

From the Associate Editor

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"Joe appreciated the intellectual context of the Labs' work—the significance of language study and linguistic research to a liberal education...."

At the end of 1997, Joseph Toth retired after working 33 years at the Language Laboratories and Archives of the University of Chicago, 26 years as manager of the facility. When he first started working at the Labs in the 1960s, funding was evidently more abundant since he was one of several staff members. As the years passed, funding diminished, as did the staff, and Joe was left on his own with a few student assistants to manage all functions of the Labs. He did an admirable job of keeping things going and maintaining the Labs' basic pedagogical support functions. When I became Academic Director in the mid-'80s, Joe and I worked together to modernize, enhance and expand the Labs' facilities, to re-energize research at the Labs, and to catalog and evaluate the condition of the Archives. Together we grubbed through piles of old equipment and media, deciding what to keep and what to throw away; we vacuumed, dusted, washed; we wrote budget proposals, annual reports and grant proposals.

Together he and I attended all the IALL conferences starting with the MIT conference in 1989, while Joe regularly represented the Labs at the MWALL meetings. Joe also served as an editorial assistant of the *IALL Journal* for the past several years. Both the *IALL Journal* and the MWALL newsletter benefitted from his excellent writing, editing and proofreading abilities.

Joe was a valuable colleague, a language laboratory professional. He possessed an outlook that seems to me essential to all good language laboratory managers: in addition to dealing with people and technology, Joe appreciated the intellectual context of the Labs' work—the significance of language study and linguistic research to a liberal education and the contribution of these forms of learning to our understanding of human cultures and the phenomenon of human language. We at the *Journal* wish Joe well in his retirement. I am pleased to report that he still appears a few hours each week at the Labs to help with the continuing transition process and to

work on those projects that benefit especially from his expertise and years of experience. So, any IALL members who wish to send personal wishes to Joe may still write to him at the Language Laboratories and Archives, and we will make certain that he receives the messages. I wish to thank Pete Smith for suggesting that I use this column to celebrate Joe's contributions to our common goal—to make language learning effective, while broadening the student's appreciation of the variety of human culture.■