IPA NEWS

Editorial Report: *JIPA* 2015–2019

The four-year period from August 2015 to July 2019 was a period of substantial changes for *JIPA* on every level. Below I discuss these changes, provide data about submissions, and briefly present some suggestions for the future.

Editorial team changes

In addition to the usual change of editor, *JIPA* saw a number of other changes in its editorial team. A most important change has been the addition of three Associate Editors, Jelena Krivokapić, Alexis Michaud, and Tine Mooshammer, who shared with me the responsibility of electing reviewers, and discussing and recommending decisions. In deference to the traditional system of *JIPA*, as Editor I handled all correspondence with reviewers, oversaw reviewer choices and Associate Editor recommendations, and had final say on the latter. The addition of Associate Editors has been important for *JIPA*'s success, as the field of phonetics has become broader while academic time is in ever shorter supply. The Associate Editors brought much needed and varied expertise to *JIPA* and I am very grateful for the time and energy they devoted to the journal and the support they provided. I have learned a great deal from all of them.

The second and equally important change in the editorial team has been the renewal of the Editorial Board. In addition to changes to the composition of the Board, its size has also increased from 17 to 29 members. The new Editorial Board is younger, gender-balanced, and covers expertise in a number of different subfields, languages and language families. The geographic location of Editorial Board members covers several European countries, North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Asia, to better reflect both the journal's coverage and the IPA membership distribution. The Editorial Board members have been very responsive to requests for reviews and have provided a vital service to *JIPA*, for which I am thankful.

Finally, *JIPA* has also welcomed Jane Setter as the new book reviews editor, replacing Linda Shockey whose service to *JIPA* for a number of years has been invaluable.

Editorial Policy and Procedures

Jane's appointment as book reviews editor was connected to an editorial policy change regarding book reviews. At a time when readers receive email notifications of new publications and can browse content online, a large number of book notices did not seem the best use of *JIPA*'s limited number of printed pages. Thus, the new policy has been to gradually reduce the number of book notices and replace them with a smaller number of critical, in-depth reviews, focusing on (a) textbooks and (b) monographs and edited volumes of scholarly import likely to be of interest to *JIPA*'s readership. I hope this new format will continue and will stimulate new debates in the field.

A second editorial change relates to the nature of and requirements for illustrations and the amount of support *JIPA* provides towards their publication. Specifically, *JIPA* and the IPA support illustrations by providing an audio management service, i.e. assistance with the organization and quality of the audio files that are required for illustrations. This support is essential for illustrations, which are an important part of the *JIPA* tradition and provide a valuable resource for the academic communities of phoneticians and fieldworkers as well as the speech communities whose languages are documented. The aim of the past few years has been to make illustrations richer so that they become meticulously documented descriptions

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of sound systems supported both by auditory transcriptions and acoustic and, where relevant, articulatory evidence. This aim, however, had a number of negative consequences in that submissions now often include hundreds of audio files requiring labour intensive audio management. In turn, this led to long delays between submission and reviewing (as the audio is checked before submissions are sent to reviewers). In 2019, a number of policy changes were made to achieve a balance between assisting authors and keeping *JIPA* support to reasonable levels. The changes are documented in the instructions to contributors (for details see https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-the-international-phonetic-association/information/instructions-contributors). They pertain to the minimum audio quality required for submission, explain and limit the support that *JIPA* can provide for audio file management, and describe in detail the required components of illustrations, such as the requirement to provide the Glottocode (or ISO-639) and language family of the language described, and a map showing where the language is spoken. I hope that these changes will allow *JIPA* to continue publishing richly documented illustrations without diverting an inordinate amount of resources to them. I am grateful to André Radtke for his meticulous work as audio manager, and to Angelos Lengeris and Ishrat Rehman who temporarily took on this role as well. I am equally grateful to Kayoko Yanagisawa, the IPA's webmaster, who continues to link illustrations to the IPA site, and to Marija Tabain who created an interactive map, allowing interested parties to find at a glance which languages are covered by illustrations of the IPA (https://richardbeare.github.io/marijatabain/ipa_illustrations_all.html). This map shows clearly how much more work is needed to document the phonetics of languages around the world, particularly in some areas, but it is encouraging to see the number of pins on the map increasing.

With respect to original articles and illustrations, in 2015–2019 *JIPA* retained two earlier policies, namely single-blind reviewing and reliance on three reviews for original papers and two reviews for illustrations. Very occasionally these targets were not met, particularly with illustrations; to address this issue, in 2016 we started asking authors of illustrations to suggest possible reviewers of their work (though independent reviewers are always also involved). The number of colleagues who have accepted invitations to review for *JIPA* is in the hundreds. Their work has been invaluable to the journal and I am grateful to all of them for giving their time to review. It is only because of fears expressed by IPA members that their identity as reviewers could be revealed that *JIPA* does not publish an annual list acknowledging its reviewers.

With respect to the editorial process, a critical change has been the move from a system based on personal emails to online submission using Scholar One. The process was long and laborious but was successfully completed after approximately a year of preparatory work, and *JIPA* moved to Scholar One in December 2016. This change has been seen with some trepidation, due to fears that it would lead to a more impersonal mode of communication between users and the editorial team than personal email afforded. Although automatic emails are sent out as reminders of upcoming deadlines for the submission of revisions and reviews, all other communications are personalized. Thus, the system allows for flexibility while providing meticulous record keeping that would otherwise be impossible to achieve. For the editorial team Scholar One has been a life-saver, as it allowed us to be less concerned with logistics and record keeping, and focus on the academic aspects of editorial work. Further, the automated reminders of upcoming deadlines (and of deadlines missed) have led to better time-keeping for authors, reviewers, and the editorial team.

Submission Statistics

Between August 2015 and July 2019, the editorial team handled 176 new submissions of original articles, and 87 illustrations, a total of 263 original submissions. The number of total manuscripts handled, however, rises significantly when revised submissions are added, bringing the total to 325 (200 original articles and 125 illustrations).

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Table 1 Papers with a final decision by country of lead author location (December 2016 – July 2019); table includes only countries from which submissions have been accepted.

Country	Accept	Reject	Total	Accept ratio
Belgium	1	0	1	100.00%
France	1	2	3	33.33%
Germany	2	0	2	100.00%
Italy	1	0	1	100.00%
Netherlands	1	2	3	33.33%
United Kingdom	7	2	9	77.78%
United States	14	10	24	58.33%
Canada	2	2	4	50.00%
Australia	3	5	8	37.50%
New Zealand	3	2	5	60.00%
China	3	6	9	33.33%
Iran	1	3	4	25.00%
Malaysia	2	0	2	100.00%
Singapore	1	1	2	50.00%
Madagascar	1	0	1	100.00%
South Africa	1	1	2	50.00%
Total	44	36	80	63.04%

The acceptance rate in this period has been 36.4% (based on Scholar One data, starting in December 2016). The distribution of papers with a final decision (acceptance or rejection) by country is provided in Tables 1 and 2. As these tables show, the vast majority of submissions and most acceptances were from the US and the UK. In addition, as the tables indicate, rejections were not evenly distributed by country. This is an issue to consider in the future, particularly how authors from countries with a less established tradition in academic publishing in phonetics can be encouraged to submit work meeting *JIPA*'s standards.

In the 2015-2019 period, *JIPA* published (in print or online first) 62 original papers, 46 illustrations, and 28 book reviews. The total of original papers includes special issue 48(1) on 'Challenges in studying prosody and its pragmatic functions' guest edited by Oliver Niebuhr and Nigel G. Ward. The published papers cover a broad range of topics and methodologies, from segmentals and prosody to phonetic typology and the discussion of issues pertaining to the International Phonetic Alphabet. The number of published papers represents an increase of approximately 50% for original articles and 27% for illustrations relative to the previous period (2011–2015).

The increased volume of submissions and published papers is a welcomed change which, however, has brought its own complications. In particular, it has meant that papers could be ready for publication but not available to readers due to the lack of printed pages. To address this problem, in late 2015 *JIPA* started publishing papers in *First View*, the Cambridge University Press platform for online publication of papers that are ready to go to print. A second positive development in this respect has been the increase of pages per issue from 128 to 160, starting in 2019. I hope that this increase will soon minimize the number of papers on First View.

Based on Scholar One statistics, in the 2015–2019 period, the average number of days from submission to first decision was 62 for original articles and 86 for illustrations (for illustrations the duration was longer due to the need to process the audio data first). Though these averages are slight underestimates, as they include desk rejections and the acceptance of production files, the aim was to reach a first decision within three months.

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Table 2 Papers with a final decision by country of lead author location (December 2016 – July 2019); table includes only countries from which no submissions have been accepted.

Country	Accept	Reject	Total
Finland	0	1	1
Luxembourg	0	1	1
Northern Macedonia	0	1	1
Poland	0	2	2
Russian Federation	0	3	3
Slovenia	0	1	1
Spain	0	1	1
Ukraine	0	4	4
Jordan	0	1	1
Qatar	0	1	1
Saudi Arabia	0	2	2
Algeria	0	1	1
Morocco	0	1	1
Nigeria	0	7	7
Brunei Darussalam	0	2	2
Iraq	0	1	1
Japan	0	1	1
Korea (the Republic of)	0	1	1
Pakistan	0	5	5
Sri Lanka	0	1	1
Taiwan	0	2	2
Brazil	0	1	1

Impact and Marketing

In the period 2015–2019, *JIPA*'s Journal Impact Factor (JIF) has remained low: it was 0.568 in 2018, placing *JIPA* in the 3rd quartile among indexed linguistics journals. As noted by Adrian Simpson's and my editorial report in 2015, one of the reasons for this is the (rightful) inclusion of illustrations in *JIPA*'s JIF calculation: illustrations tend to be rather short and little cited and these two features together have an effect of JIF (though illustrations provide an invaluable service to the linguistic community and have other benefits for *JIPA*, such as increasing institutional usage which leads to healthy subscription rates). There are encouraging trends, as well, however. First, *JIPA*'s Immediacy Index (the average number of times an article is cited in the year it is published) has been increasing, rising from 0.105 in 2014 to 0.526 in 2018; further, the number of cites in Web of Science has also been growing, rising from 225 in 2014 to 387 in 2018. These changes are likely to have a positive impact on JIF, which is calculated on a rolling basis on cites in the latest two years (by comparison to this two-year period, *JIPA*'s citation half-time in 2018 was 12.5 years, indicating that the JIF formula likely underestimates *JIPA*'s true impact).

Further, in collaboration with Cambridge University Press marketing I undertook a number of steps aimed at increasing *JIPA*'s visibility. One of these was the development of 'virtual issues', collections of papers that are freely available to non-subscribers for a limited time. Such virtual issues were developed for PaPE 2017, BAAP 2018, and most recently for ICPhS 2019. The papers in each issue were selected to reflect the interests of the audiences at each of these conferences and showcase the breadth of *JIPA*'s coverage. For instance, for the ICPhS 2019 virtual issue, I selected papers that covered typology, articulation, sociophonetics and sound change, phonetic transcription and the IPA, as well as a number of illustrations. In

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addition, in order to generate maximal interest, whenever possible the issues of volumes 46–49 included papers, illustrations and reviews that were thematically linked.

Suggestions

Although I hope that the above changes have been positive for *JIPA*, there is much more to be done. A brief outline of initiatives that I did not manage to bring to fruition is found below, as they may provide inspiration to the incoming team.

- A possible addition to the editorial team would be that of a statistics editor or consultant. Statistical modelling is moving at a pace that makes it difficult for most of us to keep up; having someone on board who can expertly assess the statistical modelling and interpretation of results in submissions could have a substantial impact on quality.
- Experimental methods also evolve at an accelerated pace; thus, a helpful addition to the types of articles published in *JIPA* would be state-of-the-art review articles on topics of general interest to the phonetics community (e.g. on dynamic measurements of vowels, or the modelling of ultrasound data), as I had originally envisaged in *JIPA*'s 2015 mission statement. Such articles could be published faster than similar papers in edited volumes and have the potential to generate much needed citations.
- Registered Reports (RRs) is another type of publication *JIPA* could consider adding to its repertoire, so long as it is understood that RRs are only one of several types of submissions, and there are safeguards in place ensuring RRs go beyond the reporting of results to include meaningful interpretation (for details, see https://cos.io/rr/).
- The Open Science initiative is another important issue for phonetics in general and *JIPA* in particular (for details, see https://cos.io/top/). The need to ensure that research data are available and open to peer scrutiny is increasingly recognized and *JIPA* could be at the forefront of this initiative. At the same time, the journal faces the additional challenge and responsibility of ensuring that the rights of study participants and illustration consultants are fully respected.
- As noted above, an issue for *JIPA* has been its low impact factor, which may deter authors from institutions where such metrics are important for hiring and promotion from submitting their work. A peer review of *JIPA* by members of the phonetics community could lead to a better understanding of how the journal is perceived and thus to more accurately targeted marketing efforts, which could in turn lead to an impact factor increase.
- On the technical side, I had hoped that by the end of my tenure *JIPA* would have its own LaTeX template; this did not happen, but the template was ready in mid-August 2019, and I hope it will be available to authors very soon.
- A final development I would have liked to have seen during my tenure is a more general use of enhanced pdfs with embedded audio, an ideal format for illustrations allowing readers to listen to examples as they read online. Enhanced html using ATI is another option that it would also be worth pursuing (see https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/authors/annotation-for-transparent-inquiry-ati). Though both ATI and enhanced pdfs are labour intensive, they could be invaluable in providing a better reading experience in phonetics, while facilitating greater scrutiny and knowledge exchange.

In conclusion, I see the journal making an increasingly strong contribution to the field of phonetics and wish the incoming team every success.

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