
A Few Words from AFRILEX

In the Foreword to last year's volume of *Lexikos*, Dr. J.C.M.D. du Plessis informed us that that volume was going to be his last as Editor of our journal. He announced that the baton would henceforth be passed on to a rotating triumvirate: Proff. Elsabé Taljard, Danie Prinsloo, and Rufus Gouws. We welcome them, and especially Elsabé, who was found willing to be next in line. Elsabé takes over at a moment when *Lexikos* has reached top speed, and as in a 4 x 100 relay race, the task is just as much a skill event as it is a speed event. Johan, who had been editing *Lexikos* for no less than fourteen of the first twenty years, went from strength to strength with each new volume. With Volume 20, our Editor-par-Excellence put a magnificent capstone to an outstanding tenure. Weighing in at 800 pages, Johan's capstone simply outgrew the concept of a single journal issue, catapulting it to the most valued library shelves, where it now rubs shoulders with the heftiest of dictionaries — quite appropriate for our discipline.

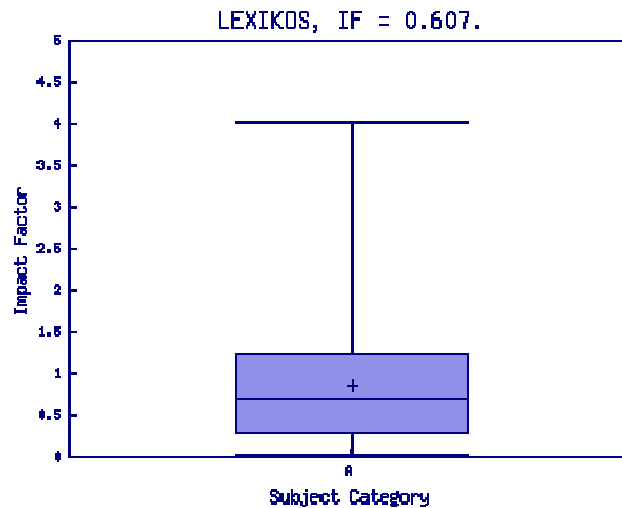
So much for the quantitative achievements. Qualitatively, the rise has been even steeper. *Lexikos* joined the world's top linguistics journals in 2008, when it was ranked 56th out of just 68 journals in the Linguistics category. Dividing the Linguistics category into four quartiles, *Lexikos* had safely joined the list in the last (fourth) quartile. In 2009, the Impact Factor of *Lexikos* more than doubled, from 0.300 (in 2008) to 0.667 (in 2009), now ranking 49th out of 92 journals, and bringing the journal into the third quartile. With last year's volume, finally, *Lexikos* held onto this excellent score, being awarded an Impact Factor of 0.607. Interestingly, in a now much larger list of journals in the Linguistics category, where *Lexikos* currently ranks 66th out of 141 journals, our journal gained yet again, as *Lexikos* entered the second quartile in 2010 — only one quartile away from the absolute top.

In the Journal Citation Reports of Thomson Reuters this can be appreciated graphically with a so-called 'Box Plot', as shown on the next page. The horizontal line that intersects the box is the median Impact Factor for the Linguistics category (A).¹ That median is 0.562 for 2010, so with an Impact Factor of 0.607 for *Lexikos* in 2010, *Lexikos* indeed just entered the second quartile, that is, the range between the median and the horizontal line that forms the top of the box.² Consolidating this excellent track record is now the challenge for the

1 *Lexikos* belongs to just one category, Linguistics, referred to as A in the graph. Some journals belong to multiple categories, and their Impact Factor is then visualized in multiple Box Plots (A, B, etc.).

2 The third quartile is the range between the median and the horizontal line that forms the bottom of the box, while the fourth quartile is the range under the box. The first quartile is the range above the box.

next three editors in our metaphorical relay race. But it's for bringing us this far this fast that we need to be most grateful.



I would like to pile even more praise onto Johan. As if it was not yet enough to spend the equivalent of six months of every year on the production of a volume of *Lexikos*, handling an annual 1 500 e-mails in the process,³ Johan-the-Academic also revealed himself as Johan-the-Generous. He went to extraordinary lengths to help create a true culture of scientific reporting on lexicography in Africa. In addition to the painstaking guidance he offered to new entrants, helping them through the numerous rewritings of their contributions, in 2003 Johan also launched the "*Lexikos* encouragement prize for scholarly writing". In his own words, the aim of this prize was:

To encourage students in lexicography and young lexicographers to conduct significant research in their field of study, and to raise the standard of scholarly writing in the field of lexicography. Competing for the prize therefore takes the form of a scientific article.

— J.C.M.D. du Plessis (2003, from a leaflet included with *Lexikos* 13)

Johan also put his money where his heart was, and further included prize money for the winners.

In conclusion, then, one can confidently state that through the unconditional devotion to his job, Johan not only raised the prestige of *Lexikos* and thus AFRILEX, but also of lexicography as an academic discipline as a whole. To Dr

3 This is a conservative extrapolation, based on just five e-mails with the author(s) of each manuscript, and four e-mails each with the two adjudicators of each manuscript. Acceptance rate is assumed to be about a half.

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Johan du Plessis — valued colleague and dear friend — our sincerest gratitude is extended!

Gilles-Maurice de Schryver
President: AFRILEX