

EDITORIAL

Continuity with change: The new editorial team and some new policies and procedures

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Bilingualism: Language and Cognition (BLC) is now in its seventeenth year, and what started out as a new interdisciplinary journal dedicated to the study of bilingualism has now become the leading journal in its field. The first issue of *BLC* was published in 1998 with François Grosjean, Jürgen M. Meisel, Pieter Muysken and Judith Kroll as founding editors. Over the years, the editorship has passed to David Green, Ping Li and Carmen Silva-Corvalán, with Jürgen M. Meisel staying on. The journal has not merely survived for almost 17 years but has thrived, enjoying a steady increase in readership and submissions, suggesting that the interdisciplinary approach of the journal and the breadth of topics that it covers are hitting the mark. The 2013 impact factor mirrors this upsurge of interest: *BLC*'s 2013 impact factor is quoted as 2.229, which makes it the 5th ranked out of 160 journals in linguistics and the 27th out of 83 experimental psychology journals. Hence it is a pleasure to report to the *BLC* readership that the journal is in excellent shape. This is primarily due to the outstanding dedication of the outgoing team of editors (Ping Li, David Green, Jürgen M. Meisel and Carmen Silva-Corvalán), to whom we would like to extend our gratitude. Under their tenure *BLC* has grown to be the leading journal in the field. We will continue to count on their advice.

With this issue, readers familiar with *BLC* will notice a number of changes. The most obvious one is that the editorial team and the editorial structure have changed. Starting from this issue, a new team will officially be in charge of managing *BLC*. Due to the increase of submissions in recent years and the potential increase of issues in the near future, it did not seem feasible anymore for a single editor to coordinate the journal. The journal will therefore be managed by a team consisting of two editors-in-chief, four associate editors, and two editorial assistants. The two editors-in-chief have different academic backgrounds, Dr. Abutalebi mainly in (cognitive) neuroscience, Dr. Clahsen mainly in (psycho)linguistics, which reflects the breadth of research to be covered by *BLC*. In the management of journal submissions, Dr. Clahsen will coordinate the more linguistic submissions and Dr. Abutalebi will deal with those that focus more on cognitive aspects of bilingualism. We are assisted in our new challenging tasks by four associate editors, Debra Jared, Robert de

Keyser, Ludovica Serratrice and Natasha Tokowicz, who along with us will be responsible as action editors on the submitted manuscripts. The new team also includes two editorial assistants, Clare Patterson and Lucia Guidi, who will be responsible for the day-do-day handling of the submissions received.

“Continuity with change” guided us in sharpening the profile of *BLC*. While we will, of course, keep the original multidisciplinary spirit as well as the wide range of research areas that find a home in the pages of *BLC*, we have reformulated the aims of the journal by underlining that *BLC* focuses on bilingualism and multilingualism IN THE INDIVIDUAL. We believe that *BLC* should be seen as the leading outlet for studies of bilingualism and multilingualism from a (psycho)linguistic and/or (neuro)cognitive perspective. The areas that *BLC* will cover include: bilingual language competence, bilingual language processing, bilingual language acquisition in children and adults, bimodal bilingualism, neurolinguistics of bilingualism in normal and brain-damaged individuals, computational modeling of bilingual language competence and performance, and the study of cognitive functions in bilinguals.

Authors who have submitted their work to *BLC* previously will also notice changes to the submission and reviewing procedures. One of the changes we have introduced is a two-tier reviewing process. The first stage is an in-house review stage, mainly executed by the two editors-in-chief. This stage aims to triage and return any inappropriate manuscript within two weeks of submission, with the purpose of filtering out submissions that stand little chance of competing for further consideration in *BLC*. Papers that are deemed suitable in terms of content and quality will be assigned to an action editor and go out for external review. The introduction of this two-tier reviewing process will be beneficial for both authors and reviewers. Authors will receive a fast response from the journal and our reviewers will be able to focus their efforts on manuscripts that are potentially suitable for *BLC*.

As happens in many other journals, we receive far more papers than we can possibly consider for publication. This allows us to select the most highly qualified articles from a large pool but requires us to implement very stringent selection criteria to shorten the acceptance-to-publication duration. We will maintain *BLC*'s unique

interdisciplinary spirit by aiming to publish the best linguistic, psycholinguistic and neurocognitive papers in the field. We expect submissions to build on existing knowledge and to make use of research methodologies and theoretical models and approaches of the disciplines within which the research was conducted: theoretical or descriptive linguistics, experimental, computational or developmental psycholinguistics, and neuroscience. We also expect that the presentation of empirical data will be accompanied by appropriate statistical analyses. The overriding criterion for consideration and subsequent acceptance, after peer review, is that papers make a truly theoretical and/or empirical contribution to the (psycho)linguistic and/or (neuro)cognitive study of bilingualism or multilingualism. Authors should also make sure that their articles are written in a concise and reader-friendly way, avoiding unnecessary jargon.

A number of formats for manuscripts are available to authors. In addition to regular submissions, we will publish special issues (e.g., Li, 2013), keynote articles (e.g., Muysken, 2013) and peer commentaries (e.g., Paradis, 2013). Regular submissions come in one of two formats, either as a “Research Article” that describes empirical findings or theoretical work in a full-length article (e.g., Morett & MacWhinney, 2013), or as a “Research Note” that describes research in a short communication (e.g., Dewaele & Wei, 2013). To make more efficient use of the limited space in BLC and to reduce the workload for our reviewers, we have introduced strict length limitations for new submissions. Research Articles should not be longer than 9,000 words and Research Notes not longer than 3,000 words. We would like to highlight that Research Notes are particularly appropriate for the rapid dissemination of new findings and ideas, as final decisions on Research Notes will be

taken no later than six weeks after submission, normally after only one round of reviewing.

Last but not least, the reader will notice an immediate visible change of *BLC*: the new cover! Indeed, it is appropriate that *BLC* gets a new look at this time and we strongly believe that the new cover reflects the true essence of what papers in *BLC* are about: the representation and processing of bilingualism and multilingualism in the mind/brain.

We are delighted to have the opportunity of taking *BLC* to the next stage of development and we look forward to working together with our associate editors, the editorial assistants, the editorial board members as well as our authors and reviewers. Finally, we would also like to acknowledge Melissa Good, our Commissioning Editor from Cambridge University Press, for her invaluable help, her patience and her endless efforts in assisting us to make the handover as smooth as possible.

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