

## **Committee of Editors of Linguistics Journals (CELxJ)**

Annual meeting -- 9 January 2011 (Pittsburgh)

Present: Stan Dubinsky, Peter Austin, Greg Carlson, Barbara Johnstone, Joe Salmons, Keren Rice, Diane Lillo-Martin, Huw Price (OUP), Marina Terkourafi, Melissa Good (Cambridge rep), Kai von Fintel, Bill Poser, Marcin Kilarski, Brian Joseph, David Beaver

### 1. Report of LSA ad hoc committee on linguistic data sources

The LSA established an ad hoc committee on linguistic data sources with the following charge:

To consider the issue of promoting changes in the way scholarly works are reviewed in LSA sponsored outlets (e.g., Language and eLanguage) to encourage reviewers to consider the extent of the database on which claims are made and the quality of citation of data sources. **An ad hoc committee consisting of technical specialists and journal editors** should produce a report for review by the Executive Committee as soon as possible suggesting concrete steps the Society can take in this area.

The recommendations in the report include the following:

A. data collection methodology should be transparently and truthfully described in all submissions. This transparency should include, for primary and secondary sources:

-- when and where the data was collected

-- information about informants/consultants (e.g. yourself, elderly male and female speakers in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, speaker of all ages in XXX village in southern Sudan...)

--method of collection (introspection, fieldwork taken place over 2 months/five years, gleaned from a database, text annotation, ...)

--for secondary data, the author should provide clear citations and state how has the correctness of this data has been evaluated?

The reviewers should check whether the paper follows these recommendations and also consider whether the analysis is based on sufficient quantities of data to be deemed reliable.

B. data availability should be encouraged. Papers should state where the data are available, what the nature of the available material is and under which conditions it is available. At the very least, all data that the reviewers might be interested in should be made available to them.

In addition, there are recommendations concerning making such information available through websites and mechanisms for collecting such information.

This report was discussed at the Executive Committee and sent to the committee of editors for their comments.

There was detailed discussion about a number of points.

**Archiving data:** There has been considerable work done in recent years on the archiving of data, including careful thought put to archiving conditions (e.g., Endangered Languages Documentation Program (SOAS), DoBeS, DEL (NSF/NEH), and it would be good to draw on their expertise about archiving.

**Accessibility:** Archives generally have a variety of conditions on access; there are often reasons for why data might not be publically available.

**Review:** Systems of review for deposits are under development, and will help define what a valuable dataset might be for various purposes. What does it mean for adequate data to be available? Does the review process as currently designed take data into account? What is relevant data that might help the reviewer of a paper? Do reviewers demand this already?

**Process:** Best practices are likely to emerge from an organic process as corpora are reviewed; there is not a single template, and it is difficult to impose standards from the start.

**Data types:** There are different types of data, and what kind of data should be archived and made accessible?

**Infrastructure:** Where is the infrastructure to support accessibility of data? How will it be developed? Who will house it?

David Beaver, one of the members of the ad hoc committee that created the document, said that the committee would be pleased to have feedback, and noted that the committee had more considered what a 'perfect' journal ought to be like – what is best practice? It did not discuss how to effect change. There was discussion about the notion of 'perfect journal.'

There was a general sense that the committee of editors should write to the ad hoc committee about their concerns, through the Executive Committee. (No one took this on.)

## 2. Committee recognition by LSA

It was agreed that it would be helpful for the committee of editors to be recognized as an LSA committee, and that with several journals under the auspices of the LSA now, it is a worthwhile time to approach the LSA again about this. It was agreed that the editors of the LSA journals, together with the chair of the Program Committee (because of extended abstracts), through Greg, should make an argument for this with the LSA executive.

## 3. Outreach

The existence of the Committee of Editors of Linguistics Journals will be announced again on the Linguist List. (No one was assigned to take this on.)

Brian offered to have a student put together a list of editors and associate editors, together with contact information, and send them a personal invitation to join the listserve and attend the meeting of editors. Brian agreed to take on the sending of this letter once a list is developed.

## 4. Possible joint session?

The Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation is considering submitting a proposal for a special session on publishing language documentation; CELJx could perhaps be a sponsor.

## 5. Follow-up on e-publishing symposium

People agreed that the symposium on e-publishing was useful in gaining perspective on the issues around this.

There was concern expressed in the symposium about the quality of eLanguage, and a sense that it is important to have high quality eLanguage journals in core areas. The semantics journal now published with eLanguage might consider becoming independent. At this point it is difficult to judge impact factors in the eLanguage publications, but in principle there is no reason to expect a difference between open access e journals and other journals in terms of impact.

## 6. Authorial retractions

The Hauser case raised the issue of retraction, and what journal editors can do to review data adequately.

It was noted that electronic publication makes it easier for readers of a journal to see that a claim has been retracted, and also to see corrections.

Along similar lines, there was discussion about how journal editors are able to review the quality of data, and what their responsibility is, as well as the responsibilities of the reviewers.

Huw Price (with OUP) pointed the committee to the Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE) (<http://publicationethics.org/>), sponsored by publisher.