EDITORIAL

Greetings from the new Editor-in-Chief

It is my pleasure and great honor to assume the editorship of the Association for Computing Machinery's *Transactions on Asian Language Information Processing*, starting with Issue 12.3. I am taking over from a distinguished set of EICs. Kam-Fai Wong and Jun'ichi Tsujii launched the journal in 2002. Hwee-Tou Ng took over in 2007 and has edited the journal through issue 12.2. I hope I shall be able to live up to their standards.

In its more than 10 years of operation, TALIP has provided an outlet for articles that cover all aspects of Asian language and speech processing: there have been articles on parsing, language modeling, machine translation, transliteration, speech synthesis, optical character recognition, and regional sign languages to name only a few. "Asian" is construed very broadly and articles have included work on Japanese in the far east all the way to Hebrew in the far west, and Tamil in the south all the way to Chinese in the north. Furthermore, while many papers in TALIP have proposed new techniques, there has also been a strong emphasis on handling various linguistically interesting phenomena exhibited in the languages of the region. This seems to me to be exactly the right breadth of coverage and that in itself makes my job as a new Editor-in-Chief that much easier: I do not need to change anything.

One feature I would like to add is an occasional editorial page, modeled on *Computational Linguistics*' "Last Words", that specifically focuses on broader issues related to speech and language processing in Asia. When I started in the field in the mid 1980's, I had trouble explaining to lay people what I did; no one had ever heard of text-to-speech synthesis, speech recognition or machine translation except perhaps for science fiction fans for whom such technology was part of a future vision. Now everyone with access to a computer or a smart phone can interface with this technology whether it be to translate a Web page from an unfamiliar language or to do a quick voice search to answer a question at the dinner table. Speech and language technology is now mainstream. But with that new-found status comes a responsibility: any technology that touches so much of society has the capacity to affect society in both good and bad ways. Machine translation, for example, can break down barriers in communication, but it could also be used to facilitate the rapid dissemination of messages of hate. Speech technology can help users of major languages access information more easily from a variety of devices, but we also have a responsibility to provide such access to speakers of minority languages, especially those where literacy may be low or virtually nonexistent. To that end, I would like to open up a forum, which I propose to call "TALIP Perspectives", for discussion of topics that link speech and language technology to issues of broader social interest with a focus on the Asian arena. My goal is for installments of this forum to appear once every couple of issues, and I invite researchers to consider contributing to this forum. Proposed contributions should be limited to four pages and sent directly to me as editor.

I would like to close by thanking the distinguished group of Associate Editors, who have all agreed to remain as AEs for another term. I am sure that I will benefit greatly from their combined experience at reviewing for this journal.

Richard Sproat
Editor-in-Chief