

**MISCELLANEA:
REPORT/RAPPORT/BERICHT, NOTES/NOTIZEN**

Joseph's Jottings — some reflections

The present column is my space as editor to offer some musings about the field, about the journal, about the weather, etc. I will refrain from saying anything about this last topic, but will have a few words about the other two, as they are, for me, interrelated.

Historical linguistics as a field encompasses, perhaps among other things, the history of particular languages, the reconstruction of past language states, the effects of language contact, and the study of language change — both in the past and in the present. Since all aspects of a language, it seems, are subject to change, it is not possible to be a good historical linguist without being a good linguist. This fact helps to make this sub-field an enormously robust and ever-relevant one, even as the overall field of linguistics expands in new directions, such as computational linguistics, undreamt of in the 19th century when historical linguistics took form as a legitimate field of investigation. That is, the study of language change will always be relevant since the phenomenon itself is so pervasive and cannot be ignored by any branch of linguistics; even the development of effective natural language processing systems, a goal of computational linguistics, for instance, will eventually have to deal with the realization that whatever state of the language the system is based on may not be the same in all respects 30 years from now.

The robustness of historical linguistics is reflected in this journal, not only in the range of topics that are covered in any given year, but also through the high quality of articles and reviews that appear in its pages. It is a matter of some pride for those of us involved in producing this journal — I refer here to my colleagues who serve with me as the editorial “junta”: Sheila Embleton, Konrad Koerner, and Joe Salmons — that we are receiving a steady stream of excellent papers as submissions to consider for publication. This fact permits us to be selective, and as a result, the quality of the

papers that we publish is extremely high. This too is a good sign of the health of the field.

As in past years, I must here acknowledge the many colleagues around the world who answered my request for their professional assistance and without whose help the task of maintaining high standards for publication would be that much harder, if not impossible. Peer review is the backbone of recognizing excellent scholarship, and these scholars who carry out the peer review process in the trenches, so to speak, provide us with expert opinions that guide us in and are critical to our decision-making process. With our thanks, I list these fine linguists who have assisted us in the past 12 months:

Michael Broe (Columbus, Oh.)	Monica Macaulay (Madison, Wisc.)
Daniel Collins (Columbus, Oh.)	John McWhorter (Berkeley)
Bernard Comrie (Leipzig)	Bettina Migge (Frankfurt)
David Fertig (Buffalo, N.Y.)	John Nerbonne (Groningen)
Andrew Garrett (Berkeley)	Terence Odlin (Columbus, Oh.)
Gregory Guy (Toronto)	Robert Orr (Ottawa)
Alice Harris (Nashville, Tenn.)	Martha Ratliff (Detroit)
Martin Haspelmath (Leipzig)	Ian Roberts (Stuttgart)
Hans Henrich Hock (Urbana, Ill.)	Aryon Rodrigues (Brasilia)
Geoffrey Horrocks (Cambridge, U.K.)	Laurent Sagart (Paris)
Dieter Kastovsky (Vienna)	John Singler (New York)
Jurgen Klausenburger (Seattle, Wash.)	Thomas Smith-Stark (Mexico City)
John Lipski (Albuquerque)	Douglas Walker (Calgary)

and of course, as always, I owe a great debt of gratitude to Konrad, Sheila, and Joe on a number of accounts. Their good counsel over the past year on all matters pertaining to the journal have made my editorial role into a job that is always interesting and certainly rewarding, but on occasion even fun! And, as before, Joe deserves special thanks for cracking the whip and rounding up book reviews.

Diachronically yours, on behalf of the editorial junta,

Brian D. Joseph

Columbus, OH, 1 November 2000