations we all had.

Four associate editors finished their terms at the end of 1999: Jean Berko Gleason, Abby Cohn, Dennis Preston, and Peggy Speas. Working with associate editors is one of the great pleasures of the job, especially when they are as distinguished and pleasant as these four (the two traits do not always go together). They will be sorely missed. New for 2000 are Gene Buckley, Helen Goodluck, Marie Huffman, John McWhorter, and Shigeru Miyagawa. Welcome to them all.

Finally, it is my honor to thank all those who have served as referees this past year. No one is obliged to referee manuscripts. Certainly, they don't get paid for the work. Yet our referees, for the most part, continue to perform at extraordinary levels. A number of editors at commercial publishing houses have remarked to me their surprise at the investment that linguists make in their referee's reports. To me, this care is a sign of the health of the field.

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