

AN OPEN LETTER  
**JCL, 45 YEARS ON**  
**Shengli Feng (冯胜利) and Virginia Yip (叶彩燕)**

Dear friends of JCL,

It is a pleasure for the two of us to address the readers of *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* (JCL) as editors. We are honored to have been invited by Professor William S-Y. Wang (王士元) to serve as editors of JCL starting January 2019. JCL was first initiated at the University of California at Berkeley in 1973 by Professor Wang who has served as Editor Extraordinaire since the inception and has grown and flourished, entering its 46<sup>th</sup> year in 2019. From 1973 to 2018, JCL has published 95 issues with over 500 articles, as well as 28 monographs. At the time of writing (31 December 2018), it was one of two journals in the SSCI (Social Sciences Citation Index) based at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, together with 2 other journals based in Hong Kong, 2 based in mainland China and two based in Taiwan. The global reach of JCL is indicated by subscriptions from more than 40 countries. JCL is well recognized as the first international journal where research on Chinese languages and related fields with cross-disciplinary perspectives was systematically introduced and published, with methodology ranging from comparative, experimental, historical reconstruction to longitudinal case studies.

It is with humility that we take up the baton Professor Wang handed over to us at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Professor Wang and pay collective tribute to him for his profound impact and enduring contributions to the field on this special occasion. Without his exemplary leadership and indefatigable dedication through the decades, JCL would not have made so many significant contributions and nurtured so many scholars who have become leaders in the field. We are grateful that Professor Wang will serve as Honorary Editor of JCL from 2019 onwards.

On numerous occasions, Prof. Wang has reiterated that JCL has inherited the legacy of Professor Y.R. Chao (赵元任) and Professor Fang-kuei Li (李方桂) and it is thanks to Prof. Wang that he created an unprecedented new epoch by establishing JCL as an international platform to benefit generations of scholars. We are also grateful to have had the support of a stellar cast of distinguished Co-editors (Shen Zhongwei 沈钟伟 and Shi Feng 石锋) and Associate Editors: Robert S. Bauer (包睿舜), Hilary Chappell (曹茜蕾), Matthew Y. Chen (陈渊泉), Chin-Chuan Cheng (郑锦全), Chu-Ren Huang (黄居仁), Jingxia Lin (林静夏), Tsu-Lin Mei (梅祖麟), Alain Peyraube (贝罗贝), Shen Jiaxuan 沈家焯, James H-Y. Tai (戴浩一), Ovid J. L. Tzeng (曾志朗), Wang Feng 汪锋. A special thanks goes to Yifeng Wu (吴一丰) for serving as Managing Editor of JCL for the last 21 years and making significant contributions to its smooth and successful daily operation. We take the opportunity to thank each and every one of the JCL team for their dedication and support over the years.

Our vision is to carry on the fine scholarship and traditions of JCL as envisioned by Prof. Wang and promote *interdisciplinary* and *multidisciplinary* approaches to Chinese linguistics. In the words of Prof Wang which articulate a broad vision of the field:

... We have papers on the Han dialects as well as on the languages of the ethnic minorities. Some papers are strongly theoretical, while others emphasize an experimental or computational orientation. While most of the discussion has centered around spoken language, there is also concern with our unique morphosyllabic writing system. There are papers in psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, sociolinguistics, and applied linguistics. After all, language is an activity that pervades every aspect of human life. It is natural that the study of language should be broadly based and that it should draw from many disciplines.

The term “Chinese Linguistics” in our IACL has several interpretations. Among these, one reading has to do with the traditions, theories and results of linguistics and philology as practiced by Chinese scholars past and present. Another reading has to do with the application of the methods of general linguistics to the languages found in China. This would include, of course, research on many non-Sinitic languages, such as Altaic, Austric, Tibeto-Burman, etc., especially on their interactions with the Han dialects. After all, China is a Sprachbund in the full sense of the

word. Her linguistic fabric has been woven together over the millennia from many intertwining and inseparable strands. ...

(William S-Y. Wang, "An Association of Our Own." *Newsletter [of] International Association of Chinese Linguistics*, volume 1, number 1 [Jan.1993], p.1)

Inspired by this vision, JCL will continue to be an all-encompassing venue for publishing scholarly works in Chinese linguistics that encourage the diversity of theoretical approaches and research methods adopted by time-honored studies and experimental studies. We recognize the importance of scholarship in classical and modern linguistic studies that is the cornerstone of JCL, even as we encourage the pursuit of new frontiers.

Not only does JCL cover familiar areas of linguistics such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, language acquisition and contact, language change and evolution, bilingualism and multilingualism, psycholinguistics, cognitive neuroscience, it also encompasses diachronic syntax, historical phonology, sinology and traditional philology, paleography and exegesis. The comprehensive scope will remain a characteristic feature of JCL and high standard of scholarship a priority. In addition, submissions written in Chinese as well as those in English will be welcomed. The bilingual format is a prized heritage that we would like to preserve for JCL.

To ensure continuity, we aim to provide a platform for publishing new studies and materials in Chinese linguistics and showcasing the development of new theories and innovative paradigms. In addition, JCL will continue to serve as a platform for scholars to have lively debates and exchange views on theoretical and empirical issues. In sum, a key mission of JCL is to create a stimulating platform and incubator for new findings and discoveries. As Directors of the Chinese University of Hong Kong-Beijing Language and Culture University Joint Research Centre for Chinese Linguistics and Applied Linguistics and the Chinese University of Hong Kong-Peking University-University System of Taiwan Joint Research Centre for Language and Human Complexity respectively, we undertake to support JCL's continued operation and growth.

JCL is a unique journal which takes pride in being the most comprehensive journal with the greatest time depth in Chinese Linguistics.

We are hugely honored and humbled to have the opportunity to serve first as Co-editors and then Editors, and are truly grateful that the majority of Associate Editors have agreed to continue to serve JCL. With their unswerving support, we will strive to publish quality research and review articles in the years to come. Realizing that the road ahead is long and the mission is daunting (*ren zhong dao yuan* 任重道远), we will dedicate ourselves whole-heartedly to producing a high quality journal in our field. Your continuous support will help JCL go from strength to strength and reach the next level of excellence.

Shengli and Virginia  
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