Language accepts letters from readers that briefly and succinctly respond to or comment upon either material published previously in the journal or issues deemed of importance to the field. The editor reserves the right to edit letters as needed. Brief replies from relevant parties are included as warranted.

Regarding the letter from Chomsky
May 29, 2014
To the Editor:

Frederick J. Newmeyer discusses the fate of Noam Chomsky's manuscript *The logical structure of linguistic theory* (1955) in his discussion note 'Getting the word out: The early generativists' multipronged efforts to diffuse their ideas' (*Language* 90.1.241–68, March 2014). He questions 'why it was not published in 1955 or soon afterward. There are several reasons. The most direct reason is that it was rejected' (p. 247). The manuscript was published only in 1975. Chomsky himself stated in the introduction to his book that the manuscript was rejected in the 1950s by the MIT Press (see Newmeyer, p. 247). Newmeyer refers to Stephen Murray's claims that two publishers had been interested in publishing the manuscript in 1957 and that there is a letter written by Chomsky that confirms this. This letter was allegedly written to Cornelis van Schooneveld (1921–2003), the editor of Mouton's series *Janua linguarum* in which Chomsky's *Syntactic structures* was published in 1957. Newmeyer remarks: 'One wishes that Murray had scanned Chomsky's aerogram into his article to settle the question once and for all. Unfortunately, he did not' (p. 247).

This question can be settled since this letter is held at Leiden University Library. It was written by Chomsky on September 12, 1957. The complete letter is as follows:

> 'Dear Cornelius, I was very pleased to hear that you would be interested in publishing my long manuscript. The situation with respect to it is as follows. I have a tentative agreement with North Holland to publish it, if it meets their length requirements (i.e., if it's shortened sufficiently). I don't feel quite ready to make a definite commitment myself as yet, since I am still not satisfied with the present form of the manuscript, and I feel that the exposition can be very much improved in many places. I hope to spend most of this year reworking it, and with luck, I may be finished in the spring. As I say, I don't feel that I can say anything more definite until I am a little clearer as to the final form of the manuscript. Perhaps I may contact you then, if you will still be interested. Sorry I missed you when you were here. Thanks for sending the review. Sincerely, Noam' (Leiden University Library, Collection C. H. van Schooneveld, Inv. No. 1, file 617; this letter was partly published earlier in *The C. H. van Schooneveld Collection in Leiden University Library: Editorial correspondence and documents relating to Mouton & Co., The Hague, and other papers in the fields of Slavistics and linguistics*, by Jan Paul Hinrichs (Leiden: Leiden University Library, 2001), p. 9.)

It is unclear whether Chomsky actually submitted a manuscript to Van Schooneveld, but it seems certain that Mouton was interested in publishing it, and that North-Holland was as well. The letter quoted above proves that Murray was right in questioning the claims that Chomsky made to him 'that he had "never heard of the alleged offers to publish *LSLT*" ' (Newmeyer, p. 247).

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Chomsky adds: I have no record or memory of that letter, but it looks authentic. It is true that I was revising the manuscript, but never finished doing so. Other projects intervened. The partially revised 1956 manuscript is what was published (in part) in 1975.

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