Editorial

Time and change

“All things must pass”. So George Harrison told us in the 1970s, though the thought certainly was not original with him. And, at Diachronica, clearly the passage of ‘things’ — particularly linguistic ‘things’ — is big business, so to speak: an interest in passages (of sorts) is what fuels the insights and analyses found on the pages of the journal.

A passage of a different sort is about to take place at Diachronica, though like many linguistic changes, there is both an abruptness to its onset and a gradualness to its implementation.

I have served as Executive Editor of the journal since 1999, a relatively short time as these things go, but my association with Diachronica goes back many more years, as I served as Review Editor from 1993 through the end of 1998, and before that, published two papers in Diachronica, one in 1987 and one in 1991. Thus in a real sense, I have worked my way up through the ranks! I have been proud to be associated with the journal and the fine team of “juntistas” and others who have helped to run it, not only my fellow editors (the core “junta”) and editorial board members and readers and authors who have so much to do with the quality of the content in each issue but also those at John Benjamins Publishers who have worked on the physical production.

The abrupt event that has prompted these ramblings is my being asked by the Executive Committee of the Linguistic Society of American to take on the editorship of Language, the Society’s official journal. This seemed to me to be an offer I couldn’t refuse, representing an extraordinary opportunity that I could not shy away from. And so, I have agreed to become the sixth editor of Language beginning in January of 2002. What this means for Diachronica is that I will be stepping down as Executive Editor, also effective in January.

Another well-worn saying is that “Old soldiers don’t die — they just fade away”; so too, it seems, with journal editors, for I will remain on the editorial junta as an Associate Editor, giving a gradualness to the implementation of the
change, from my point of view. In my place, Joe Salmons, the current Review Editor, will take over as Executive Editor, continuing the recent tradition of promoting from within, as it were, and Martha Ratliff of Wayne State University (who has been on the *Diachronica* editorial board for several years and has been a valued contributor to the journal) will assume the review editorship. These changes take effect officially in January 2002, and issue 19.1 will be their first. There is, of course, a gradual aspect to the transition, in that both are beginning to function in their new capacities as this issue is taking shape, and thus they will essentially be in place as this issue hits your local newsstands.

Just as there is change through time, there is also stability, a point that diachronically inclined linguists often fail to fully appreciate. The stable element in *Diachronica’s* diachronic development in this transitional period is that there will be no alteration of our commitment to quality and to the highest level of scholarship in what we publish; moreover, there will be no change in our focus on diachrony. In a sense, then, these are the substantive universals in the “grammar” of the journal and are thus immutable!

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