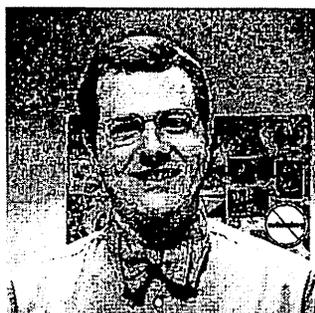


From the Editor-in-Chief

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Ideas and Their Afterlife: Keeping IALLT Together

We've all had them – the midnight epiphanies, the sudden bursts of understanding, the moments at which we realize we've learned something new. It's the afterlife of these ideas that is problematic in most cases. Do we act on what we've understood? Investigate our hunches further? Systematize our search for deeper understanding through empirical method and analysis? Or do we drop the intuitive thread we have grasped, overwhelmed by the demands of the workaday labyrinths that constitute our jobs? How many of us have projects gathering dust in the corners of our offices, contributions to the profession that we haven't had time to articulate?

The IALLT Journal, the LLTI listserv and the biennial IALLT Conference all have a similar central goal – to provide a space within which we can share ideas with others in our profession. Each venue works differently, and privileges different aspects of that communication. The IALLT Conference is a chance to hear our peers present their research on language technology, pedagogy and related issues. The LLTI listserv offers (nearly) instant feedback on questions ranging from arcane hardware problems to the never-ending search for easy-to-clean headphones. In both of these cases, the ideas and questions raised have an afterlife of sorts – conference papers are preserved in the memories of those attending the sessions and on the legal pads the audience fills with hasty notes. In some cases, the presenter may provide a handout, or point the audience to a Web site. The LLTI listserv has its archives, searchable by keyword, which probably doesn't get as much use as it should. Collective memory in the archive occurs in short snippets, in the responses to questions posed to the list.

All of these venues for the sharing of ideas are important, and each serves a valuable purpose for the profession. The IALLT Journal's role is somewhat different than that of the two entities I've described above, but it is also extremely important in the life of our community. One aspect of the Journal that I find particularly appealing is that it

serves as the collective memory and permanent record of our organization and our profession. Public declarations of IALLT's position, such as the Statement of Professional Responsibilities, are recorded in the Journal. Articles, hopefully chronicling the development of the profession in administrative, technical and pedagogical fields, provide us with a record of how the profession is developing and growing. The Journal provides another, very important, afterlife for our ideas: one that is more formal than LLTI and more permanent than conference papers. Our collective identity as an organization and a profession is bound up in the Journal – it is, in a sense, our long-term memory.

This issue of the Journal offers perspectives on the three components of our profession: technology, administration and pedagogy. Marjorie McShane provides a look at natural language processing and its technological application to the teaching of LCTLs. Jane Tchaïcha documents the creation of the Center for Languages and International Collaboration at Bentley College, outlining strategic partnerships and the process of creating a center. Licia Landi offers a look at how she uses the Web to teach the poetry of Horace to her students at the Liceo Classico Maffei in Verona, Italy. I know that many of you are now working on presentations for the IALLT Conference – please consider submitting your papers to the Journal for eventual publication. You can make an important contribution to our organization's long-term memory, and ensure the afterlife of your great ideas. ♦