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## Munin Conference on Scholarly Publishing

Eleventh Annual Conference, 21–22 Nov.  
2016, Tromsø, Norway

# A tale of two journals

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or

how Elsevier pushed open access publishing in Linguistics

Martin Krämer (UiT) & Johan Rooryck (Leiden)



# Timeline

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- 7 October 2015: Letter of Lingua's editorial team to Elsevier, proposing new OA publishing conditions
- 16 October Elsevier refuses to comply
- Editors step down
- Editorial board steps down
- Glossa founded – genuine Open Access
- Interim editors Waltraud Paul (CRLAO Paris) and Guido Vanden Wyngaerd (Leuven) til 1 January 2016
- Editors were contractually bound to Elsevier until end of year
- Editorial board had no contracts
- resigned with immediate effect and re-form as editorial board of Glossa
  
- What had happened here?

# The editors' vision of OA Lingua

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- Editors' demands in letter from 7 October:
  - Reduce APCs from €1800 to 400
  - Transfer ownership back to editorial team
  - Funding for this APC price had been secured by editorial team for the first five years
  - through VSNU (Association of Dutch Universities), NWO (National Foundation for Dutch Research) and KNAW (Royal Academy of Sciences of the Netherlands)
- 
- Editor-in-chief (Johan Rooryck) also frustrated by subscription price policy, high prices mean fewer and fewer libraries able to afford Lingua
  - More and more scholars refuse to review for Lingua because of Elsevier's image

# Elsevier's response on 16. 10. 15

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- Publisher can't accept transfer of ownership
- No mention of OA proposal

# Making waves

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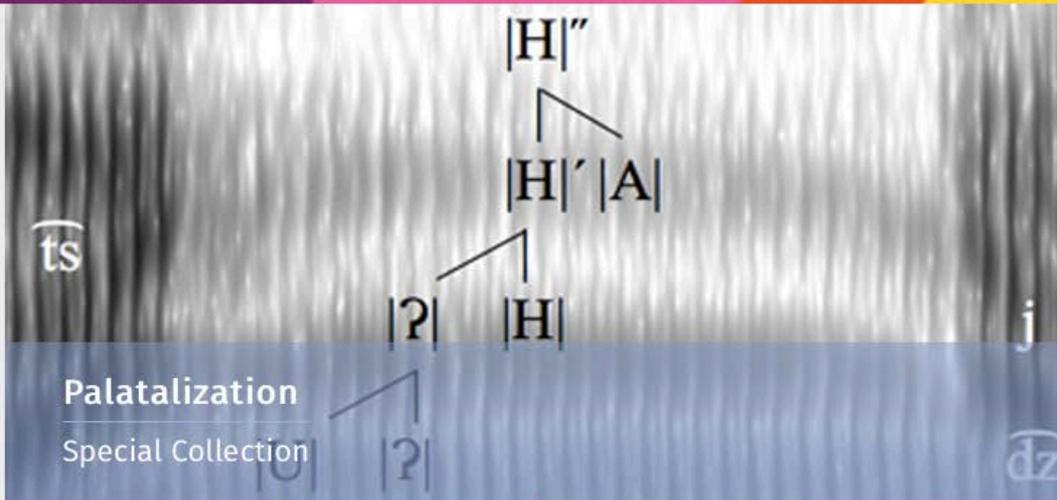
- Guest editors of special issues withdrew them and moved them to Glossa
- The Lingua news was tweeted and retweeted, shared on facebook etc.
- Discussed in linguists' and linguistics blogs (e.g., Kai von Fintel's, Eric Bakovic')
- Inside higher Ed reported several times
- Times Higher Education
- The Independent
- Fortune
- Slate ...
- Linguists rallied around the editors on social media,
- Universities and university library associations in the U.K., U.S. and elsewhere expressed their support

# Glossa

a journal of general linguistics

Start Submission

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Palatalization  
Special Collection

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## Focus and Scope

The journal is dedicated to general linguistics. It publishes contributions from all areas of linguistics, provided they contain theoretical implications that shed light on the nature of language and the language faculty. Contributions should be of interest to all linguists, independently of their own specialisation.

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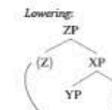
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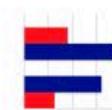
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# Glossa: A journal of general linguistics

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- Published by Ubiquity Press
- Hosted by LingOA (Linguistics in Open Access, a non-profit organizationn)
- APCs covered by Association of Dutch Universities (VSNU) and the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO)
- Long-term funding secured by Open Library of Humanities (on OLH see Kingsley's talk this morning)
- 14. 11. '16: 300 submissions, 45 articles published since April 1, 47 in production
- First special collection completed in June 2016 (edited by me and Olga Urek)

# Lingua, in the meantime

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- Had trouble finding a new editorial board and reviewers
- Most articles published in 2016 still backlog from old team
- Number of articles per issue reduced
- In September severe case of plagiarism detected
- Referred to as “Zombie Lingua” by blogging linguists

# Linguistic journal landscape

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- Most journals still commercial
- Ling OA =  
Glossa,  
Laboratory Phonology (came from de Gruyter in 2015),  
J. of Portuguese Linguistics
- Lots of small OA journals, e.g., Borealis, Nordlyd (both at UiT)
- Top journals all commercial, hybrid OA:  
Linguistic Inquiry,  
Natural Language & Linguistic Theory,  
Phonology
- Language (LSA) green OA

# Linguistic journal landscape

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- Linguistic Inquiry (MIT Press): Doesn't reveal prices publicly
- Natural Language & Linguistic Theory (Springer): APC \$3000 + VAT  
Subscription \$1460
- Lingua (Elsevier): APC \$1800 + VAT + 24 months embargo,  
Institutional subscription \$2211 or \$1900 for print-only
- Phonology (CUP): APC \$2835  
Subscription only bundled \$473
- Language (LSA) partly OA or green OA since 2013: 12 months embargo  
for non-members and readers without Project Muse subscription, or  
\$500 APC to waive embargo  
Institutional subscription \$300

# Linguistic publishing in the Norwegian context

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- All publication channels are ranked in NSD's Register over vitenskapelige publiseringskanaler
- Publication and ranking impact funding directly
- All major journals mentioned above = level 2
- All Ling OA journals = level 1
- together with local series like Nordlyd
- Lingua still level 2
- The system is not flexible enough for such coups. In the Lingua-Glossa case the level should have moved with the academic expertise
- If you want to be an (economically) successful researcher in Linguistics in Norway you hide your results behind a paywall or pay high APCs.
- Norwegian system causes imbalance of chances between rich and not-so-rich institutions

# Conclusions

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- The LinguaGlossa story shows:
- Flipping to OA is a win-win situation:  
Researchers are more in control of their output;  
Universities reduce costs massively (no APCs, no subscription fees)
- The infrastructure and funding is there. (LingOA, Open Humanities Library)
- Still systems are not quite rigged for fast transition
- And editors of many major journals are reluctant to go down that bumpy road to freedom.

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**Thank you!**



# Selected references

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