

Editorial: Expanding the Technical Reach of our Transactions

THIS editorial is a significant milestone for both the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON AUDIO, SPEECH, AND LANGUAGE PROCESSING and the *ACM Transactions on Speech and Language Processing*, which have merged into a single journal: the IEEE/ACM TRANSACTIONS ON AUDIO, SPEECH, AND LANGUAGE PROCESSING, as announced on August 2, 2013. We thank the strong support of both IEEE Signal Processing Society and the ACM Publication Boards for this successful merger.

IEEE's TASLP is a very well-established publication, strong in both quality and quantity. It is closely linked to ICASSP and to a number of workshops, such as ASRU and SLT. The language area is a relatively recent addition to TASLP, incorporated in 2006. ACM's TSLP is a more recent publication. The quality has been very high, but the quantity has only sustained a quarterly publication. There is no ACM Special Interest Group (SIG) or conference connection in this area, so it has been more difficult to maintain a direct link to the research community. One of the main motivations for the merger is that IEEE's TASLP does not yet have a strong profile in the language processing community, and this is reflected in the submissions received and the composition of the Editorial Board. ACM's TSLP has a stronger profile and Editorial Board membership in this area. Thus, it is clear that a joint transactions will be stronger than either publication on its own.

For several years, the IEEE Signal Processing Society has recognized the importance of information processing in the work of a wide range of researchers within the Society beyond the traditional scope of signal processing. This led to the technical scope of the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON SPEECH AND AUDIO PROCESSING being expanded to include Language Processing in 2006. While serving as editor of the IEEE SIGNAL PROCESSING MAGAZINE, one of the authors wrote in 2008 and 2010 two editorials [1], [2] that elaborated on the need for expanding the technical reach of signal processing by including the new "understanding" or "interpretation" component of signals consisting of language/text and bio-sequence data. They are both symbolic in nature, which were outside of the traditional definition of "signal" with numerical values in nature. This editorial on the formation of the joint IEEE/ACM TASLP, which highlights the importance of text or written language processing, is a concrete embodiment of the goal of expanding the technical reach of signal processing.

As part of the merger of the two transactions, we have taken the opportunity to restructure the editorial board. In addition to the role of Editor-in-Chief, there will be six Senior Area Editors to advise the Editor-in-Chief across the full range of topics covered by the merged journal. The team of Senior Area Editors consists of Steve Renals, Marcello Federico, Hermann Ney, Haizhou Li, Sharon Gannot, and George Tzanetakis,

whose combined expertise extends over all sub-areas covered by the expanded EDICS. Papers from the new Transactions will appear in both IEEE Xplore and the ACM Digital Library. Publication will be managed by IEEE as a hybrid journal, allowing either traditional or open access manuscript submission. The new journal welcomes novel contributions in all areas previously covered by the two journals, which includes audio, speech, and language processing and the sciences that support them. An expanded editorial board includes members from the ACM community, particularly in the area of language processing. We have also revised the EDICS of the joint transactions, notably with the expansion of the previous Spoken Language Processing category in the IEEE TASLP to the new category of Human Language Technology in the joint IEEE/ACM TASLP which covers both spoken and written language processing. For more information on paper submission, see <http://www.signalprocessingsociety.org/publications/periodicals/taslp/taslp-author-information/>. For the expanded EDICS, see <http://www.signalprocessingsociety.org/publications/periodicals/taslp/taslp-edics/>.

We envision that our merged transactions will be an important means to build the community of audio, speech, and natural language (both spoken and written) researchers, educators, practitioners, and students. To this end, we will strive to strengthen our ties with ACM, IEEE's Audio and Acoustics Signal Processing Technical Committee (TC) and Speech and Language Processing TC as well as with other technical organizations such as ISCA and ACL. With the expanded coverage that goes hand in hand with the merger, we are confident that our transactions will increase their impact and attract more authors and volunteers to better serve our enlarged community.

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