

From the Editor-in-Chief

FRED JUANG and I first met 20 years ago. At that time, I was working toward my Ph.D. My employment at Bell Labs during that same period gave me the opportunity to admire Fred's work immensely. So, it is an honor for me to follow Fred as the Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING and a greater challenge to attempt to fill his shoes in this job.

This TRANSACTIONS began life in 1993 as a quarterly publication with Dan Kahn at the helm as EIC, after its split from the prestigious IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON ACOUSTICS, SPEECH, AND SIGNAL PROCESSING. The separation of the speech and audio categories into a new journal was strongly motivated by the leading role these categories were beginning to play at the ICASSP Conference (525 speech-related papers were submitted to ICASSP in 2003), along with the feeling that potential authors in the growing areas of speech and audio would prefer to submit to a more specialized journal. That intuition turned out to be correct. The IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING has now grown to six issues per year.

Fred Juang took over as Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING in 1997. I remember distinctly one of his editorials about speech synthesis because it included a sentence about linguistic issues that I found most interesting: "What does 'signal processing' have to do with it?" The editorial addressed how exciting it was to see the results of cross-fertilization among different technical areas, which the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING was avidly promoting.

I totally share this excitement and believe that this TRANSACTIONS should cover all areas of spoken language processing, which is a strongly interdisciplinary area, going beyond the strictly traditional signal processing issues. This will help to broaden the TRANSACTIONS, making it more dynamic and attractive to both authors and readers. Especially welcome are the identification of new and vibrant areas for coverage in future special issues.

It is a few months now since my tenure as EIC began and, in that time, several new Associate Editors have joined the Editorial Board. I welcome them formally (although a little belatedly), and stress how crucial their work, and that of all

of the Associate Editors is, to the continuing success of the TRANSACTIONS. In this age of multiple conferences and workshops, a short review cycle is increasingly important to draw the best authors to this TRANSACTIONS through the opportunity for early disclosure of their findings. While we have electronic tools to assist our efforts, the challenge to roll up our sleeves and dig in to get the job done remains very much the same. It is my great privilege to work with this fine team of dedicated Associate Editors as we attempt to move the TRANSACTIONS to a level of greater quality and acceptance by the community it serves.

Editorials are meant to be few and far between, so I don't want to miss this opportunity to thank a few people for their help and encouragement. My thanks go to the 2002 Executive Committee of the IEEE Signal Processing Society and, in particular, Dr. José M. F. Moura, who was then Vice President-Publications; to Dr. Arye Nehorai, the new Vice President-Publications; and to the Society's President, Richard V. Cox, for their votes of confidence that I can make a contribution to this fine TRANSACTIONS. I also want to say thanks to Mercy Kowalczyk, the Society's Executive Director, and to Kathy Jackson of the Society's publications staff. You've already been a great help in guiding me through this transition process.

My final thanks go to the Society's Speech Technical Committee for your wonderful words of encouragement and support. It is gratifying to work with like-directed colleagues; it is an enormous privilege to work with a community of friends!

It is natural for self-doubt to creep in when a task is as important as this one. Of course, I worry about what I can bring to the job, and how I can advance the mission of this important publication. Still, I am excited by the prospects and am thrilled to have the opportunity. So you know I will be doing my very best. I hope I may continue to count on the goodwill and best efforts of the authors, associate editors, reviewers, and all who are connected with the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING. Our combined efforts cannot help but result in still greater achievements and an even brighter future for this publication.

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