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## Dr. J.C.M.D. du Plessis

### Redakteur van *Lexikos* 1997 tot 2010

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Dr. Johan du Plessis het oor die afgelope veertien jaar sinoniem geword met *Lexikos*. Toe hy in 1997 die redakteurskap van *Lexikos* aanvaar het, het hy nog die veeleisende pos van Eindredakteur van die *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal* beklee. Skielik het hy nie meer kantoorure gehad nie: hy was min of meer permanent op kantoor.

In die voorwoord van die eerste uitgawe van *Lexikos* in 1991 skryf die redakteur, Pieter Hartevelt, dat "die gesprek tussen leksikograaf en taalkundige, asook dié tussen leksikograaf en leksikograaf, op 'n gereelde grondslag by kongresse en seminare behoort plaas te vind" maar dat dit nie altyd prakties haalbaar is "waar die deelnemers hulle oor so 'n uitgestrekte geografiese gebied soos Afrika bevind nie. Daarteenoor dien 'n vakpublikasie as 'n uitstekende medium en voertuig vir so 'n gesprek". *Lexikos* word dan ook in 1996 die ampelike mondstuk van AFRILEX — die leksikografiese vereniging van Afrika.

Johan du Plessis het met die afgelope 14 uitgawes van *Lexikos* op uitmuntende wyse daarin geslaag om nie alleen 'n voertuig te verskaf vir hierdie leksikografiese gesprek nie, maar ook verseker dat die gesprek op 'n wetenskaplike vlak plaasvind wat deur ander beny word. Nie net het hy meer en meer gespreksgenote betrek nie, maar hy het ook studente en leksikograwe opgelei om waardige gespreksgenote te word. Hier moet veral genoem word die talle leksikografiestudente van veral Gaboen en jong of onervare leksikograwe van die Nasionale Leksikografiese Eenhede wat deur hom begelei is om wetenskaplike artikels van gehalte oor die leksikografie te skryf.

*Lexikos* het sy ontstaan te danke aan die strewe van die Buro van die WAT om 'n groeipunt en stimulus vir leksikografiese denke en aktiwiteite te wees. Johan het as Eindredakteur van die WAT in 1997 die redakteurskap van *Lexikos* oorgeneem en na sy uittrede in 2000 vir nog tien jaar voortgegaan as redakteur tot in 2010 met *Lexikos* 20. Hy het vanaf 2001 tot 2010 steeds byna elke dag kantoor toe gekom en miskien 'n bietjie later as die ander personelede op kantoor gekom, maar as almal al huiswaarts gekeer het, was Johan steeds hier. Net Vrydae het hy homself 'n wegbreekkansie gegun.

Danksy die ywer van Johan du Plessis strek die reikwydte van *Lexikos* veel verder as Afrika en word dit in 23 lande versprei. Dit word internasionaal geag as een van die toonaangewendste akademiese joernale in die vakgebied linguïstiek. Die Amerikaanse Thomson Reuters, wat allerweë beskou word as die belangrikste internasionale keurder van kwaliteit in akademiese joernale, het *Lexikos* in ses van hulle indekse opgeneem, nl. *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, *Current Contents/Arts & Humanities*, *Current Contents/Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *Journal Citation Reports/Social Sciences Edition*, *Social Sciences Citation*

*Index*, en *Social Scisearch*. Twee groot Nederlands-Europese uitgewers, naamlik Elsevier en Brill, lys *Lexikos* op hulle aanlynbibliografieë (SCOPUS en *Linguistic Bibliography Online*). As internasionaal geïndekseerde tydskrif, word 'n impakfaktor in die kategorie Linguistiek vir *Lexikos* bereken en met 'n impakfaktor van 0.667, is *Lexikos* nou 49ste in rang uit 92 internasionale tydskrifte in die Linguistiekkategorie, wat dit in die derde kwartiel plaas.

Ook *African Journals OnLine* (AJOL) het in 2009 verlot gevra om *Lexikos* aanlyn te huisves op hulle webwerf vir toonaangewende akademiese joernale uit Afrika.

Die wetenskaplike benadering, toewyding, sorgsaamheid en deeglikheid wat Johan du Plessis as redakteur kenmerk, het ongetwyfeld 'n deurslaggewende rol gespeel in die verwerwing van die statuur en aansien wat *Lexikos* vandag geniet.

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## Dr J.C.M.D. du Plessis Editor of *Lexikos* 1997 to 2010

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Over the past 14 years, Dr Johan du Plessis has become synonymous with *Lexikos*. When he accepted editorship of *Lexikos* in 1997, he was still holding the demanding position of Final Editor at the *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal*. Suddenly he no longer had office hours: he was more or less permanently at the office.

In 1991 the editor of the first volume of *Lexikos*, Pieter Harteveld, stated in the Foreword that "meetings between lexicographer and linguist, as well as between lexicographer and lexicographer, should take place on a regular basis at congresses and seminars", but that it is not always possible in practice, especially "where participants are drawn from such a vast area as Africa. On the other hand a specialist publication serves as an excellent medium and vehicle for such discussions". In 1996 *Lexikos* therefore became the official mouthpiece of AFRILEX — the lexicographic association of Africa.

With the past 14 volumes of *Lexikos* Dr. Johan du Plessis succeeded admirably, not only in supplying a vehicle for this lexicographic discussion, but also in ensuring that the discussion took place on a scientific level that is envied by others. Not only did he involve more and more partners in the discussion, but he also tutored students and lexicographers to make them worthy partners. In this regard one should mention the many lexicography students, especially from Gabon, and young or inexperienced lexicographers from the National Dictionary Units who were guided to write scientific articles of quality.

When *Lexikos* was established, the aim of the Bureau of the WAT was that it should become a growth point and stimulus for lexicographical thought and activity. Johan took over the role as editor of *Lexikos* in 1997 when he was Final Editor of the WAT. After his retirement in 2000 he stayed on as editor for a further ten years — until *Lexikos* 20 in 2010. He continued to come in to the office nearly every day from 2001 to 2010. He may well have arrived somewhat later than the other personnel members but, when everyone else had already gone home, Johan was still here. Only on Fridays he allowed himself to relax and was not seen at the WAT.

Through the enthusiasm of Johan du Plessis the influence of *Lexikos* stretches much further than Africa. It is distributed to 23 countries, and it is regarded internationally as one of the most prestigious academic journals on the subject of linguistics. Thomson Reuters of the USA, which is widely regarded as the most important international judge of quality in academic journals, included *Lexikos* in six of their indices, namely *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, *Current Contents/Arts & Humanities*, *Current Contents/Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *Journal Citation Reports/Social Sciences Edition*, *Social Sciences Citation*

*Index*, and *Social Scisearch*. Two large Dutch-European publishers, Elsevier and Brill, list *Lexikos* on their online bibliographies (SCOPUS and *Linguistic Bibliography Online*). As an internationally indexed journal an impact factor is calculated for *Lexikos* in the category Linguistics. With an impact factor of 0.667, *Lexikos* is now 49th out of 92 international journals in the category of Linguistics, which puts it in the third quartile.

In 2009 *African Journals OnLine* (AJOL) also asked permission to host *Lexikos* online on their website for prestigious academic journals from Africa.

The scientific approach, dedication, attentiveness and thoroughness that distinguishes Johan du Plessis as an editor, undoubtedly played a crucial role in gaining the stature and prestige that *Lexikos* enjoys today.