

A Festschrift on the occasion of Johan Rooryck's 65th birthday

Waltraud Paul*, Guido Vanden Wyngaerd[#], and Aysa Ekanger[†]

*CRLAO, CNRS-EHESS-INALCO, [#]KU Leuven, [†]UiT The Arctic University of Norway

This volume celebrates our colleague and friend Johan Rooryck on the occasion of his 65th birthday. Johan is both known for his achievements in (Romance) linguistics, his widely publicized resignation from Elsevier as the editor of *Lingua* and subsequent foundation of the open access journal *Glossa*, and his strong advocacy for open access. On this special occasion, we briefly revisit his achievements in these three domains.

Perusing Johan's publication list, one cannot help but be struck by his broad intellectual range. A Romance linguist in origin, he started out, rather classically, with a PhD dissertation on control verbs in French. But he soon branched out into other languages and empirical domains, including negation, binding, possession, modality, and evidentiality, to name only the most important ones. There is a remarkable consistency in his output over the duration of his career, which spans several decades. As a testament to the breadth of his work, we can mention an excursion into the culinary domain, in a 1989 paper on fruit, vegetables, and number, which compares *pumpkin* and *lettuce* with *potato* and *carrot*, contrasting the 'metrolinguistic hypothesis' with the 'gastrolinguistic hypothesis' to account for the number properties of fruit and vegetable names. Another excursion ventures into the domain of poetry, with a linguistic analysis of a sonnet by Mallarmé, written for a Festschrift for a colleague in French literature at Leiden University.

In addition to his own publication record, Johan has also been instrumental in fostering the careers of others, as witnessed by the numerous PhD dissertations he has supervised. Such a record of successful PhD completions does not come about out of nowhere. It requires a dedicated supervisor willing to invest significant amounts of time and energy in his students, which is exactly the kind of supervisor that Johan is. Many of his former students have gone on to have a career in linguistics themselves, while others have pursued opportunities elsewhere. One of them even served as Minister of Education in the Portuguese government.

Johan has also been very productive and successful in securing research funding. He has always been very generous with his time when opportunities arose, often helping his students and colleagues to transform the seed of an idea into a viable project proposal. His record of successful grant applications shows that he possesses a unique ability to do just that.

In 2015, Johan's life took a dramatic turn. As an editor of Elsevier's flagship linguistic journal *Lingua* for over 15 years, he had become increasingly dissatisfied with Elsevier's policies. The conflict came to a head, and it resulted in Johan leaving Elsevier to found a new fully open access journal, *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics*. What made this move unique and successful was the fact that Johan was not alone: he was joined at *Glossa* by the entire former Editorial Team and Board of *Lingua*, as well as *Lingua*'s reader and author community. The *Lingua*-to-*Glossa* transition was only possible because Johan was immensely respected by the linguistics community for his work as editor-in-chief of *Lingua*. It was evidently Johan and not the successive managers of Elsevier who had created *Lingua*'s reputation as one of the best venues for linguistic research covering all its subfields.

Two of us, Guido and Waltraud, were involved in the *Lingua*-to-*Glossa* transition from the very beginning. Given that Johan was still bound to Elsevier by a contract, we served as interim co-editors during November and December 2015. We took care of the huge number of submissions that colleagues had withdrawn from *Lingua* in order to submit them instead to *Glossa* and thus support this new diamond journal. The solidarity with *Glossa* was immense and clearly showed the growing frustration and disgust with the aggressive pricing policy that Elsevier had subjected university libraries to. While more and more linguists were no longer willing to give their time and expertise for free to a highly profitable commercial publisher such as Elsevier and had therefore declined to review for *Lingua*, finding reviewers for *Glossa* was extremely easy and a pleasure; colleagues even apologized when for diverse reasons they were unable to accept a review request!

This period of absolute frenzy was followed by months of preparation as the new journal took shape and started taking off. Since neither Ubiquity Press (the publisher of *Glossa* until 2020) nor their typesetters had experience with linguistics articles, they required extensive training and feedback, especially when it came to correctly presenting the examples with their necessary alignment of the original language material, the glosses, and the idiomatic translations. Johan steered us through these eventful times with his usual calm, competence, and humour. Since the publication of its first four articles on April 1, 2016 (cf. Johan's editorial in Rooryck 2016), *Glossa* has maintained its reputation as a high-quality journal for research in all areas of linguistics. May it continue to thrive!

Glossa was not the only linguistics journal Johan helped move from behind the paywall: he was involved in setting up LingOA (Linguistics in Open Access), a foundation under Dutch law that was officially launched in October 2015. LingOA's original mission was to promote open access in linguistics by helping journals to flip from traditional models of publication to open access. Together with *Glossa*, three other linguistics journals moved to an open access model: *Laboratory Phonology*, *Italian Journal of Linguistics*, and *Journal of Portuguese Linguistics*. Johan has since been engaged in numerous initiatives promoting unrestricted access to scholarly knowledge, and is now widely known in the open access community: his open access CV is no less impressive than his linguistics one, even though it covers a shorter time span. Johan's involvement in cOAlition S added a scholar's voice to this funder-led energetic push for open access. Projects such as DIAMAS, CRAFT-OA, PALOMERA, and ALMASI have been directed at the development of the scholarly infrastructure and standards for open access journals and books – in Europe and beyond. As co-coordinator of the European Diamond Capacity Hub – a multi-faceted programme designed to strengthen the diamond open access community – Johan now builds on the momentum of these projects he has contributed to. In all of these initiatives, Johan has been active in emphasizing quality, sustainability, equity, and the role of community in scholarly communication, and his work capacity and level of enthusiasm and determination continue to amaze people beyond linguistics circles.

In 2022, Johan was awarded an honorary doctorate at UiT The Arctic University of Norway for his work on open access publishing and open science. UiT is the national forerunner in open science initiatives in Norway, and has benefited from Johan's open science advocacy more than once. Audiences at the Munin Conference, a UiT-based international conference focusing on open science, have had the pleasure of hearing him present on several occasions. Johan is also a highly valued member of the scientific advisory board for TROLLing, a curated repository for open data and code – run by UiT and open to linguists from around the world free of charge. And the *Lingua-to-Glossa* story is frequently recounted in this university's PhD courses on scholarly publishing.

Given this background, it is only fitting that this Festschrift in honour of Johan is published in a diamond open access linguistics journal, *Nordlyd*, hosted on UiT's non-profit publishing platform for diamond scholarly journals and series, Septentrio Academic Publishing.

With this volume we celebrate Johan's contributions to science, which we hope to continue to enjoy for many years to come.

References

- Rooryck, Johan. 2016. Introducing *Glossa*. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 1 1: 1. <https://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.91>.