

From the Assistant Editor

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Karen L. Landahl

When Marie Sheppard asked me to bring this number of the *Journal* to closure because she needed time to attend to personal matters, I was happy to comply—especially since I could rely on the able assistance of Robin McClanahan, Joseph Toth and Pete Smith. Although Joe and I enjoy filling the assistant role, it is a big challenge for us to take on the full editorial responsibilities since we are a “small shop.” We are pleased to be able to return to our accustomed role when Read Gilgen becomes Acting Editor for the Spring number.

Working for the *Journal* remains a great pleasure and I am proud of my relationship with it. The content and format increase in strength. I have shared copies with colleagues who teach language and have enjoyed their comments on how good the *Journal* looks and what interesting articles it has. Read and Marie have set the *Journal* on an excellent path, and I am happy to support them in their efforts.

Of course, the quality of the *Journal* and its usefulness to the profession depends ultimately on its contributors. The *Journal* has had strong authors and dedicated columnists. I encourage every member of IALL to consider submitting a contribution next year. There are a variety of paths to getting into print: from a report on original research to a conference report for a column to a summary of an article in another publication that you found especially insightful. Please read the Publishing Guidelines to get a complete picture of the varieties of contributions possible. And remember that the purpose of the review and editing process is to enhance the presentation of your work. I would venture that almost all of us can benefit from a second (and third...) opinion. And the author gets to approve the final draft!

Now, a personal indulgence. This year for the last time I taught the undergraduate course *Language*. (My department has instead made a commitment to a linguistics-based Humanities Common Core series.) *Language* introduced students to basic concepts in linguistics and we read some classic pa-

pers. The College of the University of Chicago has a language requirement and this course could be used to substitute for the fourth quarter of a commonly taught language. Faculty and advisors would often remark to me that it must be unpleasant to teach this course since it was undoubtedly filled with people who “hated” language. This, however, was never my experience. The students were intelligent, hardworking, and curious about the phenomenon of human language. They were often just not convinced that a year of language classes (the basic language requirement) focussed on “communicative competence” made an important contribution to their college program. I will miss teaching this course because it always made me think about the role of language classes in a liberal education, the intellectual import behind the practical training. I present below a short reading list that I have found helpful when creating arguments for the importance of language and linguistics in the curriculum. I would be interested in hearing your comments. ■

- Brown, Roger. (1973). *An Unbuttoned Introduction. A First Language*. Harvard University Press. 1 – 59.
- Steiner, George. (1992). *After Babel*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press. (especially ix-xviii and 496 – 499).
- Ward, F. Champion. (1992). *Languages. The Idea and Practice of General Education: An Account of the College of the University of Chicago by Present and Former Members of the Faculty*. [2nd ed.] University of Chicago Press. 212 – 219.
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