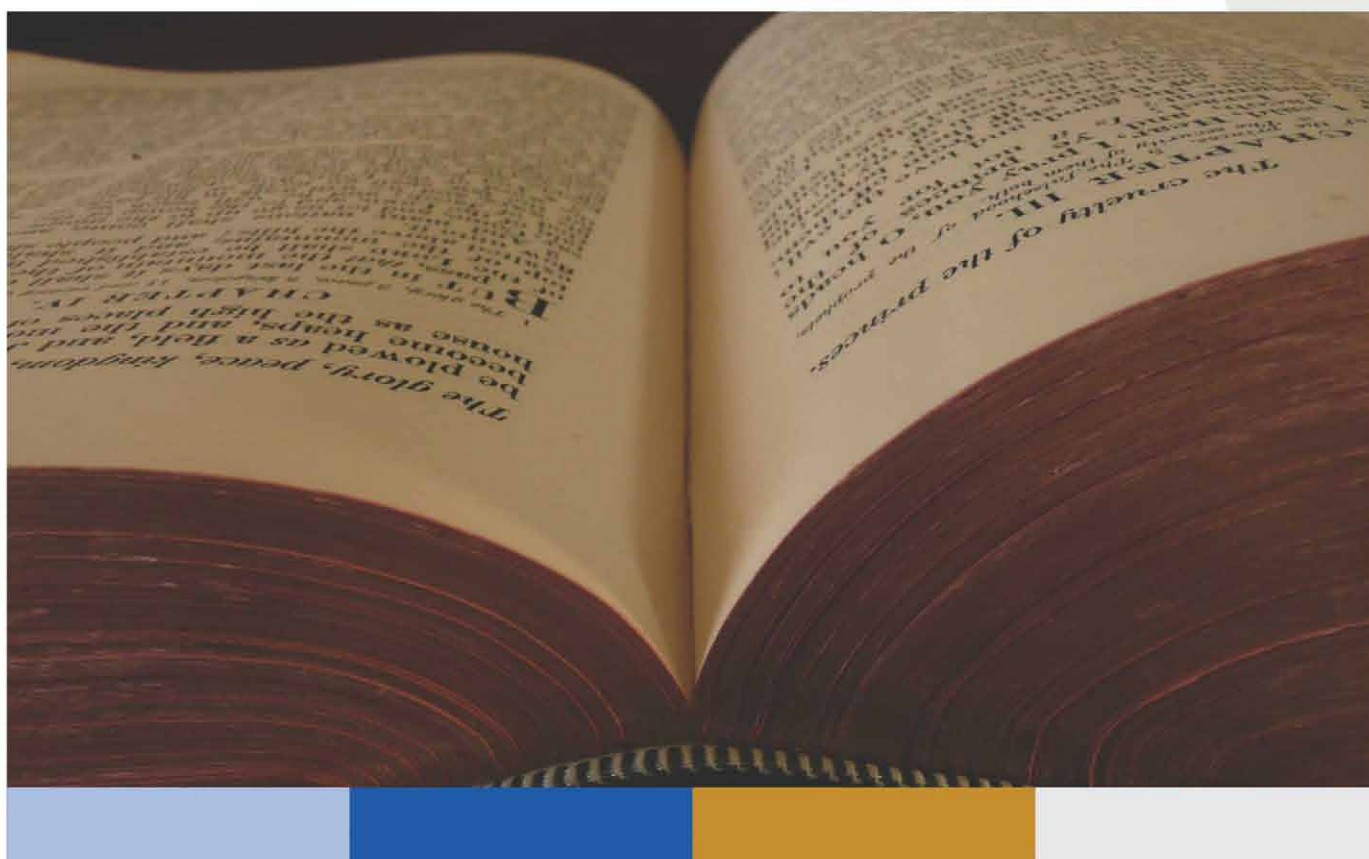
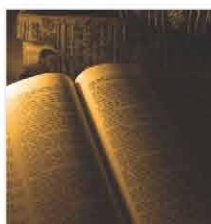


Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa  
Report on Grouped Peer Review of Scholarly Journals

## Humanities Part 1: Literature Group

### *Classics, Literature & Languages*



science  
& technology

Department:  
Science and Technology  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

© Academy of Science of South Africa  
ISBN: 978-0-9869835-6-6

October 2015

Published by:  
Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf)  
PO Box 72135, Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria, South Africa, 0040  
Tel: +27 12 349 6600 Fax: +27 86 576 9520  
E-mail: [admin@assaf.org.za](mailto:admin@assaf.org.za)

Reproduction is permitted, provided the source and publisher are appropriately acknowledged.

The Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) was inaugurated in May 1996. It was formed in response to the need for an Academy of Science consonant with the dawn of democracy in South Africa: activist in its mission of using science and scholarship for the benefit of society, with a mandate encompassing all scholarly disciplines that use an open-minded and evidence-based approach to build knowledge. ASSAf thus adopted in its name the term 'science' in the singular as reflecting a common way of enquiring rather than an aggregation of different disciplines. Its Members are elected on the basis of a combination of two principal criteria, academic excellence and significant contributions to society.

The Parliament of South Africa passed the Academy of Science of South Africa Act (*Act 67 of 2001*), which came into force on 15 May 2002. This made ASSAf the only academy of science in South Africa officially recognised by government and representing the country in the international community of science academies and elsewhere.

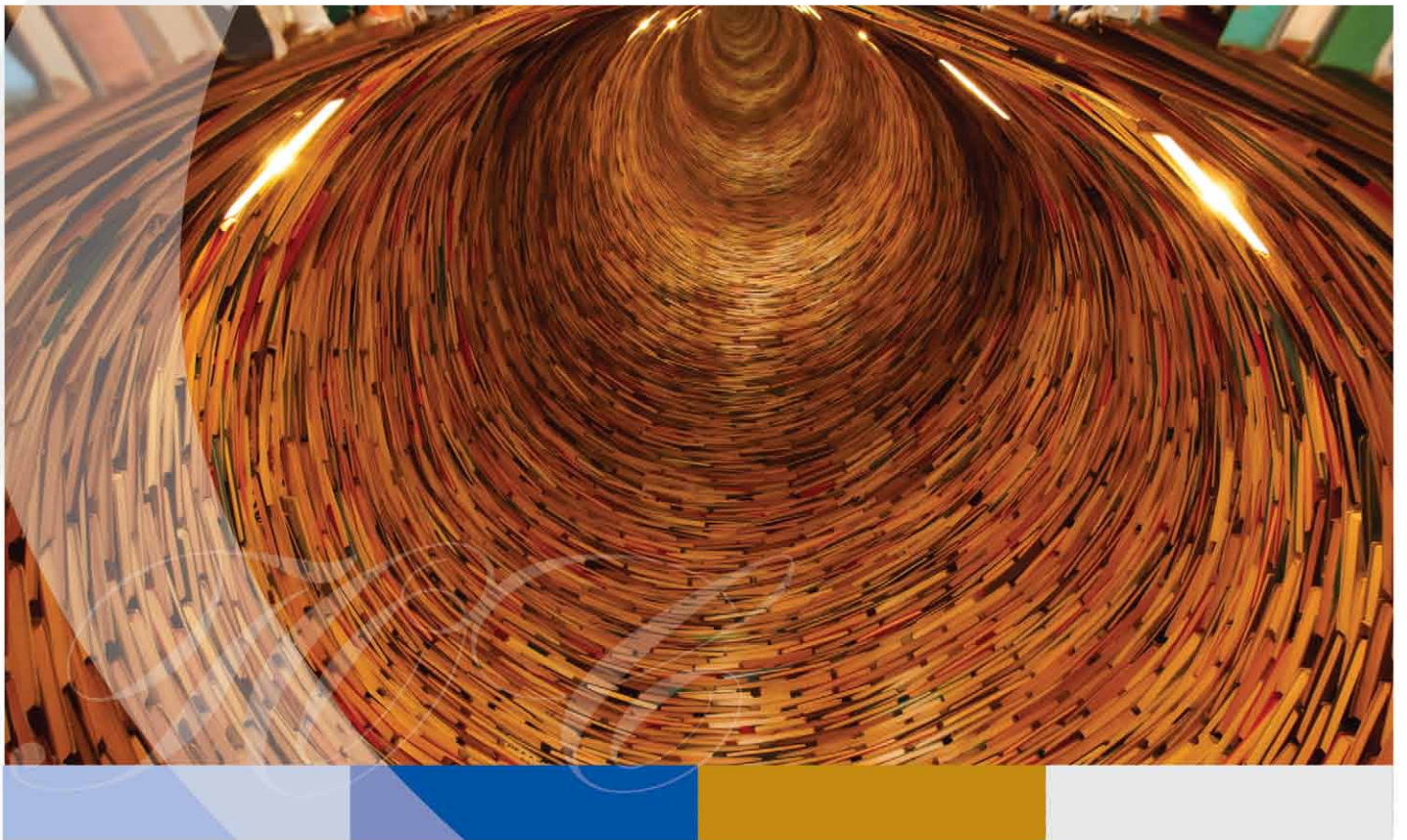
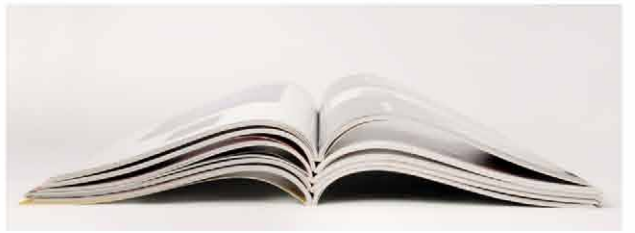
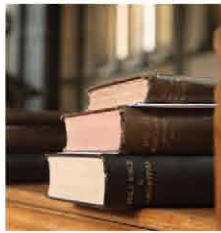
## Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa Report on Grouped Peer Review of Scholarly Journals

## Humanities Part 1: Literature Group

*Classics, Literature & Languages*







Acronyms/Abbreviations .....	5
Preface.....	7
Foreword.....	9
1 Periodic Peer Review of South African Scholarly Journals: Approved Process Guidelines and Criteria .....	11
1.1 Background .....	11
1.2 ASSAf Peer Review Panels .....	11
1.3 Initial Criteria .....	11
1.3.1 Editorial process-related criteria .....	11
1.3.2 Business-related criteria.....	12
1.3.3 Bibliometric assessments .....	12
1.4 Process Guidelines .....	12
1.4.1 Setting up panels .....	13
1.4.2 Setting up and organising the panels.....	13
1.4.3 Panel meetings and procedures.....	14
1.4.4 Post-meeting procedures and panel reports .....	15
2 Special Considerations Concerning South African Humanities Journals: Part 1 – Literature Group Classics, Literature & Languages.....	15
3 Panel Members.....	16
4 Consensus Reviews of Journals in the Group.....	17
4.1 Special Area .....	17
4.1.1 <i>Acta Academica</i> .....	17
4.1.2 <i>Nomina Africana: Journal of the Names Society of Southern Africa</i> .....	19
4.1.3 <i>Lexikos</i> .....	21
4.1.4 <i>Southern African Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies</i> .....	23
4.1.5 <i>Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies</i> .....	24

<b>4.2 Classics</b>	<b>26</b>
4.2.1 <i>Acta Classica</i>	26
4.2.2 <i>Akroterion: Journal for the Classics in SA</i>	28
4.2.3 <i>Scholia: Studies in Classical Antiquity</i>	29
4.2.4 <i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>	31
<b>4.3 African Languages</b>	<b>32</b>
4.3.1 <i>Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Southern Africa</i>	32
4.3.2 <i>South African Journal of African Languages/Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Afrikatale</i>	33
4.3.3 <i>Ensovoort</i>	35
<b>4.4 English Literature: A</b>	<b>37</b>
4.4.1 <i>English Studies in Africa</i>	37
4.4.2 <i>English in Africa</i>	38
4.4.3 <i>English Academy Review</i>	40
4.4.4 <i>Scrutiny2</i>	42
<b>4.5 English Literature: B</b>	<b>42</b>
4.5.1 <i>Journal of Literary Studies</i>	42
4.5.2 <i>Alternation</i>	44
4.5.3 <i>Shakespeare in Southern Africa</i>	46
4.5.4 <i>Current Writing</i>	48
<b>4.6 Afrikaans Literature</b>	<b>50</b>
4.6.1 <i>LitNet Akademies</i>	50
4.6.2 <i>Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans</i>	52
4.6.3 <i>Stilet: Tydskrif van die Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging</i>	54
4.6.4 <i>Tydskrif vir Letterkunde</i>	56
<b>4.7 Romance Languages</b>	<b>59</b>
4.7.1 <i>Italian Studies in Southern Africa</i>	59
4.7.2 <i>French Studies in Southern Africa</i>	61
4.7.3 <i>Acta Germanica: German Studies in Africa</i>	63
<b>4.8 Linguistics</b>	<b>65</b>
4.8.1 <i>Literator</i>	65
4.8.2 <i>Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies</i>	67
4.8.3 <i>SPiL/SPiL Plus: Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics</i>	68

## Appendix A: Questionnaire Sent to Each Editor of Journals being Peer Reviewed..... 71

## Appendix B: Requests to Independent Peer Reviewers ..... 72

# Acronyms/Abbreviations

ACLALS	Association of Commonwealth Literature and Languages
AJOL	African Journals Online
AFRILEX	African Association of Lexicographers
AFFSA	Association of French Studies in Southern Africa
AGM	Annual general meeting
ALASA	African Language Association of Southern Africa
ALV	<i>Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging</i>
API	Association of Professional Italianists
ASSAf	Academy of Science of South Africa
CASA	Classical Association of South Africa
CHE	Council on Higher Education
CSPiSA	Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa
CSSALL	Centre for the Study of Southern African Literature and Languages
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DST	Department of Science and Technology
EAR	<i>English Academy Review</i>
HEQC	Higher Education Quality Committee
HESA	Higher Education South Africa
IBSS	International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
ICOS	International Council of Onomastic Sciences
ISSA	<i>Italian Studies in Southern Africa</i>
ISEA	Institute for the Study of English in Africa
JLS	<i>Journal of Literary Studies</i>
JNSL	<i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i>
JSTOR	Journal Storage
MLA	Modern Language Association
NISC	National Inquiry Services Centre
NRF	National Research Foundation
NWU	North-West University
RU	Rhodes University
SAACLAIS	Southern African Association of Commonwealth Literature and Languages
SAGV	Southern African Association of German Studies
SAFOS	Southern African Folklore Society
SAVN	<i>Suider-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Neerlandistiek/Southern African Association for Dutch Studies</i>
SciELO	Scientific Electronic Library Online
SPU	Scholarly Publishing Unit
SPiL	<i>Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics</i>
SSOSA	Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa
SU	Stellenbosch University
UCT	University of Cape Town
UJ	University of Johannesburg
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
Unisa	University of South Africa
UWC	University of the Western Cape
WAT	<i>Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal</i>
Wits	University of the Witwatersrand
WoS	Web of Science







# Preface

## Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPISA)

### *Discipline-grouped Peer-review Reports on South African Scholarly Journals*

This is the sixth in a series of discipline-grouped evaluations of South African scholarly journals. Eventually it is hoped that all scholarly journals in the country will have been subjected to independent, multiple peer review as part of a quality assurance process initiated by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf). The quality assurance process is a precursor to the identification of journal titles to be added to the open access platform Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) South Africa. Only journals of a sufficiently high quality will be included in this fully indexed, free online multi-national platform, now also directly featured on the Thomson Reuters Web of Science (WoS) portal.

The traditional focus of peer review is on a single journal article, book chapter or book. It is less common to subject journals to independent, multiple peer review, as these are usually evaluated in qualitative, reputational terms, or bibliometrically, by means of impact factors.

The peer review of South African scholarly journal titles thus required the development of a new methodology that was piloted successfully with the first two discipline-grouped peer-review reports, published in 2010, on the *Social Sciences and Related Fields* and the *Agricultural and Related Basic Life Sciences*. This work was not achieved without difficulty, as the process was unfamiliar to reviewers accustomed to reviewing single articles.

ASSAf has confidence in this ambitious programme, which is aimed at ensuring that the bulk of South African scholarly journals are of a high quality. The process goes beyond the familiar journal assessment approaches mentioned above by providing concrete recommendations that enable the editor(s) of journals not deemed to be of a sufficient standard to take corrective action and provides an opportunity for them to reapply for evaluation.

The process centred on multi-perspective, discipline-based evaluation panels appointed by the Academy Council on the recommendation of the Academy's Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPISA); journal editors were requested to complete specially designed questionnaires, and peer reviewers were selected from a spectrum of scholars in the fields concerned. Each editor was asked to provide answers to a set of questions, which were used to address the scope and focus of the peer-reviewed articles in the journals under review, the authorship generally, and the presence or absence of enrichment features, such as editorials, topical reviews, book reviews and news and views articles. Peer reviewers were asked to scrutinise the responses to the questionnaire to assess the quality of the journals. (The editors' questionnaire and peer reviewers' set of questions are appended to this report.)

Each discipline-based evaluation panel met to discuss the individual peer reviews and questionnaires and consolidated them into a consensus review for each journal. Final formulations and recommendations were prepared, including suggestions for improvement from both the peer reviewers and the panel. The responsible editors were given an opportunity to check the accuracy of the information in each individual journal report, and the final version of the report was submitted for approval to the ASSAf Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa and the Council of the Academy of Science of South Africa.

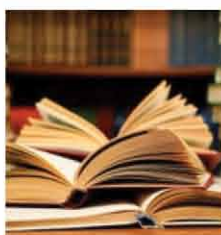
As the latest in the series of reports, it is evident that much has been learned from previous discipline groups, and that, going forward, the process will become more streamlined, such that subsequent reports will follow in rapid succession.

I would like to thank the Chair of the Panel, Prof Peter Vale, members of the evaluation panel, and particularly, Prof Wieland Gevers, who was responsible for overseeing ASSAf's peer review panels' activities, for his leadership in this quality-assurance process. As from mid-2014 Prof Robin Crewe is overseeing this process. I acknowledge the important role played by the staff of the Academy in supporting the process: Ms Susan Veldsman, Director of the Scholarly Publishing Unit, and the Project Officers who worked under her direction over the years, namely, Mr Thabo Radebe, Ms Gugulethu Mtsweni, Ms Desré Stead and Ms Tracy Lukhele. Ms Patricia Scholtz is thanked for copy-editing. Finally, I acknowledge the contribution of the many individual peer reviewers who have each contributed towards strengthening the quality of South African scholarly journals.



**Prof Roseanne Diab**

Executive Officer: Academy of Science of South Africa



*Foreword*

# Foreword

## Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)

### University Policy and Development Support

On 1 February 2013, the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) published a call for public comments on the proposed improvements to the Policy and Procedures for Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions, 2003 in the *Government Gazette* (DHET 2003). The publication of this improved policy was part of a consultative process with the higher education sector. The department welcomes input and comments on the proposed improvements to the policy, which aims to increase research productivity and reward high-quality research published in accredited journals, books and published conference proceedings. There can be no doubt that the policy has boosted the performance of the sector in terms of research outputs and that this momentum has to be sustained and improved further. Thus, the proposed improvements are meant to propel the sector further in this regard.

Through the proposed improvements, the policy seeks to include additional journal lists and/or indices for the purpose of subsidy allocations. Moreover, all indices or lists will be distributed separately, well in advance, rather than included in the actual policy. The department will determine, in consultation with the sector, which journal lists and indices will be approved each year. As is the current practice, the department will issue the indices and the approved list of South African Journals on or before 31 January of every year. In an attempt to improve the quality of local journals, the policy seeks to encourage all journals on the approved list of South African journals to reach international standards in order to apply for inclusion in accredited international lists or indices.

Addressing the decline in scholarly book publications, as well as issues raised in the report on *Scholarly Books: Their Production, Use and Evaluation in South Africa Today* (ASSAF 2009), the policy proposes that a book be subsidised to a maximum of 10 units or a portion thereof, based on the number of pages being claimed relative to the total number of pages of the book. The policy further suggests the improvement in the number of units for book publications in order to encourage production of, and publication in books. The assumption is that academic books are important.

The department also seeks to develop a list of reputable publishers, as it is difficult for academics or researchers to obtain evidence of peer review from publishers, both locally and internationally.

Moreover, the department has improved the processes and procedures through which published conference proceedings are subsidised. More improvements in this regard are addressed in the policy. All the approved indices contain a large number of published conference proceedings that undergo quality scrutiny.

The department welcomes suggestions on the improvement of its work and that of this policy in particular.

The overall objective must be constantly improving the performance and measurement of the sector. Most importantly, the quality of research outputs needs to be improved.

It is anticipated that the quality of research outputs will be emphasised over the next few years in order to enhance and reward quality where it is measureable.

The policy will be focused on measurements for quality research output and rewarding institutions. It is important that universities recognise all outputs, including those not addressed by this policy.

Additions to the policy regarding the recognition of creative outputs are currently being undertaken. Because textbooks and other outputs are important, universities are urged to put systems in place in order to include these.

### Mr Mahlubi Mabizela

Chief Director: University Education Policy and Development

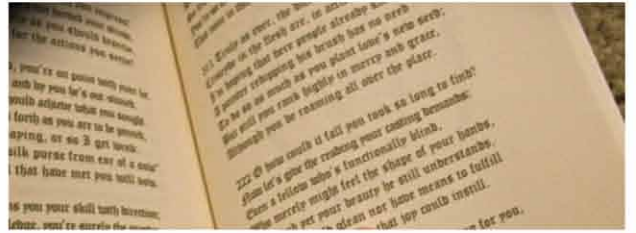
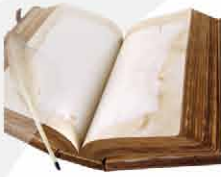
### Mr Walter Ntuli

Senior Administrative Clerk: University Education Policy and Development

### References:

ASSAf. 2009. *Scholarly Books: Their Production, Use and Evaluation in South Africa Today*. Pretoria: Academy of Science of South Africa.

South Africa. Department of Education. 2003. Policy and Procedures for Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions. *Government Gazette* 25583, Notice 7794, 14 October 2003. Pretoria: Government Printer.



# Journals



# 1 Periodic Peer Review of South African Scholarly Journals: Approved Process Guidelines and Criteria

## 1.1 Background

During the launch meeting of the ASSAf-led National Scholarly Editors' Forum held on 25 July 2007, the 112 participants supported ASSAf and its Committee on Scholarly Publishing in South Africa (CSPiSA) in taking the lead in the implementation of Recommendation 5 of the 2006 ASSAf report on *A Strategic Approach to Research Publishing in South Africa*. This recommendation dealt specifically with the need for a system of quality assurance for over 260 of the country's journals which are accredited by the Department of Education:

**Recommendation No 5: that ASSAf be mandated jointly by the Departments of Education and Science and Technology to carry out external peer review and associated quality audit of all South African research journals in five-year cycles, probably best done in relation to groups of titles sharing a particular broad disciplinary focus, in order to make recommendations for improved functioning of each journal in the national and international system.**

## 1.2 ASSAf Peer Review Panels

The quality assurance system for journals is conducted primarily through discipline-grouped peer reviews carried out by a series of purpose-appointed peer review panels (PRPs) drawn from the ranks of researchers and other experienced scholars in and around the fields concerned in each case, as well as persons with practical (technical) publishing experience. The proposed ASSAf PRPs are overseen by the CSPiSA, but appointed by the Academy Council. Their draft reports are sent to relevant stakeholders for comment and input, before finalisation by the PRP concerned, and ultimate consideration sequentially by the CSPiSA and the ASSAf Council.

The following quote from the ASSAf report clarifies the approach to be followed in the review of the journals and some aspects of the approach proposed:

*The periodic, grouped **quality assurance-directed peer review of South African research periodicals** would function analogously to the quality audits of the CHE/HEQC, would be developed as an outcome of the Editors' Forum, and would focus on: the quality of editorial and review process; fitness of, and for purpose; positioning in the global cycle of new and old journals listed and indexed in databases; financial sustainability; and scope and size issues. The **ASSAf panels** carrying out the reviews would each comprise 6 – 8 experts, some of whom would not be directly drawn from the areas concerned, and would require data-gathering, interviews, and international comparisons, before reports with recommendations are prepared, approved, and released to stakeholders such as national associations, the Departments of Science and Technology and of Education, the CHE/HEQC, the NRF and HESA.*

It must be emphasised that the main purpose of the ASSAf review process for journals is to improve the quality of scholarly publication in the country in a manner that is consonant with traditional scholarly practices – primarily voluntary peer review. It is not an attempt to control these publications in any way. ASSAf respects the independence and freedom of researchers and of the research process itself as important preconditions for the critical and innovative production of new knowledge. At the same time, the work of South African researchers has to be assessed, both qualitatively and quantitatively, as part of the global community of scholars and scientists, and in this respect ASSAf has an obligation to contribute to the improvement of quality of such work where possible.

## 1.3 Initial Criteria

A number of criteria were explored in the part of the ASSAf report (Chapter 4) that dealt with the survey of the over 200 then-current editors of accredited South African scholarly journals. Other possible criteria were proposed in other sections of the report, or have since been suggested by members of the CSPiSA or the National Scholarly Editors' Forum. These are grouped and listed below (These are consolidated in the questionnaire presented in Appendix A):

### 1.3.1 Editorial process-related criteria: generally based on the *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review* developed by ASSAf

- Longevity of the journal (continuous or discontinuous), in years.
- Number of original peer-reviewed papers published per year during the last five years, plus number of manuscripts submitted, plus number rejected out-of-hand or after peer review; average length of published papers; and 'author demography' of papers submitted and published.

- Number and nature of peer reviewers used per manuscript and the overall number per year, including institutional and national/international spread, plus quality (as per the *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*) and average length of peer-review reports.
- Average delay before publication of submitted manuscripts and frequency of publication.
- Professional stature and experience of the editor; how he/she is selected; how long the editor has been in service; and the success or otherwise in addressing the major issues in the field, through commissioning of reviews/articles, editorial comment, etc.
- Number and professional stature/experience of editorial board members, plus selection processes, turnover, and nature of involvement in handling of manuscripts or in other functions. If international members serve on the board (desirable), whether they are a mix from developed and developing countries.
- Existence and nature of editorial policy/guidelines, plus how often these are revised/updated; conflict-of-interest policy (e.g. how manuscripts are assessed when submitted by an editor or board member as author/co-author).
- Errata published – how many per year?
- Value-adding features, such as editorials, news and views pieces, correspondence on papers, reviews, policy/topical fora, etc. – how many, and how are they generated? What proportion are they of the total pages in journal issues?
- Any peer-review process of the journal already in place (e.g. by professional association).

### 1.3.2 Business-related criteria

- Frequency and regularity ('on time') of publication.
- Print runs (redundant stock, direct versus indirect distribution to readers).
- Production model and service provider(s).
- Paid and unpaid advertising.
- Sponsorship and *quid pro quos*.
- Paid and unpaid subscription base and how this is marketed. Cost level of print and (if applicable) e-subscriptions.
- E-publication. If this is done, what are the website/portal and access possibilities for users? What evaluation is done, especially in respect of tagging and searchability?
- Whether there are html/xml and pdf versions, or only pdf, and whether multimedia is used.
- The portals for open access, if provided. If not e-published, whether this is being considered, and how.
- Total income and expenditure per annum.
- Distribution to international destinations.
- Indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS and/or International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS), or any other international database? If indexed, for how long and how continuously?
- Offers to purchase from multi-national publishers.
- Copyright arrangements.

### 1.3.3 Bibliometric assessments

- Citation practice – how many authors are listed?
- If applicable, what are the WoS-type impact factors (and various derivatives) over the last five years?
- Are reviews a regular/increasing feature?
- If articles are not in English, are English abstracts mandatory?

## 1.4 Process Guidelines for Setting up the Panels, Peer Reviewers, Panel Meetings and Reports for the Subject Peer Review of Journals

### Background to ASSAf Peer Review Panels

The quality assurance system for journals is implemented primarily through discipline-grouped peer reviews carried out by a series of purpose-appointed peer review panels drawn from the ranks of researchers and other experienced scholars in and around the fields concerned in each case, as well as persons with practical (technical) publishing experience. The proposed ASSAf PRPs are overseen by the CSPiSA, but appointed by the Academy Council. Their draft reports are sent to relevant stakeholders for comment and relevant input, before finalisation by the PRP concerned, and final consideration sequentially by the CSPiSA and the ASSAf Council.

### Role of the Scholarly Publishing Unit (SPU)

An ASSAf project officer of the Scholarly Publications Unit is assigned to support each panel chair, but reports to the Director of the Scholarly Publishing Unit in terms of review logistics and the production of draft and final review reports. The project officer is responsible for the following issues and activities:

- selecting and appointing panel members;

- obtaining completed questionnaires from editors;
- organising panel activities, including meetings; selecting independent peer reviewers for each journal or groups of titles;
- drafting consolidated version 1 reports; and
- obtaining CSPiSA and ASSAf Council approval for final, publishable panel reports.

#### **1.4.1 Setting up panels**

The proposed PRPs are chaired by an ASSAf Member and appointed by the Council, which assumes accountability for the PRP's work in helping to develop a credible quality assurance mechanism for South African scholarly journals.

##### **Selecting Panel Members**

- The appointment process of PRP members is managed by the Chair of the CSPiSA until the panel and its chair have been appointed.
- CSPiSA members are asked to assist in preparing a list of at least 12 – 13 names, of which the last 4 – 5 shall be considered to be potential alternates to the first 7 – 8.
- A typical PRP consists of 6 – 8 members.
- Each name must be accompanied by critical personal and career details, as well as by a brief motivation, to enable the CSPiSA, and later the ASSAf Council, to apply its mind to the question of constituting the best possible, most competent PRP.
- The draft list of potential members is published on the ASSAf website, and is also circulated for comment to members of the National Scholarly Editors Forum at least two weeks before the Council meeting where the appointments are to be made.
- All comments received will be noted in making the final decision.
- All provisionally listed persons are required to complete and submit conflict-of-interest forms prior to the Council's consideration of the list in question.

##### **Criteria for Membership**

- The individuals selected to serve on a PRP should have experience and credibility in the disciplines under review or in related disciplines, or be senior scholars who may be from a completely different discipline. Generally, the composition of a panel, in an approximate ratio of 3:3:2, should be a mix of disciplinary specialists, specialists in areas cognate to the broad disciplinary area concerned, and 'wise people' who are steeped in scholarly practices and drawn from any broad disciplinary area.
- The panel members should have demonstrable expertise and experience in both the editing and peer-review aspects of research journals.
- It is not necessary that all PRP members be experts in both editing and peer review aspects – a mix of senior academics and a few active editors (of journals not under review) is appropriate – but all should have some appreciation of both editing and peer review.
- At least one member should have direct practical (technical) experience of publishing.

Persons selected as panel participants will typically be drawn from ASSAf's membership, academic institutions, science councils and consultants.

##### **Conflict of Interest**

- It will be necessary to take care to avoid real or perceived conflicts.
- Committee expertise, balance and conflicts of interest are discussed at the first meeting (and may again be discussed at any later meeting) of the PRPs, and recommendations to resolve problematic issues can be brought through the SPU (Secretariat) to the ASSAf Council for possible amendment of the composition of PRPs.
- Panel members are requested to submit written conflict-of-interest statements, and are bound to report any new potential sources of conflicts of interest during the quality review process.

#### **1.4.2 Setting up and organising the panels**

The organisation of the panel is conducted by its chair, supported by the assigned project officer. The activities related to organisation typically include:

- Planning and costing the review and panel activities.
- Obtaining completed questionnaires from each editor/equivalent (concerning publishing logistics).
- Identifying suitable peer reviewers for each journal or group of titles (concerning content quality).
- Assembling hard copies of journals for use by the panel.

- Establishing panel meeting dates, assigning tasks, and collating materials.
- Preparing and distributing pre-meeting and post-meeting materials (draft version 1 reports, i.e. assembled peer reviews and editors' questionnaires, in template form).
- Taking responsibility for post-meeting activities, including draft version 2 report preparation, circulation for comment to panellists and editors, and preparation and processing of final reports.
- Evaluation of panel processes.

### **Selection of Peer Reviewers (See above)**

- At least two, but preferably three, independent peer reviewers, as well as alternative reviewers must be agreed upon by the panel for each title or group of similar titles.
- Members of the CSPiSA and the ASSAf Membership in general will be given an opportunity to volunteer through a specific written call.
- Other candidates will be sought from lists of the National Research Foundation (NRF) and active science council research staff.
- The process of selection is overseen by the panel chair. The final agreed appointments of willing volunteer reviewers are made by the panel itself.
- Conflicts of interest must be avoided – thus current or former editors cannot become peer reviewers of the journals concerned; this also applies to current members of editorial boards.
- The project officer must arrange access to hard or e-copies of the journals under review by independent experts.
- The core questions to be answered in each case must be provided to peer reviewers, who should be asked to ensure that these questions are all addressed in their reviews.

## **1.4.3 Panel meetings and procedures**

### **Preparations**

- The ASSAf project officer is responsible for drawing up the version 1 report on each journal. Each reviewer's answers should be consolidated under the standard headings of the draft; each input as a separate paragraph. The editor's questionnaire should also be inserted as a single item under 'business aspects'.
- The documentation (editors' questionnaires, peer-review reports) should be sent out by email to all panellists at least two weeks prior to the panel meeting.
- Conveners of sub-sets of journals should be alerted at this time to their role at the forthcoming panel meeting – to present the journals in the set, and to make recommendations for discussion and elaboration. If unable to attend, they should be asked to submit written notes for presentation to the panel by the convener.
- Ideally, hard copies of issues of journals to be considered should be available at the meeting, but if logistically impossible, this can be dispensed with.
- A quorum of at least two-thirds of the members of PRPs must be guaranteed at any meeting, otherwise a new date must be sought.
- Panellists should be informed at the same time that hard copies of all documentation will be available at the meeting in bundles containing the completed editor's questionnaire and reviewers' reports for each journal title.
- The responsible project officer should ensure that at least two peer reviews, and preferably three, are in hand for each title by the time of the initial send-out of materials, or, by default, by the date of the meeting, for tabling on the day.

### **Meeting**

- Journal titles should be considered in sub-sets.
- Consensus on each of the criteria should be agreed *seriatim* as per a convener's spoken summary, and noted by the project officer in attendance.
- Particular attention should be paid to reaching agreement on recommendations in respect of:
  - (a) An invitation to the publisher/editor to join the SciELO South Africa platform (note the special criteria on frequency of publication and annual number of original peer-reviewed articles).
  - (b) A recommendation to the DHET on accreditation in its list of South African journals in which any article is considered as a valid research output.
  - (c) If not recommended, suggestions for improvement that would make it possible to make an invitation and/or recommendation under 2 (iii) (a) or (b).
  - (d) Suggestions for improvement or enhanced function in general.



#### 1.4.4 Post-meeting procedures and panel reports

- When producing a version 2 report, the three paragraphs in each item have to be consolidated to produce a consensus version.
- A detailed and motivated draft version 2 report of each peer review panel's findings and recommendations is prepared by the assigned project officer, working closely with the panel chair.
- The project officer and convener should reach agreement on the record of the meeting in respect of all outcomes within no more than two weeks.
- The meeting record should be sent for comment and ratification to all panellists (including those who were not able to attend the meeting) and replies should be received within one week.
- The convener should prepare a final version of the meeting record, and submit a copy of each journal-specific item as a privileged communication to the editor concerned for written comment within no more than two weeks.
- The convener should identify any editor's comment that might materially change the recommendations in the record, and submit these to the panel for consideration and decision.
- The finally agreed-upon record should be submitted to the CSPiSA for approval before its submission to the ASSAf Council and public release.

## 2 Special Considerations Concerning South African Humanities Journals: Part 1 – Literature Group Classics, Literature & Languages

No conversation on the work in the humanities can be divorced from the progressive marginalisation of its individual disciplines within the broad domains of higher education, scholarship and research. This has taken place over the past three decades and, increasingly, takes the form of proposals to 'close the field down' unless it – or disciplines within it – can show its 'worth' or 'value' in utilitarian terms. The humanities are often immediately affected by developments outside their immediate domains. So, for instance, the online journal *LitNet Akademies* which is reviewed in this report demonstrates that technology has also had an impact on the field.

Very often, these changes are not linear but dialectic. After the demise of apartheid there was a shift away from the political authority of journals that were published in the Afrikaans language, even though that language has experienced an intellectual and cultural renaissance in the past two decades. Understanding this ebb and flow of ideas and the rise of new platforms is very tricky, and attempts to 'manage' these shifts, have had unfortunate outcomes for journals.

ASSAf has tried to play a constructive role in countering this trend. It has produced a report on *Scholarly Books: Their Production, Use and Evaluation in South Africa Today* (ASSAf 2009) arguing for the greater recognition of scholarly books and offering several recommendations: these will be implemented in 2016 under the new DHET Research Outputs Policy (DHET 2015). It has ignited a wider national debate on the humanities by producing a *Consensus Study on the State of the Humanities in South Africa* (ASSAf 2011), and has engaged with the proposals of the DHET for the humanities and social sciences. It arranged a major international conference on the humanities in June 2014 and is considering establishing an annual prize for the best book in the humanities.

The *Consensus Study on the State of the Humanities in South Africa* (ASSAf 2011) set out the issues covered in this report as follows.

"The contribution of the Humanities to knowledge production in South Africa has remained stagnant for almost two decades. In that single marker of new knowledge produced, journal and book publications, the patterns of journal outputs in the Humanities has not changed for most fields, with two exceptions, [Theology and Law]... Otherwise publication outputs remain at around 22% of total output, even dropping in recent periods to 20%... two other trends appear to constitute this crisis...(in the Humanities): the small number of scholarly book publications as standard outputs of Humanities faculties throughout the world, and the poor quality of outputs reflected in the larger number of non-accredited publications that dominate the publishing landscape." (ASSAf 2011: 126)

Other notable findings in the Humanities Consensus Study on this issue include the following:

- Two 'publication cultures' exist among South African scholars: scholars in the humanities publish predominantly in South African journals, while scholars in the natural and health sciences publish much more in foreign journals.
- There is growing evidence of increased international collaboration resulting in increased 'visibility' of our humanities scholarship.

- The annual number of monographs submitted to DHET for subsidy initially declined but recently seems to have settled at an average of around 60 titles per year. The vast majority of monographs are in the humanities – some 82%.
- Scholars in the humanities fields benefit more from the DHET research subsidy scheme as there are many more journals in these fields (compared to the numbers of journals in the natural and health sciences) included in the list of accredited journals of the DHET. (ASSAf 2011: 80)

The review methodology used in the review of journals groups the individual disciplines into convenient groupings. However, those involved in this exercise, firmly believe that the interests of individual disciplines should be respected and that they are the primary responsibility of reviewers and, indeed, of ASSAf.

In the journal review exercise, peer reviewers were requested to report on whether the journals under review had 'value-added' or 'enrichment' features such as editorials, book reviews, debates, correspondence and the like. The importance of a conversation within individual disciplines is of obvious academic value. In addition, the publication of substantial scholarly books remains the central weight of humanities scholarship notwithstanding the bureaucratic attention given to the academic journal. Discussing books in journals reinforced their importance.

The interest in the 'international' dimension in this assessment exercise represents both the role that foreign scholars play in fostering a global academic discourse while effective peer review is ideally internationally-centred. The gestures made towards African scholarship in journals published in South Africa suggest that African scholarship is increasingly important, but there is much work to do in this direction.

The policy frameworks governing the funding and support of research and scholarship in South Africa place a premium on the distributed national character of publication. Put differently, journals cannot be captured by closed groups or a small number of institutions.

When considering the recommendations of the peer review panel for the group of humanities journals in this report, it must be noted that 29 out of a total of 31 journals will continue to be listed on the DHET's accredited journal list despite the fact that nine journals were not recommended for inclusion on the SciELO online platform. Of the 22 journals that were recommended for SciELO, only two journals will be invited to join as seven of these journals are published by a commercial publisher and the remaining 13 had not begun to publish articles in time and therefore do not meet the criteria.

## References

ASSAf. 2009. *Scholarly Books: Their Production, Use and Evaluation in South Africa Today*. Pretoria: Academy of Science of South Africa.

ASSAf. 2011. *Consensus Study on the State of the Humanities in South Africa: Status, prospects and strategies*. Pretoria: Academy of Science South Africa.

South Africa. Department of Higher Education and Training. 2015. Research Outputs Policy. *Government Gazette* 38552, Notice 188, 11 March 2015. Pretoria: Government Printer.

## 3 Panel Members

- I Prof Peter Vale (Chairperson), Member of ASSAf, Professor of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg and Director of the Johannesburg Institute for Advanced Study.
- II Ms Eve Gray, Honorary Research Associate, Centre for Educational Technology at the University of Cape Town.
- III Prof Gerrit Olivier, Honorary Professor in the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Pretoria.
- IV Prof Craig MacKenzie, Professor of English at the University of Johannesburg.
- V Prof Russell Kaschula, Professor of African Languages, Head of the School of Languages at Rhodes University.

Director of the Scholarly Publishing Unit: Mrs Susan Veldsman.

Servicing Project Officers, SPU: Mr Thabo Radebe, Ms Gugulethu Mtsweni, Ms Desré Stead and Ms Tracy Lukele.

## 4 Consensus Reviews of Journals in the Group

### 4.1 Special Area

#### 4.1.1 *Acta Academica*

**Focus and scope:** *Acta Academica* is an academic journal dedicated to scholarship in the humanities. The journal says that it is also interested in scholarly work that examines how the humanities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are responding to the double imperative of theorising the world and changing it. Since 2012, as part of a new focus, the journal has published scholarly articles that examine society, culture and politics, past and present, from a critical social theory perspective. The journal has added an English subtitle, *Critical views on society, culture and politics*, to make its new intellectual focus clearer.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The Editor and Associates are academics with good local/national reputations, and include a number of younger scholars from different disciplines. The Editorial Advisory Board consists of well-respected South African scholars, also spread across a wide spectrum of individual disciplines and intellectual orientations; several of its Board are pre-eminent and include a distinguished international scholar.

The Editors have accepted the need to adapt the journal over the past two years, changing it into one that is cosmopolitan and cutting edge.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published since 1969 without significant interruptions. It appears in four issues per year. In the three-year period under review, the journal published 118 peer-reviewed original papers, an average of just under 40 per year. No letter-type articles and book or topical reviews appeared in the journal. The available back records do not provide accurate numbers for the manuscripts received every year, but 93 manuscripts were received in 2012, of which 54 were rejected without peer review. Thirteen per cent of published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Three reviewers are approached for each submitted manuscript. In 2012, 113 peer reviewers were used, of whom 16% had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in the records but are not open to the public. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and publication is 10 months, with print and web publication occurring at the same time.

The journal previously published *Supplementa* (a form of thematic issue, in general carrying conference papers not subjected to the normal editorial review). Since 2012, the journal has replaced *Supplementa* with special issues comprising articles commissioned and reviewed by the editorial team. The present Editor has been in office since January 2012, and was appointed competitively by the University of the Free State for an indeterminate period. This also applies to the Assistant Editor and the two Associate Editors who comprise the editorial team. The Editorial Board members are not appointed competitively; they are invited to serve for five years, and are drawn from inside and outside the country. The Editorial Board members occasionally conduct peer reviews of individual manuscripts and provide advice on editorial policies/practices.

The journal publishes editorial guidelines and has a conflict-of-interest policy. The journal's editorial and policy guidelines are aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. *Errata* are published. The journal to date has contained no non-article features, such as editorials, news and views articles, topical reviews, book reviews and correspondence on published articles. The intention is to include such value-adding features from mid-2014. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is over 90%.

**Content:** quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.

**Consensus review:** The journal is devoted to broad 'critical humanities' and publishes articles across a very wide range of disciplines. In general, articles published in *Acta Academica* were considered to be strong and the result of thorough and knowledgeable research. The literary articles are generally of a high standard.

It was noted that the quality of articles in the journal had improved over the years, the rejection rate of submitted articles was high, and acceptances were now in line with the themes that the journal is pursuing for publication purposes – namely relevant and cutting-edge sociolinguistic themes. The articles in the sub-fields of language planning, sociolinguistics and applied language studies, as well as cultural and socio-political issues, were judged to be among the best produced in the country.

The journal has a strong South African and educational focus, reflected by a pervasively local authorship, drawn from institutions across the country. Authors working at previously Afrikaans-medium universities predominate, with the host institution contributing 37.5% of content overall. Fewer than 7% of the articles were from authors outside the country's borders, most of these from Africa.

About a third of the articles in the journal deals with local problems in education and educational research, both at the level of schools and in higher education; similar issues in Zimbabwe and Zambia are also addressed. Issues particularly relevant to South Africa in the areas of tourism, the economy and its management, sociology, psychology (parent-child relationships), the built environment, the media and aspects of philosophy are also featured more frequently than others. In line with its newer 'critical social theory' perspective, many of the articles reflect cross-disciplinary research. Despite their local focus, most of the articles are embedded in international conceptual frameworks.

#### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** All articles have English-language abstracts.

The journal does not publish items that are not peer-reviewed articles or features, except for prefaces to thematic issues and supplements, which are mostly longer articles devoted to a specific theme. It was noted, however, that the journal will start publishing additional features from mid-2014, and will discontinue the *Supplementa*.

The typography is clean and aesthetically pleasing, although the block quotes would be more readable if the line spacing was increased.

In general, the language and editing are of a high standard. Some typographical and other errors were noted, however.

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal has published articles by well-known local academics, PhD students and emerging researchers, and so will likely provide a valuable stimulus for younger researchers and postgraduates. The quality and clarity of most of the articles would be useful in this context. The wide range of topics covered would stimulate readers to take note of research beyond the confines of their own disciplines.

International comparability was found too difficult to assess, as *Acta Academica* was not directly comparable in focus with specific international journals. It is significant that in the review period a number of internationally recognised local scholars contributed to the journal. Articles published were very good, well anchored in the literature and methodologically sound.

#### **Business aspects**

The print run of the journal is approximately 400 copies. It appears online (in open access mode) on the host university's website, and is also available on the Sabinet e-journals service, with 78 paying subscribers (all organisations), through Sabinet Online. The publisher, SUN MeDIA, is responsible for production and distribution, but the journal is currently reviewing the contract with the publisher. The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising and receives limited financial sponsorship from the University of the Free State. The journal charges page fees to its authors, which are retained by SUN MeDIA. The total expenditure per annum is R130 000. No offers to purchase from multi-national publishers have been received. The existing copyright arrangements are under revision.

The journal is not indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS or in the IBSS. The journal has never been independently peer-reviewed. The Editor and Publisher are keen to be included in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform as a free online journal.

#### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** Although increasingly cosmopolitan, the journal should not lose its developing-country focus. More attention should be paid to drawing in scholars from other African countries, both as editors and authors. This could be achieved through a better networking system online, and consequently greater accessibility through information technology.

Inclusion in the SciELO South Africa open access platform would do much to enhance the journal's visibility abroad.



Addition of value-adding non-article content, such as book reviews, commentaries and correspondence would also augment the impact of the journal.

The website of the journal should be improved; it is not very user-friendly or appealing, as, for example, it only gives the titles of articles and not the authors or their affiliations.

These issues could be resolved through editorial best practices and in cooperation with selected partners internationally.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be accredited by the DHET for the purposes of its institutional research support system.**
- II The journal should be invited to join the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editors/Publishers should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.1.2 *Nomina Africana: Journal of the Names Society of Southern Africa***

**Focus and scope:** The first volume of *Nomina Africana* appeared in 1987, a full six years after the formation of the Names Society of Southern Africa, but it has appeared regularly every year since then. Normally, *Nomina Africana* appears twice a year, with the cover dates of April and November, but occasionally, when manuscripts are thin, or when the Editor needs to catch up on the cover date, numbers 1 and 2 appear in a single volume.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editor-in-Chief is also the President of the Names Society of Southern Africa, of which this journal is the mouthpiece; he is a well-known and respected scholar both nationally and abroad. The members of the Editorial Board of the journal comprise prominent South African authorities in the field. The journal Editor and the Editorial Secretary who deal with the review process are both, according to the society's constitution, ex officio members of both the Editorial Board and the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee does not advise on the content of *Nomina Africana*. There is also an Editorial Advisory Committee, as well as an International Advisory Board made up of scholars from Europe, the UK and the USA. This degree of 'editorial overkill' is not professional. The Editor-in-Chief and two other members of the executive are all NRF-rated researchers, who have recently published articles in *Onoma* – the journal of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS). This is indicative of some measure of the international standing of those involved in the journal. The Editor and a number of the members of the Editorial Board are regular contributors to the journal – an outcome that suggests their dominance of this small discipline in the country.

**Questionnaire:** The number of research articles published in the review period runs at 23, plus one review article. Seven of these have had at least one author with a non-South African address.

The Editor has been in the position since 2003, and was not appointed competitively. The Editorial Secretary conducts the peer-review process following a rigorous process of double-blind review of individual manuscripts, and advises on editorial policies/practices. Members are not appointed competitively, and serve for an indefinite period.

No editorial policy and guidelines have been published, and there is no conflict-of-interest policy.

The journal occasionally contains features, such as editorials, news and views articles, topical reviews, regular book reviews, and correspondence or debate on previously published articles.

The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 85%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles, some of which are empirical, while most are descriptive, vary from 'poor' to 'reasonably average' to 'generally good'. They are mostly topical, reflecting issues of naming in everyday life, from the use of generic names – like 'Rooibos' – as a proprietary name, to naming maritime features or geographical places in Africa. The articles cover a wide range of topics, mostly around South African place names, but articles on place names in the rest of Africa and internationally are also published, for example: nicknames in Romania, the use of animal names in guerrilla warfare in Zimbabwe and personal naming in southern Nigeria.

Onomastics is a small and specialised field in South Africa. Most of the research done by members of the Names Society of Southern Africa seems to be published in this journal. *Onoma*, the ICOS journal, is pub-

lished only once a year, but then in fairly large issues, so that Vol 43 (2008), for example, contains more than 400 pages.

The material published in articles is apparently regularly presented at international fora, and is well researched and presented; so, the articles are mostly internationally tested and benchmarked.

The explanation of South African (and also African) names and naming practices in local languages besides Afrikaans and English gives the journal a unique focus.

Authors are drawn from institutions across the country and are representative of the racial demographics of South Africa.

The most serious concern for the Panel is that too many articles are authored by the Editor and by members of the Editorial Board; in the absence of clear guidelines in the form of an editorial and conflict-of-interest policy, this is not good practice.

### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The journal contains book reviews, onomastic 'snippets', correspondence, reports on national and international conferences, and excerpts from the press dealing with names and naming issues.

There are English abstracts for all articles, and sometimes Afrikaans abstracts as well. None of the issues contained *errata*. The citation practice follows the Chicago Manual of Style. There were a fairly low number of sources cited.

The language in the journal is of a high standard, but the design and layout is rather unattractive to the eye. The photographic representations are particularly poor.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** Since the content of the journal is topical, interesting and mostly methodologically sound, it is likely to be informative for graduate students and young scholars in the field. The wide variety of naming issues makes onomastics a potentially fascinating field to explore in multi-disciplinary studies. The articles on naming in African languages are highly interesting and would certainly be a good example for young graduates in African languages to follow.

The journal is average when compared with some leading international journals such as *Names*, the journal of the American Name Society, and *Nomina*, the journal of the Society for Names Studies in Britain and Ireland.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 200 copies per issue. It is published by the Names Society of Southern Africa. The production and distribution are partially outsourced. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising, but occasionally receives financial sponsorship. Figures are not available to indicate the number of paying subscribers, nor how many of these are organisations as opposed to individuals. The journal does not appear free online.

The journal has never received offers from multi-national publishers. Copyright rests with the Names Society of Southern Africa. The journal publishes all its articles in English.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The fact that the journal has many contributions from the Editor and from members of the Executive Committee of the society suggests a closed system. When combined with the absence of editorial policy and appropriate guidelines for avoidance of possible conflicts of interest, this practice is not acceptable in an accredited journal. The ASSAf *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review* (or another code of practice) should be adopted without delay.

Efforts should be made to encourage scholars from other disciplines to collaborate with specialists in the field of names.

The quality of the papers needs to be improved by tightened peer review and strict editorial choices. Copy-editing ought to be improved.

Conference reports should be broadened beyond mere reporting on the events concerned.

It is possible that attention may have to be given to changing the Latin name of the journal or adding a subtitle, in order to make its focus more accessible to outsiders.

It is recommended that the journal broadens its base and establishes linkages and networks across the southern African region. Relationships should also be built in order to strengthen the disciplines of African languages, English and Afrikaans. We do recognise that since 2014, there have been efforts to strengthen linkages and networks in the region through Names Society congresses in Africa.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals for an interim period. In the next review cycle, if the suggested improvements are not implemented, the accreditation should be discontinued.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.1.3 Lexikos**

**Focus and scope:** *Lexikos* is published by the *Buro van die WAT* (*Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal*) in association with the African Association for Lexicography. *Lexikos* is the only journal in Africa dedicated to lexicography. This journal is listed on Thomson Reuters WoS and the Arts and Humanities Citation Index.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** This journal is aimed at specialist lexicographers and is an organ of the African Association of Lexicographers (AFRILEX). In previous times, the work of the journal was essential in the preparation of the WAT. It continues to be published by the *Buro van die WAT*, but nowadays it is devoted to lexicographical aspects of the many languages of Africa. It is served by an Advisory Board consisting of 16 established scholars from 13 different countries (SA, France, Zimbabwe, Australia, Great Britain, Egypt, Gabon, Belgium, The Netherlands, Canada, Germany, Norway, and the US). The Editorial Committee is drawn from South Africa in particular, but also from Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Gabon and Botswana; some members of the Editorial Committee are known as specialists in their respective languages. Most of them have national standing, and a few are internationally recognised. The Editor-in-Chief is assisted by a Reviews Editor.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published uninterruptedly for 19 years. Fifty-two research articles were published in the review; 20 review articles appeared. Approximately 82 manuscripts were received in the same period; only 10 manuscripts were rejected without peer review. About two-thirds of the published items had one author with a non-South African address.

Two peer reviewers are called upon to read each manuscript; in the review period, 19 reviewers were used. About one-quarter of these had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are retained in accessible form. The average waiting period for articles to appear in the journal in both print and e-versions is ten months. One issue appears on the scheduled date each year.

The Editor-in-Chief has held the office for 14 years, and was not appointed competitively: the appointment is indefinite. Members of the Editorial Board conduct peer review of individual manuscripts, but do not advise on editorial policies/practices. Members are not appointed competitively, but they are appointed for a set period. Some are from outside South Africa – presumably, to provide expertise that is not available within this country.

Editorial policy and guidelines are public. Currently, there is no conflict-of-interest policy. The editorial policy guidelines have not yet been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

The journal contains features such as editorials, news and views articles, topical reviews, and book reviews, but does not publish correspondence. The proportion of pages in each issue that represent peer-reviewed original material is 80%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles in the 2008, 2009 and 2010 issues of the journal are of a good overall quality. The lexicographic terminology used in many of the articles emphasises the journal's focus primarily on lexicographers.

The length of the articles varies considerably (the longest article runs to 50 pages), although the majority fall within the prescribed length of 20 pages.

With respect to the number of articles published annually:

- In 2008 (Vol 18), 18 articles were published: 14 in English, 2 in Afrikaans, and 1 each in French and German.
- In 2009 (Vol 19), 25 articles were published: 17 in English, 4 in Afrikaans, 2 in French, and 1 each in German and Dutch.
- In 2010 (Vol 20), 33 articles were published: of which 25 were written in English, 4 in Afrikaans, 2 in French and 1 each in Dutch and German.

As is plain, there has thus been a significant increase in the number of articles published in *Lexikos* over the past three years.

Articles include contributions on lexicographic and terminological issues, with a strong focus on the African context of these. Development of dictionaries, particularly in indigenous African languages, is a frequent theme in the journal. Some of these contributions provide meaningful insights into cultural and social issues affecting language, and have relevance for scholars other than lexicographers. Papers written by scholars from other countries on lexicographic or terminological topics in Africa are also published, although a sizeable number of the papers also focus on lexicographic issues in non-African countries.

European countries represented among the authors include The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Poland, and Spain. North America is represented by the United States, and the Middle East by Kuwait.

A substantial number of articles in the issues surveyed are of a theoretical nature.

It is evident from the journal that the articles present a balanced judgment on the part of the Editor and the editorial team, providing a good platform for people from different countries with different languages and specialisations to reflect on developments in the discipline. This is a decided strength of the journal.

### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Each volume of the journal includes a comprehensive foreword in both English and Afrikaans. Other scholarly features include reports on projects, book reviews, and announcements of publications. Both Vol 19 and Vol 20 included a supplement, which has its own foreword (in English and Afrikaans). Both these supplements also feature editorials (in English and Afrikaans) that draw attention to important issues in the respective editions.

Each article includes an abstract in both English and Afrikaans, as well as a list of keywords – also in both languages. No *errata* were discerned in the issues that were reviewed, but occasional typographical errors were identified.

The layout, style and presentation of the electronic contributions to *Lexikos* are easy on the eye. The copy-editing is professional, and other editorial work is of a high standard. Citation practice is consistent, but it should be noted that details about citation and bibliographic practice are not provided in the 'instructions to authors', with authors being instructed instead to "examine recent issues of *Lexikos* for details".

There appears to be a lack of clarity regarding the sources to be included in the list of references: in some articles all the sources cited in the text are listed, while in others this is not the case. The 'instructions to authors' should indicate which sources should be included. It was also noted that for some articles, references to internet sources were not included in the list of references, whereas in other cases they were included under a subsection of the References, viz. Websites.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** *Lexikos* has successfully expanded on its largely Afrikaans focus to include a wider range of languages. As a result, it draws on research from a range of backgrounds. It is intended for subject specialists in lexicography and linguistics, including young academics who are specialising in these fields. Its African focus should also be a meaningful stimulus for continental scholars to submit their work for publication. Some of the contributions have relevance for scholars interested in language issues other than lexicography and linguistics, but to date these appear only on a limited scale.



Assessing the extent to which *Lexikos* compares with similar journals in other countries is difficult. AFRILEX is one of five continental associations for lexicography and is one of only three of them to have its own journal.

The regional focus of the journal makes it somewhat narrow when compared to the *International Journal of Lexicography*. Nevertheless, as a journal of, and for Africa, it can be said to have come of age as an internationally respected journal based in South Africa.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 250 copies per issue. The publisher is the *Buro van die Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal*. Production and distribution are done in-house. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising, but does receive financial sponsorship. The number of paying subscribers is 100, about 10% of which are organisations. The journal appears free online (<http://lexikos.journals.ac.za/pub>).

The journal has never received offers for purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright of all material published in *Lexikos* is vested in the Board of Directors of the *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal*. Authors are free to use their material elsewhere, provided that *Lexikos* (AFRILEX Series) is acknowledged as the original publication source.

The journal is indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS, and Thomson Reuters WoS impact factors have been determined for the journal. The Editor is not interested in the possibility of the journal being included in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** Attempts should be made to increase the spread of authors by making connections with scholars in cognate disciplines.

The provision of clear guidelines for the required referencing style in the 'instructions to authors' section of the journal would be helpful.

The introduction of a formal conflict-of-interest policy should be explored.

The possibility of increasing the number of issues published each year should be investigated to enhance the journal's impact, to make its content more legible and ensure that articles are being read thoroughly.

The journal is commended on its ability to adapt to the post-apartheid situation of the intellectualisation of South African languages other than English and Afrikaans.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this under policy as a Thomson Reuters WoS-indexed periodical).
- II The Publisher/Editor should *pro forma* be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The journal should consider the recommendations in this review.

#### **4.1.4 Southern African Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies**

**Focus and scope:** The *Southern African Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* is the journal of the Southern African Society for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. The society aims to promote scholarly interest and research in Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Southern Africa and further afield.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The Editor-in-Chief is a senior academic of good national and international standing. The editorial team members' institutional affiliations are not listed on the journal's website. The Editor and the Editorial Board are national representatives but institutionally they are restricted to Gauteng – University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the University of South Africa (Unisa).

**Questionnaire:** The questionnaire was not completed by the Editor.

**Content:** quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.

**Consensus review:** The articles are thorough and scholarly and are mostly of an acceptable academic standard. They are however drawn from the small community in South Africa that researches European

Medieval studies. The journal covers Medieval, Renaissance and early modern periods up to 1700 almost only in Europe. Coverage of sub-topics is erratic, for example, one whole volume covering mainly theology, with interactions with other South African theological journals or their content. The journal appears annually and the number of articles per annum is small (about 4 – 5). The journal does not pretend to be South African-focused, but describes its reach as 'universal'. The authors of articles are representative of all South African universities and some are international, although some institutions are over-represented (Wits is an example). Considering the scope and focus of the journal, one would expect more authors from Europe. Members of the Editorial Board are authors of many articles, raising concerns around its editorial independence. The peer-review procedures are sound.

#### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Useful editorials are included, as well as conference announcements, but there are no book reviews or scholarly correspondence. Most, but not all, articles have English abstracts (although not called this by the use of the usual heading), and no keywords are featured. No errata have been published. The citation and reference systems are of an acceptable quality.

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** Allowing for the fact that the journal deals with an over-focused discipline, restricting itself to only one admittedly very active region of the world, this journal offers necessary reading for students and young scholars, and not only in the specific field. It is, nevertheless, likely to be of the same quality as international journals, just very small.

#### **Business aspects**

The questionnaire was not completed by the Editor.

#### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The journal should expand its author and editor base to include international authors/editors. It is recommended that it should also expand its scope to Medieval studies beyond Europe, which will assist in improving its international reputation.

The Editor should increase the number of articles published per annum.

The introduction of sound and transparent policy measures to minimise conflicts of interest amongst editors and authors is highly recommended.

Abstracts, appropriately headed, are essential for the purpose of citation and referencing.

The journal needs to consider adding book reviews and correspondence/editorials.

The website of the parent society should provide more information about the journal, at minimum the full contents pages and 'instructions to authors'.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review. In the next review cycle, if the suggested improvements are not implemented, the accreditation should be discontinued.**

#### **4.1.5 Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies**

**Focus and scope:** The Southern African Folklore Society, through its accredited *Southern African Journal for Folklore Studies* (SAJFS), has provided the much needed platform for researchers, scholars, academics, folklorists and indigenous knowledge practitioners alike to test their views on many broad issues pertaining to folklore studies.

#### **Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The journal enjoys a high national and international reputation, and the Editor also has a strong academic reputation. The Editorial Advisory Board comprises active, widely-published researchers who are in the fields of African languages, literature and linguistics.

**Questionnaire:** The Southern African Folklore Society (SAFOS) journal has been published for 23 years without significant interruptions in publication. In the period under review, the journal published 80 peer-reviewed papers, but no letter-type articles or reviews. One hundred and thirty-two manuscript articles were received in the same period and 10 manuscript articles were rejected without peer review. Twelve of the original papers had authors with a non-South African address.

It is the practice that two reviewers are approached to scrutinise each manuscript. In Volume 21.2, 42 reviewers were used – ten of these had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessible in hard copy form. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its printing is six months.

The journal is published twice a year and issues are scheduled for a particular month of the year. However, issues sometimes do not appear on the scheduled dates.

The Editor has been editing the journal since September 2012 and was not appointed competitively. The SAFOS Executive Committee identified the Editor and based his selection on his publishing record. The appointment was recommended to the association at the annual general meeting (AGM) where it was unanimously approved. The period of the Editor's appointment is reviewed by the SAFOS Executive Committee.

The Editorial Board members are not appointed by competition; they are selected on their expertise in the field to serve for a set period and are drawn from inside the country and abroad. The Editorial Board members provide specific expertise, conduct peer review of individual manuscripts and advise on editorial policies/practices.

The journal publishes editorial guidelines but does not have a conflict-of-interest policy. The journal's editorial and policy guidelines are aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. *Errata* are not published. The journal contains one value-adding feature in the form of editorials. Each page in each issue represents peer-reviewed and original material.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The journal's contents offer a good sample of the work done in this field in the country, with a judicious mix of original research articles, theoretical articles and critical reviews. The journal focuses on local and southern African issues.

The journal appears to be a good teaching resource for senior undergraduate and graduate students. An interdisciplinary approach (psychology, religion, medicine, social development, linguistics, cultural studies, music, art, etc.) offers the necessary stimulus for research and allows for cross-disciplinary collaboration.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The journal does not carry additional scholarly features. No *errata* are published. Abstracts are in English and the journal has good citation practice.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** This journal compares well with other oral literature journals in the world. However, some improvement will have to be made if it is to compete with the very best of these.

**Business aspects**

The print run of the journal is 120 copies. Approximately 80 to 100 copies are sent to subscribers of which 10 are organisations. The publisher, SAFOS, is responsible for distribution while its production is outsourced. The journal does not carry advertising and receives no financial sponsorship. It appears online through open access.

The journal has received no offers of purchase from multi-national publishers. The copyright arrangements must be signed and returned to the Scientific Editor's office before a manuscript can be published.

The journal is not indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS or the IBSS. Articles are in English. The journal has been independently peer-reviewed for DHET inclusion. The Editor and Publisher would consider an invitation for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform as a free online journal.

## Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** There are a number of areas that will help to improve the overall presentation of the journal. The recommendations relate to two aspects: (1) formatting; and (2) additional scholarly features.

In the earlier issues, the titles of the articles are in uppercase and bold. The different sections are not numbered. In the later issues, the titles are not bold but the sections are bold and numbered. There are, however, no distinctions between the first level of headings (as in, 1.0), the second (1.1.1), and the third, and so on. Second, there seems to be no consistency in terms of font size for the abstracts.

It is also recommended that the Editorial Board diversify the journal's contents to include one book review or create forms of scholarly correspondence.

The reviewers noted that the journal is not currently available in many South African libraries, so it is suggested that the journal works on a distribution strategy to ensure that copies are available.

Researchers from beyond the borders of South Africa should be invited to contribute to the journal.

### Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

## 4.2 Classics

### 4.2.1 *Acta Classica: Proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa*

**Focus and scope:** *Acta Classica* publishes contributions on any aspect of classical studies, but also considers submissions on patristic and Byzantine themes, especially where these touch on Africa and African issues.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The Editor is an internationally respected scholar, and the other members of the Editorial Board are well established, highly regarded South African scholars from a variety of institutions, most also with international reputations. The Editorial Advisory Board consists of scholars in the UK and the US.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has appeared since 1958, without interruptions in publication – this is a considerable achievement. The number of manuscripts published in the period under review was 32 articles with 13 reviews. All manuscripts were peer-reviewed, and only nine were rejected (20% rejection rate). About half of the published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

At least two peer reviewers are approached to judge each submitted manuscript. In effect, one South African and one overseas reviewer are used for this purpose. Some 30 peer reviewers were used in 2009, half of these were based abroad. Peer-review reports are retained in the journal records and are accessible.

*Acta Classica* appears annually in February of each year, and the period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in print can be anything from 2 – 10 months.

The Editor, who has been running the journal for six years, was appointed competitively and was elected at the biennial meeting of the Classical Association of South Africa (CASA) for a period of two years. Names are put forward at the AGM and the best candidate is determined by vote.

Editorial Board members, who are drawn from within the country, are appointed at the biennial conference of CASA for a set period at the AGM in the same way as the Editor is. The Editorial Board carries out the business of the journal. Members of the Editorial Board neither conduct peer review of individual manuscripts nor advise on editorial policies/practices.

There is also an Editorial Advisory Board of seven foreign specialists.

The editorial/policy guidelines are published, but there is no conflict-of-interest policy. The former have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. Errata

have not appeared in the last three volumes. The journal contains features such as editorials in the supplements only, but not in regular numbers and book reviews are also published. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 85%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** This journal publishes the proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa. As a result, it features a range of South African-based research.

The articles published in the journal compare well with similar international journals. It is noted that there are only 10 to 12 articles published per annum, and all appear in a single volume.

The articles are representative of the best work done in Classics in South Africa.

The field of Classics does not really lend itself to too much local focus, yet articles discussing links between the classical world and the South African context do appear at regular intervals. The spread of work by authors from all over the country is good, and there is always a good proportion of international authors. There are no contributions from authors from other African countries.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Apart from research articles, the journal contains book reviews, which are of a high standard; this is customary in quality journals in this field. Summaries of papers presented at the meetings of CASA are also published: this is a useful additional feature. There are also editorials, notes, reviews, information on journal exchanges, and news from the parent body.

There are clear editorial guidelines and contact details for the Editors. All articles are in English and are introduced by English-language abstracts.

No *errata* were observed in the copies under review. The citation practice is sound. The presentation, layout, style and copy-editing are attractive.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal is useful as a high-standard publication and is comparable to other international journals in the field.

**Business aspects**

The print run of the journal is 400 copies per issue. Of the 400 copies printed, 85 are exchanged with other journals, 131 are sent to institutional subscribers, and the remainder are issued to CASA members or referees. There are 31 subscribers to the online Sabinet service. The journal is subscribed to by many libraries internationally in addition to local subscribers. It is published by V&R Printers, Pretoria, while both production and distribution are handled in-house. The journal is financially sound and is financially managed in accordance with the constitution of the Classical Association of South Africa. It has no brief to seek outside sponsorship and is the autonomous organ of CASA, which is registered as a non-profit organisation in terms of the Non-Profit Act (*Act 71 of 1997*).

The Editorial Board has yet to decide on its preferred copyright arrangements.

The journal is indexed on the Thomson Reuters WoS. Front details like titles, authors, addresses, and abstracts are mandatory for articles. The journal has never been independently peer-reviewed.

The journal is currently not interested in inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

**Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The Classical Association of SA could consider a merger between the three journals *Acta Classica* and *Akroterion* and *Phronimon*, in order to address the average of only 10 to 12 articles per year.

The journal should embark on a process to attract more international contributions and to provide broader dissemination.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this, under policy as a Thomson Reuters WoS-indexed periodical).

- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

#### 4.2.2 *Akroterion: Journal for the Classics in SA*

**Focus and scope:** *Akroterion* is published annually by the Department of Ancient Studies, University of Stellenbosch, with the financial support of the Classical Association of South Africa (CASA). The journal publishes articles in English or Afrikaans aimed at the non-specialist, covering all aspects of ancient Greek and Roman civilisation, but focusing especially on the influence and reception of the Classics.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** *Akroterion* is a journal for the Classics in South Africa. The Editor is a nationally recognised scholar based at Stellenbosch University, at which institution the four members of the Editorial Committee are located; only one of them does not hold a doctorate. There are nine Advisory Board members, all professors, six of them drawn from other local institutions and one each from the UK, New Zealand and Ireland.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 58 years, without significant interruptions in publication – this is also a significant achievement. The number of peer-reviewed original papers published during the period under review was 24 articles with two reviews. About 36 article manuscripts were received in the same period, while the reviews were commissioned contributions from authoritative voices in the field. No manuscript was rejected without being peer-reviewed. Approximately 21% of published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

At least two peer reviewers are usually approached for each submitted manuscript. On average, 18 peer reviewers were used in a given year. Approximately 15% of peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are retained in the journal's records in an accessible form.

The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in both print and on the web is nine months. The journal issues are not pre-scheduled to appear on given dates and the journal appears annually.

The Editor, who has been editing the journal for seven years, was not appointed competitively, but was invited to serve by the then Editorial Board. The appointment is renewed annually. Editorial Board members are not appointed competitively, and their respective appointments are also renewable annually. They are appointed from both inside the country and abroad, to provide specific expertise. Members of the Editorial Board conduct peer review of individual manuscripts, and offer advice on editorial policies/practices.

The editorial/policy guidelines are published in each edition. A conflict-of-interest policy determines that articles submitted by members of the Editorial Board are peer-reviewed by non-members of the Board. The journal's editorial/policy guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

The journal publishes *errata* and the journal contains value-adding features such as editorials, occasional news and views pieces, and book reviews. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed, original material is between 87 and 90%.

**Content:** quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.

**Consensus review:** The articles are of good quality, even though only between seven and 10 articles are published per annum in a single issue. The work published is among the best work done in the field in the country. Many articles show how traditionally non-African subject matter is made relevant for South Africa/Africa. An average of 20% of the authors are non-South Africans.

**Essential technical features:** English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

**Consensus review:** The journal publishes features such as editorials, in memoriam pieces and other articles dedicated to recognised classical scholars. Award-winning student essays are also published in *Akroterion*. English abstracts are published, but no keywords are provided. The Editor stated that *errata* are published when necessary, but the reviewers observed that no *errata* were published during the review period. There is consistency in the referencing system, and the presentation, layout, style and copy-editing are of good quality.



## Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability

**Consensus review:** The journal, while very limited in the number of its contributions, is internationally respected. The journal is of great help to students and younger staff.

### Business aspects

The print run of the journal is 250 copies per issue. It is published by the Department of Ancient Studies, Stellenbosch University. The journal's production is outsourced, while distribution is handled in-house. The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising.

The number of paying subscribers is 237, and of this total, 23 are organisations as opposed to individuals. The journal appears online as part of the Sabinet e-publications service as well as through Gale commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe).

The Editor has had expressions of interest to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright resides with the journal, but authors may reprint articles in collective works with the necessary permission.

If articles are not in English, front details such as titles, authors, addresses, and abstracts in English are mandatory.

The journal has been open access since 2012: <http://akroterion.journals.ac.za>. The Editor would in principle be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

### Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** The Editorial Board should consider cooperation (or even a merger) with other similar South African journals such as *Acta Classica* and *Phronimon*, since local scholarly activity in classics can only be strengthened by consolidating resources and increasing South Africa's presence internationally.

More book reviews should be considered, as these are a feature of respected journals in the field.

### Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

## 4.2.3 *Scholia: Studies in Classical Antiquity*

**This journal was discontinued in 2011 after the review was completed.**

**Focus and scope:** *Scholia* features critical and pedagogical articles and reviews on a diverse range of subjects dealing with classical antiquity, including late antique, Medieval, Renaissance and early modern studies related to the classical tradition; in addition, it includes news about museums and articles on classical artefacts in museums in New Zealand. It also includes reviews and other sections dealing with the Classics.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The journal is not published in South Africa, but in New Zealand in a collaborative exercise between the University of Otago in New Zealand and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) in South Africa. The Editor(s)-in-Chief are classicists from these two universities. The eight Editorial Board members include six from Otago and two from the UKZN. The Editorial Advisers number no fewer than 43 from all over the world, but are mostly from the Southern Hemisphere; their role in the affairs of the journal is not specified on the website.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published since 1991 without significant interruptions, but with occasional delays in its appearance. The number of peer-reviewed original papers published during the period under review was 38 articles, three letter-type articles and 36 reviews. The acceptance rate for manuscripts was 25%. The vast majority of articles published were from outside South Africa.

At least two, and sometimes three, peer reviewers are approached to scrutinise each manuscript. On average, 20 peer reviewers were used in any given year. Most peer reviewers are drawn from outside South Africa. The Editor deletes peer-review reports after the volume is published but retains the letters which have been sent to authors.

The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in both print and on the web is four years. The publication frequency of *Scholia* is one volume per year. Normally the volume is scheduled to appear in the first six months after the year on the cover.

The Editor has been editing the journal since its inception. He was not appointed competitively and is the founding Editor of the journal. Editorial Board members are appointed on the basis of their expertise in areas within the discipline covered by the journal. They are appointed for an unspecified period. Members of the Editorial Board conduct peer review of individual manuscripts; however, they do not advise on editorial policies/practices. Some are appointed to provide specific topical expertise.

Editorial and policy guidelines are published.

*Errata* are not published. The journal contains features like editorials, news and views pieces, topical reviews and book reviews. Correspondence on published articles is not published. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 85%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The journal publishes an average of six articles and four reviews per annum, a very small number considering the breadth of the scope of the journal as expressed in its title page. The authors are mainly from South Africa and New Zealand, but other countries are also represented. The standard of the published articles is generally high.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Among the various types of features are book reviews, columns such as 'In the Museum' and the 'Best Student Essays' (all these are drawn from the New Zealand experience). All published articles have English abstracts, but keywords are not provided. *Errata* are not published. The citation practice is good. The presentation, layout, style and copy-editing interventions are satisfactory.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The reviewers felt that the journal serves as a suitable stimulus for local graduate students/young staff in the disciplines concerned. It is an international journal, but its infrequent appearance limits this as does the restricted number of articles which appear each year.

**Business aspects**

Both production and distribution are handled in-house in New Zealand. The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising. The journal occasionally receives financial sponsorship.

The number of paying subscribers is 300, and 30% of these are organisations. *Scholia* is a print journal, but is also available online through a commercial service (ProQuest). The Editor/Manager has had expressions of interest to purchase from multi-national publishers.

Front details like titles, authors, addresses, and abstracts are published in English, as are the articles themselves. *Scholia* would consider inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform after its current contract expires with ProQuest.

**Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The claim that this journal is to be considered 'South African' under DHET policy is questionable. The website of *Scholia* is clearly associated with the University of Otago, not UKZN. This confused situation needs to be cleared up, as the small numbers of SA scholars who publish in *Scholia* make its claim to be a local journal tenuous.

Discussions should be held with the Editors/Publishers of *Acta Classica* and *Akroterion* to agree on closer cooperation, a strategy for enhancement of publishing functions in the field of classics, and greater scholarly impact generally.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should not continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited local journals unless its true status as a South African journal can be established. It fails on technical grounds as it is published in New Zealand.

**II The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to join the SciELO South Africa platform unless the foregoing condition is resolved.**

**III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.2.4 Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages**

**Focus and scope:** The *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* (JNSL) publishes articles dealing with linguistic, translational, literary, text-critical, historical, religious and cultural issues related to Ancient Near Eastern texts and societies, as well as articles addressing theoretical issues that underlie these fields.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The journal has appeared regularly for over 40 years. It is anchored in a single academic department, but is edited by a respected academic and draws on the expertise of an international Board that includes African members.

**Questionnaire:** In the period under review (2011 – 2013), the journal published 32 letter-type articles and 13 book reviews. In the same period, the journal received 50 manuscripts, none of which was rejected without peer review. In total, 88% of the published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address. JNSL is published twice annually.

Usually, two peer reviewers are approached to judge each submission. In the review period, 14 peer reviewers were used; of these, 55% had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained on record. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and publication is eight months in print and 10 months on the web.

The current Editor has been editing the journal for four years, and was not appointed competitively. The Editorial Board members are appointed for an indeterminate period from both inside the country and abroad; they are not appointed competitively. Their responsibilities include conducting peer reviews of individual manuscripts and advising on editorial policies/practices.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles are of a high standard. Each issue has four to five articles, and the annual yield is thus only about 10, on average. Articles are in English.

The journal predominantly publishes articles on biblical Hebrew. As is to be expected, there are no articles on South African or African concerns. A great majority of the articles are by foreign authors, so the local authorship is quite limited in the small total of articles per annum. There are only a few contributions from local universities also active in this field.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** A book list that appears in each issue provides a useful tool for keeping readers abreast of the latest publications in the field. Also valuable are the substantial book reviews. Each article has an (English-language) abstract. For those articles published in German, for instance, adequate translations into English are provided. Some SA authors are listed by nicknames or contractions of their first names. A scholarly journal that expects to be indexed, or authors who expect to be uniquely identified in the literature, should use full 'publishing' names. *Errata* are not published. Both footnotes and a bibliography are used in all articles. To a limited extent, the journal may well be useful to younger scholars and postgraduates, as the international input is considerable. The fact that the broad local community in the field seems not to be involved in the journal is a drawback.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** Article for article, the journal may match comparative titles published elsewhere, but it is a small contributor at 10 papers a year, and it is devoted largely to biblical Hebrew and not to the broader set of "Northwest Semitic languages" implied by its title.

**Business aspects**

The print run of the journal is not known; it costs R12 000 to produce each issue. The journal is printed by Mega Digital, Parow, and the publisher only does the production. The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising and does not receive financial sponsorship. The number of paying subscribers is 190, and of these 156 are organisations. The journal is open access and part of a commercial e-publication service.

The copyright arrangements belong to JNSL. The journal is not indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS or IBSS. To date, the journal has not been independently peer-reviewed.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The journal should apply to be indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS or IBSS.

The journal might encourage at least one article per annum on the state of the discipline in South Africa or Africa. Since most articles are on biblical Hebrew, a change of title might be reconsidered. The full, unique names of all authors and editors should be used without exception. The addresses and affiliations of authors should be given after their names in articles.

Book reviews should, perhaps, be discourse-oriented to enrich the scholarly debate.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should *pro forma* be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

## **4.3 African Languages**

### **4.3.1 Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Southern Africa**

**Focus and scope:** In general, this journal promotes the dissemination of ideas, points of view, teaching strategies and research on different aspects of all of southern Africa's languages. Its primary focus is on issues related to multilingualism, but it aims to provide a forum for discussion on the whole spectrum of language usage and debate in the region.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editor and Editorial Committee are well established and respected academics in South Africa – they are all drawn from one institution, Unisa. The Advisory Board is more diverse, with academics from Europe, the United States, Africa and the Middle East.

One of the reviewers (referring to Vol 40.1) suggests that there should be greater diversity in authors; i.e. the journal should publish articles from academics from different institutions. In this particular number, all but one article are from authors based at the University of Botswana.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 16 years since 1993 without noticeable interruptions. Two journals per year are published, and each article is peer-reviewed by at least two reviewers. A total of 25 peer reviewers have been used in the last three years. Thirty per cent of the articles have international authors. Reports from reviewers are retained. About 90% of the pieces published are peer-reviewed – the rest are book reviews and editorials.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles are of a high standard and cover important work in this field. The content includes both local material, as well as articles dealing with other African countries. This is a decided strength. However, one of the reviewers noted that the journal is not consistent in its diversity of authors and content.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The journal contains articles and abstracts written in English; they are of a high standard, with only one *erratum* being published in the last 16 years. This suggests high editorial standards. The journal is indexed in the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, the Social Sciences Index and Social Research Index. Keywords also accompany each article.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal compares favourably with international journals. It is of value to both undergraduates and postgraduates, as well as young staff and experienced scholars. Anyone else interested in language policy issues could also benefit from reading the journal. The Editor and Editorial Advisors are to be commended for the quality of the journal.

## Business aspects

The journal's print run is 400 copies, and it is published by Unisa in collaboration with Taylor & Francis. The journal receives financial support from Unisa. The Editor was unable to access all the necessary information from Routledge (Taylor & Francis). The journal cannot be considered for the SciELO South Africa open access platform because of the publishing agreement with Routledge.

## Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** The Editor should consider diversifying the content. The journal should also guard against publishing authors who come mainly from a single institution, even though the articles may be of a high standard.

A forum for disciplinary debate should be considered. It is further suggested that policy decisions and legal events affecting the languages of southern Africa could be topics for special issues of the journal.

## Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor cannot be included on the SciELO South Africa platform. The reviewers indicate that joining SciELO could only be possible if the business relationship between the journal and Routledge were to change.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

### 4.3.2 South African Journal of African Languages/Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Afrikatale

**Focus and scope:** The *South African Journal of African Languages (SAJAL)* is devoted to the advancement of African (Bantu) and Khoe-San languages and literatures. Papers, book reviews and contributions of a scientific nature based on original research in any of the core areas of linguistics, both theoretical and applied, and literature are considered. The journal is the official mouthpiece of the African Language Association of Southern Africa (ALASA), which was itself established in 1979.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editor and Editorial Committee are well-established and respected academics in this country. The journal's introduction of a journal 'ombudsman' to mediate differing opinions regarding an article is an innovative idea that could be recommended to other journals.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 36 years, with no interruptions. The number of peer reviewers approached is two per manuscript, and 31 peer reviewers were used for those articles that were published in 2008. Some 58% of the peer reviewers that were used had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in records. The average period for the journal to appear in both print and on the web is eight months. The journal is published twice yearly – an earlier backlog has been addressed.

The Editor has occupied the chair since July 2007, and was nominated for the position by ALASA, the journal's sponsoring organisation. She had previously served on the Editorial Board and was appointed as Editor for an initial two-year term, but was re-appointed in 2009, 2011, and in 2013. The Editorial Board members conduct peer review of individual manuscripts, and also advise on editorial policies/practices. An ombuds committee of four professors has been appointed to resolve disputes between the readers' reports should these arise. Suitable persons are approached to serve, and their nominations are ratified by the Executive Board of the association; their terms of office coincide with that of the Editor. Members of the Editorial Board are appointed to provide specialist expertise.

Editorial guidelines appear in each issue. The Editor is of the view that the editorial policy guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. She also indicates that the journal would publish *errata* if the need became apparent.

The journal contains features such as editorials in the case of special issues (often written by the Guest Editor). Since the journal only carries peer-reviewed research articles there are no value-adding features. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 100%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles cover both literary, as well as linguistic issues, and their quality is judged as average, with some of the articles being good.

In 2005 – 2006 there appears to have been a backlog of articles, but this has been totally transformed under the leadership of the new Editor-in-Chief.

This appears to be the only journal in the world that specifically relates to research in the important field of African language studies. Many of the articles published in this journal should be considered innovative. The work that is published in this journal is helping to codify, theorise and strengthen African languages in a country where many of these are official languages. This is the only platform in this country – and perhaps elsewhere – that is playing this role.

On occasion, the journal carries pieces on European languages, but its emphasis remains on southern, and particularly South African languages.

Authors are mainly from southern Africa, although international authors who are doing research in the field of African languages are also published in these pages.

There are approximately 12 articles per issue. The journal reflects ongoing debates and pioneering work in several areas.

#### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** All abstracts are in English, but other languages are also used where this is appropriate. To date there has been no publication of *errata*, but exercising this option is possible when needed.

The citation process is clearly laid out in the notes to authors.

One of the advantages of SAJAL is the fact that it is backed by a financially strong association, namely ALASA, which is in the position to hire professionals to assist with the preparation of the journal. The journal has been published by the National Inquiry Services Centre (NISC) in association with ALASA since 2012 under the auspices of Routledge (Taylor & Francis).

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal is of a very high standard. It compares favourably with the *Journal of African Cultural Studies* which is published by the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London, and covers both language and literary topics from a wide range of African languages.

Often articles that appear in this journal are prescribed to students, and very often SAJAL is the recommended journal for graduates to publish reworkings of dissertations or theses.

This journal is on the IBSS index. The journal is electronically available through the e-journal portals of institutional libraries.

#### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 300 copies. Production and distribution is outsourced to NISC. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising and sponsorships towards publication costs of the journal are rare. The journal appears as part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service.

#### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** This journal does not carry much additional information such as book reviews. It may be an idea to include book reviews in each edition – extended book reviews might also be considered.

Articles on all the languages of Africa should be solicited, especially important are those that face extinction. Perhaps this is the journal that, with its emphasis on education, should spearhead the production of textbooks and progress towards African languages as mediums of instruction at tertiary and postgraduate level. The journal should broaden its scope into southern Africa.

The journal Editor/Board should reconsider appointing an Advisory Board.



SAJAL should attempt to position itself as the leading African languages journal in the world. There should also be a national drive to circulate the journal more widely and to encourage further subscriptions. The quality of the journal and the fact that the journal now appears on time warrants greater support from organisations such as the Pan-South African Language Board, the National Department of Arts and Culture, as well as the Department of Higher Education and Training.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II Under current licensing agreements, it is not possible for this journal to join the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

#### 4.3.3 Ensovoort

**Focus and scope:** *Ensovoort ontvang graag artikels, boekbesprekings en skeppende skryfwerk (gedigte, prosa en kort dramas) met die oog op publikasie. Die fokus val op die Afrikaanse en Nederlandse literatuur binne die konteks van sowel die breë Suid-Afrikaanse as die Nederlandse samelewings. Bydraes van sosiokulturele, omgewingsletterkundige, toegepaste taalkundige of vergelykende aard is ook ter sake.*

**Translation:** *Ensovoort* is interested in publishing articles, book reviews and creative writing (poetry, prose and short plays). The focus is on Afrikaans and Dutch literature in the context of the broader South African and Dutch society. Contributions of a socio-cultural, environmental literature, applied linguistic or comparative nature are published.

It is important to note that from 2014, the focus of the journal shifted towards cultural studies in several languages, although it still carries reviews and critique of Afrikaans literary works.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** An internet search reveals that this journal appears to have been devoted to poetry in an earlier life. As we have noted. Its focus has shifted somewhat. The Editor-in-Chief is a well-known and experienced researcher and scholar who enjoys a national standing. The members of the Editorial Board are academics, while the members of the Advisory Board, including two international members, are also experienced academics from various universities.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published since 1981, with a few significant interruptions in publication. In the period under review, 24 peer-reviewed articles and 17 letter-type articles were published. The number of manuscripts received in the same period was 52 and 11 of these were rejected without peer review. Only two of the published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Two reviewers are approached to review each paper, and approximately 30 peer reviewers, all local, were used for this purpose during 2007. Most peer-review reports are retained. The average period to print is one calendar year. From 2014, the journal was transformed from print form to online, with open access at the website: [www.ensovoort.com](http://www.ensovoort.com). The journal was published irregularly, however, after the transformation in 2014, the journal publishes articles as they become available after the peer-review process.

The previous Editor was in the chair for 28 years and his position was considered to be permanent. However, a new Editor was appointed in 2014. Unlike his predecessor, he was appointed competitively. Members of the Editorial Committee occasionally conduct the peer-review process of some manuscripts, and advise on editorial policies or practices. They are appointed (from within the country and abroad) competitively through a selection process, serving for an unspecified period to provide specific expertise.

Editorial policy and guidelines of the journal are published, and it has a conflict-of-interest policy. The journal has aligned its editorial/policy guidelines with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

*Errata* are published in all cases where this is necessary. The journal contains features such as editorials, news and views, topical reviews, book reviews and correspondence on published articles. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed material is highly variable, ranging between 40 and 95%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The number of original peer-reviewed articles is eight per annum or 24 over the three years of this review. Some 50 articles are received per year, of which about 80% are published. This figure is high, suggesting a lack of rigour in the peer-review process.

Moreover, there is often a noticeable looseness in contributions that does not always line up with the "focus on Afrikaans and Dutch literature in the context of the broad South African and Dutch societies". It is unlikely that the very best work in the field of Afrikaans literary and linguistic studies is published here, although many of the leading figures in the field certainly have published in the journal.

Periodically, *Ensovoort* publishes issues on specific topics. These allow for depth and scope in each article. No attention has been given in these pages to experimental or protest literature, literature in other accessible Germanic languages, poetry and poetics, or many other themes.

Often, however, the articles seem rather parochial by focusing on authors and not on texts. This is why, at times, these pages could be suggestive of "a mutual admiration society" – in the words of one reviewer. Most authors are drawn from across South Africa, with only a few sourced internationally.

#### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Introductory editorials and obituary notices are routinely included. English-language abstracts are provided for all articles, but no keywords are included. *Errata* are published. The citation practice is satisfactory.

The journal is well presented, well laid out, and reader-friendly. The reproductions of graphs and tables are professional and clear.

#### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The contributions tend to be essayistic overviews, technical compilations and categorisation aimed at describing the structure, rather than the texture, of literary works. Undue deference is paid to mentors and senior authors – these considerably exceed the attention given to analysis and evaluation.

*Ensovoort* is not therefore comparable with international literary and literary theoretical journals. Moreover, vibrant literary e-journals in the Afrikaans language, such as *LitNet* and *Versindaba*, are more compelling than this journal.

Another view could be that while this journal does not fall into the same category as the high-profile international journals and is not an academic journal, it can be considered as a basic academic journal of good quality that is both useful and relevant.

#### **Business aspects**

On average, the journal's print run was between 300 and 400 copies. It was published by the Unit for Academic Literacy, University of Pretoria. Production and distribution was outsourced. The journal carried both paid and unpaid advertising in addition to receiving financial sponsorship. This, of course, changed when the journal migrated from print to online open access.

The number of paying subscribers is approximately 100; of these, ten are organisations as opposed to individuals.

No offers to purchase have been advanced by multi-national publishers. Copyright remains with the respective individual author. The journal is considering applying for Thomson Reuters WoS and IBSS listing. In principle, the Editor would not oppose inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

#### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The journal needs to canvas the work of young writers and be prepared to deal with more contentious topics.

It is disturbing to note that over three years there have been no book reviews in a largely literary journal, certainly one whose object of study is language and literature. There have been only two non-South African authors in three years, while no peer reviewers have been non-South African, although there is

easy access to experts in literary centres in the Netherlands. Without a web presence, the journal cannot expect to have the impact that it seeks.

A visit to the library of a major university revealed that there was only one copy of only one (special) issue of the journal to serve and stimulate a very large student body, including many registered in relevant courses.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should not continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II As such, the Publisher/Editor should not be invited to join the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.4 English Literature: A**

##### **4.4.1 English Studies in Africa**

**Focus and scope:** As its name suggests, this journal is focused on the study of world literature in English within an African context; it also seeks to promote the study of African literature worldwide.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editors and main Editorial Board are well-established and respected academics in South Africa. An impressive list of international members serve on the Editorial Board.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published since 1958 (52 years) without any interruptions in publication; there have however been delays. The archive issue list is available at this URL:  
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~db=all~content=t904149979~tab=issueslist>.

In the review period, the number of articles published was 59: eight short essays and four reviews were also published. The number of received manuscripts in the same period was 72 research articles, eight essays and four reviews. Eight manuscripts were rejected without peer review and approximately 21 rejected after peer review. The greater digital reach of the journal has led to a flood of weak submissions from across the world, and the rejection rate was 78% in 2014. The proportion of papers of all three types that had at least one author with a non-South African address is nine of 72.

Two reviewers are approached (ideally, one South African and one international scholar). A total of 18 peer reviewers were used in a single year: eight of these had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are archived. The average period to appear in print is eight to nine months, and on the web, seven to eight months. The publication frequency of the journal is biannual (appearing both in May and in October). Recently publication has been scheduled by Taylor & Francis for specific dates.

The present Editor of this journal has been in the chair for six years, but two volumes were managed by another Editor who has subsequently left the publication. The Editor is assisted by a Co-Editor from the Department of English at the University of the Witwatersrand. The Editorial chair is always occupied by a member of the Wits English Department and is appointed for five years in the first instance.

Members of the Editorial Board occasionally conduct peer review of individual manuscripts, but are not called upon to advise on editorial policies or practices. They are invited to serve indefinitely on the board and are drawn from inside the country and abroad.

Editorial policy and guidelines are published online. There is no conflict-of-interest policy. The journal has not aligned its editorial/policy guidelines with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

*Errata* are published in all cases where these are necessary. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is more than 90%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The quality of the articles published is very high, and there is a contextually good number of articles per annum: eight – nine per issue. This journal covers a wide field of scholarly interest, and no particular aspect is given special focus, which is a decided strength. Local issues are well covered, but the journal's particular forté is that local scholars working in international topics are also well represented.

## **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** There is not a strong review section (the Editor's report suggests that only four reviews are included in the volumes of the past three years). However, other scholarly features are well represented. A recent special issue addressed the topic of post-transitional South African literature which speaks to the issue of relevance. The Board's intention is to publish a special issue every year.

English language abstracts have been provided for all articles since Vol 54 of 2011. Publication of *errata* was not in evidence in the issues under review. Good citation practice and presentation, layout, style and copy-editing interventions were noted.

## **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** For some years, this journal has been an essential resource for young students and teaching staff at South African universities. It is certainly comparable with leading international journals in the field. There is a good proportion of international academics among the contributors to this journal.

While it serves as a valuable niche for SA literary studies, the journal succeeds in reaching out to international audiences.

## **Business aspects**

The information on the journal's print run is not available to the Editor. For five years, *English Studies in Africa* has been published by Unisa Press/Routledge (Taylor & Francis). The journal does not carry advertising, but it does receive financial sponsorship.

The number of paying subscribers is in the region of 200, but this information can be accessed from Routledge. Most subscribers are institutions, especially libraries, although many of these are moving over to electronic forms of subscription.

Authors retain copyright, but have to request the right to republish from Routledge, (this has been granted in all cases so far). The journal is a Thomson Reuters WoS-listed journal.

The Editor indicated a willingness to discuss any issue that may help to develop the journal, but is bound by its arrangement with Routledge (the contract was negotiated, and is held by, Unisa Press).

## **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The Editors should consider introducing more sections into the journal's contents list. This may help those who are desirous of drawing advantage from the DHET subsidy system.

Non-accredited contributions, such as topical reviews, essays and musings on the nature of literary studies will be usefully positioned elsewhere.

The journal might helpfully also bring its mission statement into sharper focus.

## **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this under policy as a Thomson Reuters WoS-indexed periodical).
- II The Publisher/Editors should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The journal should consider the recommendations in this review.

### **4.4.2 English in Africa**

**Focus and scope:** Founded in 1974, *English in Africa* provides a forum for the study of African literature in English. It is published by the Institute for the Study of English in Africa at Rhodes University. The journal also publishes scholarly articles on African writing in English with particular emphasis on research in new or under-researched areas within African literature. Reviews and review articles on new works are also included.

## **Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editors and Editorial Board are individuals of high standing in the field of South African and African literary studies. The composition of the Editorial Board is most satisfactory. There is a small grouping within the Board who might be considered 'international'.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 35 years without any significant interruptions in publication. In the period under review, 52 peer-reviewed articles and 12 book reviews were published. A total of 112 article manuscripts and 14 review manuscripts were received for consideration. Ten article manuscripts and two reviews were rejected without peer review. Sixteen published articles had at least one author with a non-South African address (27.5%) and for review articles this number was six or 17%.

Approximately 14 of a total number of 52 articles were from contributors abroad, while three of the 12 reviews were from the same source. Two peer reviewers are usually approached to scrutinise each article. In total, 16 peer reviewers were used during the review period, some of whom were approached more than once.

Only three reviewers had non-South African addresses: it should be noted, however, that *English in Africa's* primary focus is South African and African literature: for this reason, it mostly uses local scholars as peer reviewers.

Peer-review reports are retained in accessible records. The average period to appear in both print and on the web is 18 months. The publication frequency of the journal is two issues per year and issues are pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

The Editor has occupied the editorial chair for four years, and was not appointed competitively in an open process. The present Editor's replacement is being recruited in the traditional way. The duration of the appointment is three years, with the possibility of renewal. Members of the Editorial Board conduct peer review of individual manuscripts, and advise on editorial policies and practices. Editorial Committee members are not appointed competitively. They normally serve for an unspecified period, and are recruited from both inside the country and abroad.

Editorial policy guidelines are published in the journal, and a policy for any conflicts of interest is in place. The editorial guidelines have not been aligned to ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. *Errata* are published in all cases where these are necessary. The journal does not publish editorials. On average, approximately 93% of published articles represent peer-reviewed original material.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** Articles published in *English in Africa* are of a high quality. An average of eight articles appears in each issue – the panel judged this as satisfactory. Published material represents a good sample of the best work done within the country in this field. The focus on local or regional kinds of materials and problems is indeed this journal's strong point. The journal is strong in respect of publications of articles by authors from across the country and internationally.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Although this journal contains no editorials, there is a reviews section in each issue, as well as occasional obituaries, letters to the Editor, interviews, and bibliographies. No abstracts are provided. No *errata* are in evidence. The journal has immaculate citation practice and good presentation, layout, style and copy-editing.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** This journal is a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students/young staff in African literary studies and enjoys significant international and local credibility.

As such, it occupies a valuable niche of SA literary studies and favourably compares to research published internationally in the broad field of postcolonial literary studies.

**Business aspects**

The journal's hard print run is 180 copies, and it is published by the Institute for the Study of English in Africa at Rhodes University. Hard-print production and distribution are done in-house. Electronic distribution is outsourced (See below).

No advertising is carried, but the journal is sponsored by the university. The number of paying subscribers is 112; 69 organisations subscribe to the journal.

The number of individual subscribers is on the decline because a) individual academics no longer take personal subscriptions, and b) of the ready availability of the journal on multiple electronic platforms.

*English in Africa* is available online through EBSCO, Gale Publishing, Chadwyck-Healey (ProQuest), African Journals Online (AJOL) and Sabinet publishing products. Full back-runs of *English in Africa* have been digitally archived by Journal Storage (JSTOR) (International) and the Sabinet Gateway project (SA), with a moving wall of five years. Through the EBSCOhost Connection, the journal is linked to major search engines, including Google. The journal is indexed by several major bibliographies.

The journal has had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright rests with authors. The journal is indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS.

In principle, the Editor would be interested in including the journal on ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform but such a move would be subject to the decision of the Institute for the Study of English in Africa (ISEA) Board of Management.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** This journal should require its writers to include an abstract for each article. A more professional, user-friendly layout should be adopted. Currently the text runs very close to the margins (especially the right and bottom), which is aesthetically unattractive. It also makes it near impossible for a reader to insert marginalia. The Editors should also clarify the statement that the journal is a forum for addressing "all aspects of English writing and the English language in Africa".

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this under policy as a Thomson Reuters WoS-indexed periodical).
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

### **4.4.3 English Academy Review**

**Focus and scope:** The *English Academy Review: Southern African Journal of English Studies* (abbreviated as EAR) is the official journal of the English Academy of Southern Africa. In the words of their President, the vision of this Academy is of a democratic society in which effective English is available to all who wish to use it, where competent instruction in the language is readily accessible and in which the country's diverse linguistic ecology is respected.

The Review considers submissions on language, as well as educational, philosophical and literary topics from southern Africa and across the globe. In addition to refereed academic articles, it publishes creative writing and book reviews.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editors and Editorial Board are of the highest standing, reflecting an impressive mix of distinguished local and international scholars.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 26 years consecutively – from 1983 to 2006 (one issue per annum) and from 2007 to 2009 (two issues per annum) – without any significant interruptions. In the period under review, 167 article manuscripts were received, and 58 of these were published. Nineteen letter-type manuscripts were received, and all of these were published, as were 35 review manuscripts – no manuscript was rejected without peer review. The number of published articles that had at least one author with a non-South African address was 16 (27%), while six, or 17%, of the published total of review articles had at least one non-South African author.

Usually, between two and three peer reviewers are approached to consider each submitted manuscript. In the review period, a total of 46 peer reviewers were used; of these, 9% had a non-South African address. Peer-review reports are retained in accessible records. The average period to appear in both print and on the web is six to 10 months. The journal issues two numbers per year, and these are pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

The Editor was previously a Guest Editor; he had also been a Managing Editor and the Editor-in-Chief. He was appointed in a competitive process for a three-year period. Members of the Editorial Board conduct



peer review of individual manuscripts, and advise on editorial policies and practices. Editorial Committee members normally serve for five years, and are drawn from both within the country and abroad.

Editorial policy guidelines are published; however, there is no conflict-of-interest policy. The editorial guidelines have been aligned to ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. *Errata* are published in all cases when necessary. The journal does publish editorials and the like, and on average about 75% of published articles represent peer-reviewed original material.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** Published articles are of a high quality. Approximately 14 articles per annum are published – this is a good number. While the standard of articles is good, the articles in this journal do not necessarily represent the 'best' done in the country in the field of literary studies.

The editions that were reviewed showed a preponderance of articles from academics (many of them Professors Emeriti) at the universities of Cape Town, Wits, Pretoria and Unisa. Other South African universities were represented, but only sporadically. There was one article and a few book reviews by international scholars.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Each edition typically contains six or seven articles, preceded by an editorial and followed by several book reviews (some of the latter are peer-reviewed), one or more items of poetry, and an essay or a public lecture which is suitably revised for publication.

Scholarly articles are preceded by an abstract together with a list of keywords. No *errata* were found in the editions examined. Editorial standards are very high. The journal may be judged to have a highly professional presentation.

As noted, *EAR* publishes a vibrant review section, interviews, reports on the English Academy, poetry, essays, and memorial lectures.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** Articles published in this journal are interesting and of a high academic standard; they are also sufficiently varied to provide graduates and early-career academics with stimulation. This is an impressively varied publication for anyone in the field of English literary studies in southern Africa.

The high quality of the material published in this journal gives it considerable credibility, both locally and internationally.

It is comparable with leading international journals in the field.

**Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 400 copies per issue. The production is done by Unisa Press and Routledge, an imprint of Taylor & Francis, and the distribution is done by The English Academy and Taylor & Francis.

No advertising is carried, but the journal does receive financial sponsorship. The number of paying subscribers is 320, and five of these are organisations. *English Academy Review* is openly accessible only to sub-Saharan African users, and is also part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service. Authors are required to sign a licence-to-publish agreement.

The Editor and Publisher would not be interested in being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

The overall rejection rate for the representative past three years was 65.3%, testifying to its high quality.

**Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The Editorial Board has strong international representation, but this is not adequately reflected in the articles themselves.

The journal is highly respected but at times its mission seems confusing because of its interdisciplinary diversity. While some interdisciplinary diversity is to be welcomed, often boundaries that are too porous are unhelpful. It is recommended that a clearer disciplinary focus should be crafted.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.4.4 *Scrutiny2***

**Focus and scope:** *Scrutiny2* publishes papers on theoretical and practical concerns in English literary studies in southern Africa, and in particular tertiary education. It is aimed at specialists in English literary studies. While the journal predominantly publishes scholarly articles, it also features poetry, as well as other forms of writing such as essays, review essays, conference reports and polemical position pieces.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The journal has a strong national and international reputation. The Editorial Board and Editor-in-Chief are an impressive mix of international and local scholars. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group is the publisher. The Editor is elected. All members of the Editorial Board are eligible to stand for the office of Editor. Names are put forward at the Editorial Board meeting and an election is conducted in an openly competitive process.

Associate Editors are office-bearers who carry out the business of the journal and are appointed by the Department of English Studies at Unisa. The Editorial Board are mostly international figures in the field.

**Questionnaire:** The questionnaire was not completed by the Editor.

**Content:** quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.

**Consensus review:** The quality of articles is generally high, while a good number of these are published per annum. Moreover, they constitute a good sample of the best work done nationally in this discipline.

**Essential technical features:** English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation

**Consensus review:** Generous editorial space is allocated to additional scholarly features. All articles have English abstracts. *Errata* are published if necessary but no *errata* were observed in the journal in the period under review. There is good citation practice and very good presentation. Very good additional scholarly features are published. There are English abstracts, but no keywords are provided.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** This journal is suitable for accessing by young academics; it is a high-calibre publication that is comparable to leading international journals.

#### **Business aspects**

The questionnaire was not completed by the Editor.

#### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The reviewers recognise that *Scrutiny2* is a much sought-after target for publication. One matter of concern is that its academic accreditation might be jeopardised by the temptation of the Editor to publish less-scholarly material. Consideration might also be given to the inclusion of a great number of international luminaries on the Board.

#### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.5 English Literature: B**

##### **4.5.1 *Journal of Literary Studies***

**Focus and scope:** The *Journal of Literary Studies* (JLS) aims to provide a forum for the discussion of literary theory, methodology, and related matters. It features articles, commentary, book reviews and general announcements.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editors are of good standing in the local literary community, and there is good representation on the International Editorial Board. *JLS* is one of the most respected and widely read literary journals in South Africa, spanning not only literature in English, but drawing from the Afrikaans literary tradition, as well as from other languages.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 24 years, without any significant interruptions in publication. The number of articles published in the review period is 73, and 93 manuscripts were received during this period. In this time, three manuscripts were rejected without peer review. There were 18 foreign authors of peer-reviewed original papers published over the review period.

The journal is published quarterly. It was noticed that the publication of double issues, as in 1 & 2 and 3 & 4, was occasionally used in the past for theme-based special issues, or, in a few instances, to bring the journal up to date. This has been discontinued and special issues are now published as separate issues in addition to the four issues published annually.

Two peer reviewers were approached to scrutinise each manuscript; in 2008, approximately 48 reviewers were used for this purpose; all were South Africans. Peer-review reports are retained in records that are accessible in both hard and electronic copy. The average period from manuscript to publication is one year. The journal is published four times per year, appearing in the months of March, June, September, and December.

The Editor has been in the chair for three-and-a-half years; he was appointed in an uncompetitive process for an indefinite period of office. The Editorial Board members advise on editorial policies/practices and conduct the peer review of individual manuscripts. Members are not appointed competitively and there is no time limit on their respective appointments.

Editorial policy and guidelines are published. A conflict-of-interest policy is in draft form, and will be discussed further. The editorial/policy guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. When necessary, *errata* are published, and the journal publishes value-adding features such as editorials and review articles.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** Very good quality. Most contributors are seasoned academics, but emerging scholars are also published. A satisfactory eight to 10 articles are published in each issue.

One of the strong points of the *JLS*, according to one reviewer, is that it provides a platform for literary scholars with an interest in theory. It predominantly publishes local authors, although there are several contributions from foreign authors.

*JLS* is a well-established journal, and has a regular publishing programme with four annual issues, making it the most prolific local journal in the discipline. It regularly features relevant and interesting special issues on southern African literatures.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The reviews section varies from issue to issue. A few years ago the journal decided to carry review essays as opposed to reviews. Abstracts for all articles are carried in both English and Afrikaans; the journal also publishes articles in both the languages. No *errata* were evident in the journal during the review period. Citation practice is excellent; the journal is well edited while presentation, layout, style and copy-editing interventions are excellent.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** This journal does not carry sufficient material from emerging researchers, but most of the contributors are seasoned academics. As noted, this journal has a particular niche which is theoretical articles on southern African literature and international literature. The impression one gains from a perusal of the journal is on par with international standards.

**Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 600 issues four times per year; it is published by the Unisa Press. Copy-editing and printing are outsourced. It does not carry paid or unpaid advertising, nor does it receive financial sponsor-

ship. The number of paying subscribers is 164 and there are 61 institutional subscribers. The journal is not published free online; however, it is part of Routledge, Taylor & Francis' commercial e-publication service.

The Editor has received offers to purchase the journal from Routledge (Taylor & Francis). Copyright on published articles is vested with authors. English abstracts precede each article. On a previous occasion, the *JLS* was independently peer-reviewed.

Any invitation for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform needs to be discussed by the Editorial Board.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** This journal is considered among the best currently published in the country, but more reviews (or review essays) would, perhaps, further enhance its value.

The use of foreign-based special issue editors who are networked into different and diverse networks of global scholarship may be a way of internationalising content.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

## **4.5.2 *Alternation: Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of the Arts and Humanities in Southern Africa***

**Focus and scope:** This is an international journal that publishes interdisciplinary contributions in the fields of the arts and humanities in southern Africa.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** *Alternation* offers more diverse content than many local journals, and needs to be commended for its pro-active steps to encourage a greater range of voices in the ranks of its contributors. An unevenness in quality is to be expected, but this is more than compensated for by the opportunity to read new and emerging voices. The disciplinary reputations and standing of the Editor-in-Chief and members of the Editorial Board are adequate. The Editorial Committee is local, but the Editorial and Advisory Boards both have a good mix of local and international members with a good number from reputable universities.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 15 years (from 1994) without any interruptions in publication. In the period under review, 129 manuscripts were received of which 84 were published. No manuscripts were rejected without peer review. The number of published articles that had at least one author with a non-South African address was 8% and only one review article had an author with a non-South African address.

A minimum of two peer reviewers were used to scrutinise each manuscript. A total of 32 (2006), 33 (2007) and 38 (2008) peer reviewers were used; of these, seven had non-South African addresses – this breaks down as follows 2006 = 1, 2007 = 4 and 2008 = 2. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained.

The average length to print is one year and, as from 2010, publication on the web takes less than one year. The publication frequency of the journal is twice a year and issues (including special editions) are pre-scheduled to appear on given dates. Over the last three or so years some issues were a few months late.

The present incumbent has been Editor for 14 years, and was not appointed competitively following advertisement and a selection process. In 1995, he was the only person willing to take up the responsibility.

If possible, members of the Editorial Board conduct peer reviews. Some years ago the journal changed to a more efficient practice, appointing reviewers for each thematic issue.

Members of the Editorial Board, who are not appointed competitively, advise on editorial policies and practices, themes of issues, as well as the operating system of the journal. They are invited to participate as Guest Editors and/or reviewers for the relevant journal issues.

Editorial Committee members serve for a minimum of five years, or as long as they wish. Reviewers who serve for the duration of a single thematically focused issue only serve on the Board for the duration of

the themed issue. Members of this Board are drawn from both within the country and abroad. Members of the Editorial Committee are appointed to provide specific topical expertise and are very active in the affairs of the journal.

Editorial policy guidelines are not officially published, but are communicated to each of the Guest Editors on a case-by-case basis. An innovation is the use of a third reviewer in instances where one reviewer does not approve publication. Guest Editors are expected to sign a document that includes the commitment to follow the guidelines in ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

The journal has not yet published *errata*; grammar and syntax errors have been brought to the Editor's attention and are corrected on the website PDF version of the journal. *Alternation* does carry value-adding features such as editorials – catered for in the usual introductions to each volume. From Vol 16, 2009, the Editor or Guest Editors have written regular editorial columns for each journal issue.

If possible, topical reviews are aligned with thematic issues of the journal, as are book reviews. Correspondence on published articles is published. On average over the 15 years of publication, about 80% of published articles have been peer reviewed.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Panel believes that the quality of the published articles is fair. They reflect the work of a mix of experienced and more junior researchers, both in terms of content and style. This journal must be commended for carrying a wide range and a good number of articles per annum.

Periodically, the journal seems to lack a coherent profile or identity. An interdisciplinary journal needs a clear focus on an issue or theme that enables interventions from multiple disciplinary points of view, not simply a juxtaposition of arguments that fail to 'talk to each other', as often seems to be the case in the pages of *Alternation*.

The journal provides, however, a good sample of the best work done in the country in the different disciplines, but the journal does not always represent the 'best' work done in the country in the field of literary studies.

The journal needs to exercise care in not becoming so diverse and unspecialised in content that it risks losing its regular readership.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The reviewers noted that since Vol 2.2 (1995) all numbers of the journal have carried an introduction that includes summaries of the articles published in each issue. From Vol 14.1 (2007), each article has carried an abstract. The presentation, citation practice and overall editing of articles is of an acceptable standard. The respective review and correspondence sections of recent numbers need attention and might helpfully be expanded. In the issues that were examined for reviewing, there were no *errata*. The citation practice is clearly set out on the inside back cover of the journal. The layout and typesetting in recent numbers are uneven, with some typos.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal excels here and should be commended for doing so. In these categories, *Alternation* compares better than any other journal in English studies in the country. The journal is most suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young staff in the discipline.

There is probably some kind of favourable comparability with leading international journals, but some of the articles reviewed were a little rough and too long: this may suggest a lack of focus.

**Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 300 copies per issue. The journal is published by the Centre for the Study of Southern African Literature and Languages (CSSALL) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The production and distribution are done by the Editor-in-Chief and an assistant.

No advertising is carried and the journal does not receive financial sponsorship. The number of paying subscribers is 135; of these, 96 subscribers are libraries and other organisations.

The journal was opened to the public from the end of September 2009 through open access. The journal is not part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service. Since 2012, all volumes of the journal are open access and available at this URL: <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Homepage.aspx>.

There have not been offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright belongs to the journal, but authors may freely use their published material for their own purposes.

In principle, the Editor and Publisher would consider inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

Because the Editor has been editing with no infrastructural support, the journal began moving towards training Guest Editors from 1999. So far, this initiative has trained 22 people. As Guest Editors they are encouraged to edit issues in areas directly related to their own areas of specialisation either on their own or in groups. This approach has proved very beneficial for up-and-coming researchers, and has bolstered the facilitation of research capacity development and research output in an interdisciplinary framework.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The journal should seek stronger representation from scholars outside of Africa, particularly South African émigré scholars, who are not well represented in the local journals surveyed here. The Editorial Board has strong international representation, but this wider focus is not really reflected in the articles themselves.

The journal needs to be more selective with the choice of articles that are published, and it needs to apply more discipline in limiting the length of some articles.

The editors also need to reflect more carefully on what constitutes the humanities and its disciplinary limits in the planning of future numbers of the journal.

In addition, the journal should seek to improve on its copy-editing.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.**

### **4.5.3 Shakespeare in Southern Africa**

**Focus and scope:** *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* is published annually by the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa (SSOSA) through the Institute for the Study of English in Africa (ISEA) at Rhodes University. The journal carries articles, commentary and reviews on all aspects of Shakespearean studies and performance, with a particular emphasis on the response to Shakespeare in southern Africa.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editor has a high international reputation and the international standing of the Editorial Board is sound.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 22 years, without significant interruptions in publication. In the period under review, the journal published 16 peer-reviewed papers, three letter-type articles and 29 reviews. In the same period, the journal received 57 manuscripts. Approximately seven of these were rejected without peer review. In total, seven non-SA authors were published in the journal during this period.

Usually two peer reviewers are approached to scrutinise each manuscript. On average the journal uses 16 peer reviewers each year. During the review period, of the total of 16, four had non-South African addresses. The peer-review reports are accessibly retained in records for a three-year period. The average time to print and to appear on the web is 14 months. The record shows that the issues appear on the dates scheduled.

The Editor has been with the journal for almost two years; he was appointed competitively following advertisement and a selection process for a three-year period – renewal of the term is possible. The Editorial Board members are not competitively appointed and their service period is not specified; they are however appointed from within the country and abroad, to provide the Editor with topical expertise. They conduct peer review of individual manuscripts and advise on editorial policies/practices.



Editorial policy guidelines are published in each issue and the journal has a conflict-of-interest policy. The Editor is unaware of ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*, and feels the code needs broader dissemination.

The journal publishes *errata* in cases where this is necessary. The journal carries editorials, interviews, theatre reviews and book reviews. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed material is 70%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The quality of the articles in this journal is very impressive. Around five articles are published annually. The Panel believed however that the number per annum could possibly be raised. Although its focus is limited, its title is broadly interpreted, with the result that the contents cover a relatively wide field of scholarly focus.

Local scholarship on Shakespearian issues is well covered, but the journal's particular strength is the unique niche it occupies. The contents demonstrate a good sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** There is a very good reviews section, with editorials and other notices in almost every issue. The journal also carries photographs and other visual material; as a result, it provides the reader with a varied and rich content. It also serves as an outlet for special Shakespeare or Renaissance-related conferences and symposia. This is a particularly valuable resource because often these pass by unnoticed.

Not all articles are abstracted. Publication of *errata* was not in evidence in the issues under review. The citation practice is good and there is excellent presentation, layout, style and copy-editing.

While the journal often includes book reviews and reports on local productions of Shakespearean performances, it has made no attempt at becoming a review organ of record, as might be expected from a journal with such a specific focus.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** There is evidence that younger scholars use this journal as a platform for publication, but most of the articles are written by seasoned researchers. This journal holds its own in terms of both content and presentation. It is a good resource for early career publication, becoming average for those at the mid-career stage, but it is decidedly average-to-poor for senior scholars for whom repeated publication in these pages tends to become a substitute for effective international participation. Leading international journals, with which we might compare *Shakespeare in Southern Africa*, actively seek out a wider range of contributors.

**Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 200 copies per issue; it is published by the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa, through the Institute for the Study of English in Africa, Rhodes University. Hard-print production and distribution are done in-house. Electronic distribution is outsourced as part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service. Occasionally, the journal carries both paid and unpaid advertising. The journal does not receive financial sponsorship.

The number of paying subscribers (print and electronic) is 204; of this total, 50 are organisations. The journal is part of a non-commercial e-publication; it is available online through EBSCO, Gale Publishing, Chadwyck-Healey (ProQuest), AJOL and Sabinet online publishing products. Through the EBSCOhost Connection, *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* is linked to major search engines, including Google, and is indexed in major international bibliographies including YWES and SQ (Folger).

The journal has received offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright is vested in authors. The Editor would in principle be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform, subject to a decision by the Shakespeare Society Executive Committee.

**Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** This is a solid journal: it is well managed and occupies a unique niche.

The Editor should engage with the issue of abstracts, and should be encouraged to double the number of articles published without sacrificing quality or losing the niche that the journal occupies.

More scholarly academic articles and reviews of international academic work are recommended.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The journal should consider the recommendations in this review.**

#### **4.5.4 Current Writing**

**Focus and scope:** *Current Writing* focuses on literary and cultural debate around contemporary and re-published texts from Southern Africa, and on the interpretation of world texts from a southern African perspective. The journal is now the official journal of the Southern African Association of Commonwealth Literature and Languages (SAACLALS), which, in turn, is affiliated to the international body of the Association of Commonwealth Literature and Languages (ACLALS).

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editorial team and Editorial Board enjoy high standing in the fields of South African and African literary studies. The composition of the Editorial Board is most satisfactory: half of them are 'international', although they all have strong roots in, or ties to, Africa.

The journal's reputation has certainly been enhanced through the general editorship of the current Editor-in-Chief, one of South Africa's leading literary historians. The Editor's imprint is visible in the double special issue (Vol 21.1 & 2, 2009) which considered the emerging trends of post-2000 literature: this is indispensable reading for any scholar working in the discipline.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 22 years (2010 was the 23<sup>rd</sup> year), without significant interruptions in publication. In the period under review, the journal published 52 peer-reviewed original papers and nine reviews. In the same period, the journal received 126 manuscripts. Approximately eight submitted manuscripts were rejected without peer review. In total, 10 published papers (17%) had at least one author with a non-South African address.

The number of peer reviewers approached is two per manuscript. On average, the journal uses 22 peer reviewers in a year, and of this number 6% had non-South African addresses. The peer-review reports are not yet accessibly retained in records, but will be in the future. The average period for the journal to appear in print is 12 months. The publication frequency of the journal is twice annually, in May and October.

The Editor-in-Chief has been editing the journal for three years, and he was appointed by the team of editors for five years. The team of Editors are only appointed from within the country. The Editorial Board members – as distinct from the team of Editors – comprises both national and international representation. They are not appointed competitively, and their period runs for five years. They advise on editorial policies/practices and provide specific topical expertise. However, Editorial Board members do not conduct the peer review of individual manuscripts.

Editorial guidelines appear in each issue. A third blind review is required when a disagreement arises. Reviewers outside of the host institution (UKZN), including at least one outside of the country, are solicited when the submission is by a member of the Editorial Board. The Editor was unaware of ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

The journal publishes *errata* if necessary; however, this has not been necessary over the previous three-year period. The journal carries value-adding features such as editorials and book reviews. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is between 90% – 95%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** Of all local journals in this field, *Current Writing* is most closely attuned to the evolving and changing literary landscape of southern Africa, featuring, over the years, a number of noteworthy interventions and analyses. It is undoubtedly one of the most highly regarded journals in the discipline in South Africa.

The general quality of published articles is high. An average of eight to 10 articles are published per issue; this number is entirely satisfactory.

Publication of articles is predominantly by locals, although there are a few contributions from abroad. For example, the 2009 double issue had 18 contributors: ten from UKZN, one international, six from other institutions in SA and a single one from a non-academic source. In the three years between 2008 and 2010 members of the Editorial Board published between two and five essays each.

The reviewers were concerned that apparently little international participation is sought.

### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The depth of the reviews section varies from issue to issue. In general, the journal could carry more reviews, especially given that its focus is on current southern African writing.

A welcome recent development is that all articles carry abstracts: no *errata* appeared in any of the issues under review.

There is a good citation practice, and the journal is well edited. Its presentation, layout, style and copy-editing are good.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** This journal does carry material from emerging researchers, especially those associated with UKZN. It is an excellent resource for early publication, becoming average for mid-career scholars, and average-to-poor for more senior ones.

The journal occupies a particular niche: southern African literature (and occasionally literature further afield) of the past few decades with a focus on topical issues.

Leading international journals, against which this journal might be compared, actively seek out a wider range of contributors: this however is a determinedly local journal, with a marked UKZN dominance.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 300 copies per issue, and it is now published under Routledge (Taylor & Francis). The edited manuscripts are supplied to Taylor & Francis, and all other tasks are handled by the publisher. The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising. The journal does not receive financial sponsorship.

The number of paying subscribers is 125, but this not a reliable figure. A steady decline in hard-copy subscribers suggests a move to electronic sourcing. Of the total subscribers, 60 are organisations. The journal has previously appeared free online with Gale, but is now under Taylor & Francis. Copyright of articles lies with the authors.

An application has been made for indexing by Thomson Reuters WoS. The journal has received an endorsement in DA Barker in 2007. English Academic Literary Discourse in SA 1958 – 2004: A Review of Academic Journals. University of Trier, Germany: 83 – 86. The Editor would in principle be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** This journal is certainly among the best currently published in the country, but more reviews would further enhance its value. It is effective in promoting the development of a local research culture, particularly at junior to mid-level, but is relatively isolated from the global discourses. In this, the journal resembles many examples of good to strong local-national journals in the humanities across the world.

The journal could summon the energy and determination to become one of the world's leading journals by seeking more contributions from abroad, and striking a better balance between other local scholars.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform but this is not possible under the current licensing agreement.
- III The journal should consider the recommendations in this review.

## 4.6 Afrikaans Literature

### 4.6.1 LitNet Akademies

**LitNet publishes a number of online journals focusing on various disciplines. The review was conducted on the geesteswetenskappe (humanities) section of LitNet Akademies.**

**Focus and scope:** LitNet provides a robust virtual node to culture lovers and offers a platform for the South African multi-disciplinary journal, *LitNet Akademies*, which is a DHET-accredited journal. It has a specific section on humanities (*geesteswetenskappe*), which links closely to other sub-sections of the journal, i.e. basic and applied sciences, law, religious sciences, and education. Each article forms part of a multi-disciplinary and dynamic approach within a hypertext environment. Now firmly established within the Afrikaans environment, LitNet is committed to growing its English and African language content. For the purposes of this review only the humanities section of the journal will be evaluated.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The idea behind the journal is to promote research through the medium of Afrikaans. Most of the contributors are local, with a sprinkling of international contributors. The editors are all of high academic standing, all of them also senior academics with considerable and strong research records. The Editor-in-Chief has a strong reputation nationally as a researcher. The editorial team is very professional and capable. All the others are highly respected scholars in their specialisations.

The journal has a strong Advisory Board consisting of prominent academics from different disciplines and institutions across South Africa; six are Europe-based. The Board shows a good mix of older and younger, male and female and white and black academics, though literary scholars and linguists predominate.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for two years, with no interruptions in publication. In the period under review, the journal published 37 articles. The journal received 97 manuscripts in the same period and four manuscripts were rejected without peer reviewing. About 4% of published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address. The number of peer reviewers approached is generally two or, at times, three per manuscript.

Approximately 3% of peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer reviews are accessibly retained in records. The average period for an article to appear on the web is two months from submission – it must be noted that the journal is only published online. The journal is published three times per year. Issues of the journals are pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

The Editor-in-Chief has been editing the journal since May 2007, having founded it. The Editorial Board members are not appointed competitively, and their term of office is not specified. They are appointed from both within the country and abroad to provide specific expertise. Board members are not required to conduct peer reviews of individual manuscripts; however, they do advise on editorial policies/practices.

Editorial guidelines appear in each issue and a conflict-of-interest policy is available. The Editor-in-Chief is unsure whether editorial policy guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. The editorial staff correct the digital text immediately; therefore no errata are necessary.

Editorials, news and views, and the like form part of the larger LitNet community, which is driven by debates on issues often addressed in the scholarly articles. The editorial team often conducts interviews with those who have been published; these are then posted on the wider LitNet platform and linked to the journal to draw traffic. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 100%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** As the content is peer reviewed, and put through strict and very critical reading processes, the quality on the whole is good to high. With three issues per year with on average 37 articles per volume, the journal publishes a substantial number of articles per year.

On the completion of their theses, young researchers publish on LitNet with their supervisors, as the idea at conception was also to stimulate the growth of research in the Afrikaans language, and to grow new young researchers working in Afrikaans. At present there is a tendency towards more established and older researchers to publish increasingly in the electronic mode. The journal focuses on local and regional materials.

Building on the success of *LitNet* as a website for all kinds of literary and intellectual activities, a parallel project called *LitNet Akademies* has become a showcase of research in a wide variety of disciplines and also in the humanities in Afrikaans. The journal publishes a very good sample of some of the best work done in the country.

In an unusual move, the journal pays its authors. Because the Internet is a flexible medium it can accommodate long articles, as well as graphics and audio material like snippets of music or pronunciation. There are no restrictions on length, though a general length of 7 000 words and a maximum of 20 000 words are published as guidelines.

Of the articles that appeared in the years under review, about 63% can be classified as 'South African' and 36% as 'international' topics - however tenuous this distinction might be.

In *LitNet Akademies* the focus is on a vibrant academic debate on Afrikaans and South African intellectual issues, situated in a strong international and dynamic framework that is informed by international debates in the various disciplines.

The authors are drawn from universities across South Africa. That the journal publishes only in Afrikaans of course limits international contributions: Afrikaans writers in the diaspora have published on these pages.

In addition, the panel believes that the journal makes a very useful and important contribution.

### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Not only does this journal publish research articles, but it forms part of the rich intellectual environment, where a wide variety of materials on literary and scholarly life are available. Readers can participate in the debates by means of letters, SMS, blogs, opinion pieces and other creative contributions. Citation practice is good. It has good presentation, excellent special language editors, and other editors in full-time employ. Abstracts of maximum 300 words in Afrikaans and longer abstracts in the English language are provided. None of the issues contained *errata*. The journal follows an adapted Harvard style with a full bibliography and a limited number of endnotes.

The journal has a rigorous set of style guidelines to ensure uniformity. The online presentation is attractive, and easy to read. This said, the first page of the *LitNet* website is overloaded and forms a kind of a barrier to the content of the journal (See second point in suggested improvements below).

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** *LitNet Akademies* (*geesteswetenskappe*) is generally comparable to any good international online humanities journal. The journal is suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young staff in the discipline. Because of the use of Afrikaans as a sole medium, it cannot compete internationally with research published in, say, English. The published research is topical, interesting, of high quality and methodologically strong. It addresses significant South African problems, as well as basic research questions.

### **Business aspects**

The journal is published electronically only. It is published by *LitNet* ([www.litnet.co.za](http://www.litnet.co.za)). Both production and distribution are handled by *LitNet*. The journal does not carry paid advertising. It does receive financial sponsorship.

The journal appears free online (open access). It is also part of a non-commercial e-publication mechanism – *LitNet* (the wider platform) is sponsorship driven, but *LitNet Akademies* carries no advertisements – it does, however, display the logos of sponsors. Revenues from advertising cover the costs of the employment of the *LitNet* and *LitNet Akademies* staff, who manage the administration, uploading, proofreading, etc. The Editor-in-Chief of *LitNet Akademies* receives no monetary compensation.

The journal has received no offers of purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright remains with the author of the article. As articles are not in English, and 'front details' like titles, authors, addresses, and English abstracts are mandatory. The Editor-in-Chief would in principle be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform as a free online, open access journal.

## Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** The humanities (geesteswetenskappe) section of the journal is a generalist, rather broadly focused publication. Originally the focus was very much on Afrikaans literature, with an article here and there on Afrikaans language or linguistics. This contrasts noticeably with the more rigorous approach of the three science journals in the same stable, which are very specialised and focused.

The journal is embedded in the host-website of *LitNet*. This is off-putting if one wants to consult the journal. It is difficult to get an overview of what the journal has published and of the different issues. To search for a specific article by title or author is cumbersome, as the website only makes provision for a list of all the contributions by author, date or title. It is probably easier to search for a specific contribution through Sabinet. There seems to be room for an improved design of the journal's public face. *LitNet* is apparently undergoing a process of redesign and hopefully, when this is completed, these issues will be alleviated.

### Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor-in-Chief should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor-in-Chief should consider the recommendations in this review.

### 4.6.2 Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans

**Focus and scope:** *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* is 'n geakkrediteerde tydskrif en word uitgegee deur die Suider-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Neerlandistiek (SAVN), met finansiële steun van die Nederlandse Taalunie. *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* wil die studie van die Nederlandse taal- en letterkunde en kultuur bevorder, ook in sy verhouding tot die Afrikaanse taal- en letterkunde. Daarbenewens wil die tydskrif die Afrikaanse taal- en letterkunde in Nederlandstalige gebiede bevorder. Die tydskrif verskyn twee keer per jaar.

**Translation:** *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* is an accredited journal, published twice a year by the Southern African Association for Dutch Studies (SAVN), with financial support from the Dutch Language Union. *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* promotes the study of the Dutch language, literature and culture, in its relationship to the Afrikaans language and literature. In addition, the journal aims at promoting Afrikaans linguistics and literature in Dutch-speaking territories. The journal appears twice a year.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editors-in-Chief are scholars of high national and international standing in the field of Netherlandic studies. The Editorial Board consists of high-calibre academics: there are 14 members, of which seven are from Europe, two from the USA and five from South Africa.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 22 years, and delays have created interruptions in publication. There were 50 research articles published during the period of 2007 to 2009. The terms, 'letter-type articles and reviews' were unclear to those who responded to the questionnaire. The journal only publishes articles written in prose and occasionally containing figures or pictures. Since the new Editors assumed responsibility of the journal, no manuscripts have been rejected without peer review during the past two years – however, articles were often rewritten.

About 14 published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address. The number of peer reviewers approached to read a submission is two per manuscript. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in records. The average period to print is seven months. The journal is published once every six months. However, issues do not appear exactly on the scheduled dates because the present editors have been working on a backlog.

The Editor-in-Chief is elected at a general meeting of members of the SAVN: the appointment runs for three years until the next meeting.

The Editorial Board members conduct peer reviews of individual manuscripts from time to time, and also advise on editorial policies/practices. They also provide specific topical expertise.

They were individually approached by the Management Committee of the SAVN to join this board because of their expertise in certain sub-disciplines and their status as researchers. The term of office is not specified. The status of the Editorial Board was extensively discussed at a meeting of the Board of the South African Association for Dutch Studies (SAVN).

Editorial guidelines are published and appear in each issue, and a conflict-of-interest policy is in place. The editorial policy guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. The journal publishes errata if any become necessary.

The journal carries editorials as a value-adding feature. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 95%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The quality of the articles is good: they are methodologically sound, informed and well written, even if they are not always on the frontiers of research. In general, however, they represent a valuable contribution to the study of Afrikaans and Dutch. A decided strength of the journal is its articles on the history of this literature. The journal also makes an important contribution to comparative Netherlandic and Afrikaans studies.

*Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* maintains a good balance between 'South African' and 'Dutch' topics. Indeed, the aim of the journal is to promote the study of the Dutch language, literature and culture in its relationship to the Afrikaans language and culture. Conversely, it also aims to promote Afrikaans literature and language in Dutch-speaking parts of the world. Many articles therefore compare Dutch and Afrikaans literature, language and culture.

With two issues per year on average containing six articles and an average of 122 pages, the journal publishes a substantial number of research articles per year. The number of articles is on average 14 per annum, which is adequate for the subject area. Dutch studies in South Africa is relatively small, so it is encouraging that the journal has been able to continue to publish a regular output of articles. The articles published in the journal offer an adequate to good sample of the best work done in South Africa in the discipline of Afrikaans and Dutch studies. The *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* has established itself as the leading journal for academic publications in this field in South Africa.

The journal shows a good spread of authors from across the country and from abroad. Authors from Pretoria, Stellenbosch and the University of the Western Cape are well represented (as they should be, as these universities are the centres for Netherlandic studies in South Africa), with North-West University also contributing significantly. The authors from abroad are mostly from Belgium and the Netherlands, and in another issue, two Indonesian authors featured. According to the Editors, 14 out of 65 articles (or 21.5 %) published had at least one author with a non-South African address. In the issues from 2008 to 2010, 11 out of the 39 articles (or 28.2%) had at least one non-South African author.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation, practice, presentation etc.**

**Consensus review:** *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* usually carries an editorial in every edition of the journal. The journal also contains a subscription form for prospective subscribers. Furthermore, it provides a set of guidelines to authors about the house style, copyright, etc.

Abstracts in English are provided. As the articles are devoted to Afrikaans and Dutch studies, it may be advisable to offer the abstracts in Afrikaans (or Dutch) in addition to the current abstracts in English. The presentation of the abstracts could be more prominent in the journal and could be preceded by a heading 'Abstract'.

*Errata* are published in a suitable fashion, but rarely so. The citation practice is consistent and in line with acceptable practices in the field of Afrikaans and Dutch studies.

The journal is presented in an attractive and well-organised fashion that is typographically pleasing and highly readable. The style is pleasing to the eye. Each issue has a unique cover based on colour illustrations related to topics that are discussed in that issue. Occasionally, the copy-editing is not of a sustained high quality.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The articles in *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans* can be favourably compared to leading international journals. The research is original, professionally done and well written.

The journal offers many articles that are useful to local graduate students in Afrikaans and Dutch studies in their ongoing studies. Indeed, some of the articles are written by graduate students in collaboration with their academic supervisors.



## Business aspects

The journal's print run is 280 copies per issue; it is published by the sponsoring body, SAVN. Both production and distribution are done in-house. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising. The journal receives sponsorship from the Dutch Language Union (a Dutch, Flemish and Surinam governmental organisation).

The number of paying subscribers is 160 (all members of the society are automatically subscribed). Twenty-four copies are taken by organisations. During the period under review, the journal did not appear free online. However, the Management Committee of the SAVN were committed to working together with the *Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlands Letterkunde* (Digital Library for Dutch Literature) to make this journal freely available online.

There is a link to the journal on the webpage of the SAVN:

<http://www.savn.org.za/index.php/tydskrif-vir-nederlands-en-afrikaans>. The last issue that one can access at this URL is 2011, No 2.

The journal has received offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. For reproduction of articles appearing in the journal, permission must be given by the Management Committee of the society.

## Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** Every effort should be made to ensure that the journal appears on time.

A current website and more prominent availability on the internet would ensure greater visibility for the journal and it would ensure that contributors attract a wider audience.

The journal could be marketed more aggressively to scholars who work mainly in the field of Afrikaans studies as opposed to Dutch studies. A steadier stream of contributions could be ensured if the Editors actively commissioned articles from contributors who work in Afrikaans studies.

The journal should publish brief biographical notes on the contributors, as not all of them are well known. Contributors to the journal should be encouraged to engage with new theoretical writing on their topics.

The journal should improve on independent peer-review practice.

## Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

### 4.6.3 *Stilet: Tydskrif van die Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging*

**Focus and scope:** *Stilet* is die amptelike tydskrif van die Afrikaanse Letterkundevereniging (ALV). Die tydskrif word geheel gewy aan die wetenskaplike studie van die Afrikaanse literatuur in die vorm van navorsingsartikels, literêre analyses, kommentaar oor aktuele literêre vraagstukke en ALV-kongresreferate.

Translation: *Stilet* is the official journal of the Afrikaans Literature Association (ALV). The journal is entirely devoted to the scientific study of Afrikaans literature in the form of research papers, literary analyses, comments on current literary issues and the ALV congress.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** For 2008 and 2009, the Editor and the Sub-Editor were both on the staff of the University of the Free State. In 2010, a new Editor took over the post; he is still the Editor of the journal and he is based at North-West University. The editors have strong national reputations as academics. Members of the Editorial Board are all prominent members of the community of scholars in Afrikaans literature and many of them also have sound international reputations. A number of well-known Dutch and Polish scholars with very good reputations (also internationally) in Dutch studies serve on the Editorial Board.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 20 years; a backlog of about six months for four years has been rectified. In the period from 2007 – 2009, the journal published 62 peer-reviewed original papers. In the same period the journal received an estimated 85 manuscripts (some issues were produced by

Guest Editors). None of the submitted manuscripts were rejected without peer review. Roughly eight (12%) of the published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

The number of peer reviewers approached is three per manuscript. In 2009, the journal used 52 peer reviewers, and of these, three had non-South African addresses. The peer-review reports are accessibly retained in records. The average period for the journal to appear in print (and on the web) is six months. The publication frequency of the journal is twice a year – issues appear in March and September.

The Editor, who was not appointed on a competitive basis, has been editing the journal for 10 years. The Editorial Board members are also appointed in a closed process: their term of office is not clear. They are appointed from within the country and abroad, to provide topical expertise. They also conduct peer reviews of individual manuscripts and advise on editorial policies/practices.

Editorial guidelines appear in each issue however, the journal does not have a conflict-of-interest policy. The editorial policy guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

The journal publishes *errata* when these are necessary. The journal publishes editorials and provides a section for creative writing, e.g. poems, literary translations, essays and short stories. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is about 90%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles published are generally of a very high standard. *Stilet* caters exclusively for articles in academic Afrikaans with a good focus on local issues, especially on Afrikaans and Afrikaans literature. It also publishes articles from experts on Afrikaans from South Africa, the Netherlands and Poland.

With an average of 10 articles per issue (20 per volume) published in the three years under review, the journal compares well with similar Dutch or Flemish journals like *Spiegel der Letteren*, *Revolver* or with the new online *Journal of Dutch Literature*.

In the field of Afrikaans literature *Stilet* is the flagship journal in which all serious Afrikaans literature scholars publish. The articles represent the best work done in this discipline nationally – and also internationally, as the reviewers are knowledgeable about the field and the peer-review process is rigorous.

As mouthpiece of the Afrikaans Literature Society, the journal is dedicated to publishing research on Afrikaans literature and related fields. Many of the articles were presented at the society's biannual conferences.

Issues in Afrikaans literature that are related to wider human and international issues. Volume 20.2 was a special issue on research into book history, publishers, publishing and censorship that situates research into South African publishers within a wider international context, particularly with reference to Dutch and Flemish publishers. Other wider international contexts include semiotics and the archaeology of the sign, utopias and dystopias, issues of identity, time and narrative, the diary as novelistic form and representations of the *femme fatale* in literature in general. Connections and comparisons with Dutch and Flemish literature are a constant interest. One of the strong points of articles in *Stilet* is that they are often informed by continental philosophy and theory. An important new theoretical tendency like trauma theory was also used and discussed critically in issue 21.1.

A feature of the journal is that young academics who have completed their MAs or PhDs are regularly published.

The Panel believes that the journal should be commended for its contribution in its field.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Scholarly features like editorials and creative contributions are published in a separate section called 'Stilus'. All articles carry English abstracts. The citation practice is good. The presentation, layout, style and copy-editing interventions are all of a high standard. None of the issues examined contained *errata*. The journal is attractive in design and layout. The covers are visually interesting with good use of colour and typographical elements.

However, too much interlinear space is used in the list of references, which distracts from the modern and crisp feel of the rest of the text. In contrast, too little space is used between the lines in the abstracts and

block quotations, giving a cramped impression. There are no reviews in the journal but sometimes one finds the odd scholarly polemic.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The published research represents some of the very best in the field of Afrikaans literature. It is topical, up to date, interesting and methodologically the pieces are sound. The journal offers good stimulus for graduate students since it contains topical articles on relevant literary issues. *Stilet* has to be compared to specialist journals in specific smaller literatures like Norwegian, Dutch, or Portuguese, and, perhaps, to specialist journals in English, French and German literature as well.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's printing process is between six and eight weeks; it is published by SUN MeDIA Bloemfontein. Both production and distribution are handled in-house. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising. The journal does receive financial sponsorship.

The number of paying subscribers is about 115, and of these 25 are organisations. The journal is part of the commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) Sabinet e-publications service. The journal has not received offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright of articles lies with the authors. If articles are not in English, 'front details' like titles, authors, addresses, and English abstracts are mandatory.

The Editor would be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform as a free online, open access journal.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** A system of Guest Editors should be encouraged, as should the publication of issues dealing with a particular topic – even if restricted to one edition per year.

Initially editions were university-based, i.e. there was a rotation of Guest Editors from the different universities and that encouraged junior members of departments to participate. Perhaps this should be reintroduced. A system of Guest Editors would prevent the journal becoming too focused on one Editor and his or her colleagues.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

#### **4.6.4 Tydskrif vir Letterkunde**

**Focus and scope:** *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* is published under the auspices of the *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* Association, University of Pretoria. Established in 1951, it is the oldest literary journal in South Africa. It publishes articles on African literature. The 'literature' in *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* does not only signify *belles lettres*, but also the diversity of contemporary cultural practice. Articles may be submitted in Afrikaans, Dutch, English and French.

The Editor welcomes the submission of original, previously unpublished research and overview articles on theoretical, applied or comparative aspects of African literatures and cultural practices.

### **Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editor of the journal is a highly respected scholar in Afrikaans literary studies who has a strong network of academic collaborators elsewhere in Africa and abroad. The Editor has a unique approach to the study of literature, particularly Afrikaans literature, and he has made a huge contribution towards a more sustained study of black and coloured writers in the language.

The Co-Editors are from the University of Pretoria, University of Abdou Moumouni (Niger), University of Botswana, Imo State University (Nigeria), University of Nairobi (Kenya), Richmond University (USA), University of South Africa, Utrecht University (The Netherlands) and Villanova University (USA). The journal has a strong Advisory Board featuring well-known writers.

It is a decided strength that the journal has succeeded in recruiting the collaboration of scholars from African states who are not living in the diaspora. *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* is a particularly impressive journal as it publishes articles on Anglophone literatures in Africa.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published since 1936 as a yearly publication. From 1951 it became a quarterly publication. Since 2003, *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* has become a half-yearly publication. In the early 1960s there was some interruption in publication and the journal did not appear between the years 2001 and 2003.

In the period under review the journal published 74 research articles and 77 reviews. The journal received 100 research manuscripts and the same number of review manuscripts in this period. Normally, two to three manuscripts per issue are rejected without peer review, while authors of letter-type articles/interviews and review manuscripts are usually invited to contribute. If submissions are found to be inadequate, authors are asked to rework their material. The after-review rejection rate was approximately 30% between 2005 and 2007, and currently the rejection rate is about 60%.

About 87.5% (in 2007), 31.8% (2008) and 41.6% (2009) of published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address. The number of peer reviewers approached is normally two per manuscript, and in the case of special issues, the Guest Editor selects appropriate articles. The complete manuscript is then submitted to two peer reviewers who look at the entire contents. In 2007, about 16 reviewers were used. In the case of special country issues the reviewers are invariably non-South African e.g. 2009 (Congo, a special issue – 100% foreign peer reviewers) or 2007 (Burkina Faso, also a special issue – the same percentage).

Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in records, although a recent virus incident destroyed some earlier files. The average period for the journal to appear in print is a year. The journal only produces two issues per year, while web publication is currently not regarded as separate from the print version. Issues of the journals are pre-scheduled to appear in April and September. Since 2003 every *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* issue has appeared regularly on the scheduled dates.

The present Editor has been editing the journal since 2003; he was not appointed competitively for an initial period of three years and he has asked to continue for a further three years. The Editorial Board members are also not appointed competitively, and their term of office is not specified. They are appointed from within the country and abroad to provide specific topical expertise. Board members will conduct peer review of individual manuscripts when they are specialists in certain fields or when a conflict of interest arises. They also advise on editorial policies/practices.

Editorial guidelines appear in each issue and there is a conflict-of-interest policy. The editorial policy guidelines, which have been in existence for a while, are similar in content to ASSAF's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

The journal rarely publishes *errata*, since an author would have seen his/her article thrice before final publication. The journal contains features such as editorials, news and views, topical reviews, book reviews and correspondence on published articles. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is about 80%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The quality of the articles is generally good, and, as a result, they make an invaluable contribution to the subject area of Afrikaans and African literary studies. On average 24 scholarly articles per annum are published. This number is more than adequate, comparing well with other Afrikaans literary journals.

The articles published in the journal offer a good sample of the best work done in South Africa in the discipline of Afrikaans and African literary studies. Most of the contributors also publish work of similar standing in comparable journals. A unique achievement of the journal is that it has succeeded in finding articulation between Afrikaans literary studies and African literary studies. This is highly commendable.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The journal publishes editorials, interviews, calls for contributions and conference announcements, review articles, as well as obituaries. It usually has a good review section of recent publications. It features a regular book review section and interviews, and some publishing companies also place advertisements for their books in the journal.

Some issues, particularly those devoted to a particular theme, carry an editorial. The journal also contains a subscription form for prospective subscribers and regular calls for contributions for the special-themed issues of the journal. Furthermore, it provides a set of guidelines to authors about the house style, copyright, etc. Each issue of the journal invariably contains the names of the Editors and the Editorial Board.

All articles are preceded by an abstract in English (but no abstracts in Afrikaans or any other languages). As many articles are devoted to Afrikaans and Francophone literary studies, it may be advisable to offer the abstracts in Afrikaans and/or French in addition to the current abstracts in English. The abstracts are provided with a suitable title in English and are followed by useful keywords. The citation practice is consistent and in line with acceptable practices in the field of literary studies.

The journal is presented in a particularly attractive and well-organised manner. The style is pleasing to the eye and aesthetically it portrays a satisfying appearance.

Abstracts of maximum 250 words for articles in English and 350 words for articles in Afrikaans, Dutch or French are provided. *Errata* are published when necessary, according to the Editor. The journal follows an adapted Harvard style with a full bibliography and a limited number of footnotes. From 2012 (issue 49.1), the journal will use the MLA style of referencing, according to notices in Volume 48.

The journal is copy-edited to a very high standard, with very few errors and omissions. A very attractive new format, cover (tied to one of the themes and unique for each issue) and page design were introduced with issue 40.2. Generally, the journal is very attractive, highly readable and world class.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal offers many articles that are useful to local graduate students in Afrikaans and African literary studies. In the review section, younger academics and postgraduate students frequently receive an opportunity to write book reviews.

*Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* can be very favourably compared with similar journals devoted to the connection between South African literary studies and the literatures of other African nations. *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* is one of various journals on Afrikaans and African literary studies, and on its own it makes an important contribution to the study of African literature.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 300 to 500 copies per issue; it is published by the *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* Association. Both production and distribution are outsourced. The journal carries both paid and unpaid advertising. Occasionally it receives financial sponsorship.

The number of paying subscribers is 200, and about 30% of subscribers are organisations as opposed to individuals. The journal appears free online (open access). It is also part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service. The journal has previously received offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright vests with the authors.

The journal is indexed in Thomson Reuters WoS. Its impact factors have not yet been determined. If articles are not in English, 'front details' like titles, authors, addresses, and abstracts are in English. The Editor would in principle be interested in being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform as a free online, open access journal.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The cohabitation of Afrikaans and the Anglophone and Francophone literatures of Africa within the ambit of the journal is not always seamless. Sometimes the journal leaves the impression that the different languages and literatures operate in isolation and that very little exchange takes place. Perhaps a more concerted effort could be made to highlight the points of convergence between Afrikaans and the literatures of Africa.

It is inconvenient that the details of the reviews and review articles are not indicated in the table of contents. They are all subsumed under 'Reviews' and not all of them are included in the electronic version of the journal.

#### Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals (over and above its entitlement to this under policy as a Thomson Reuters WoS-indexed periodical).
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

#### 4.7 Romance Languages

##### 4.7.1 *Italian Studies in Southern Africa (ISSA)/Studi d'Italianistica nell'Africa Australe*

**Focus and scope:** This journal aims to provide a forum for academic discussion on all aspects of Italian culture. It features articles on language and literature, and, since it is one of the primary aims of the journal to foster multi and inter-disciplinary study and communication, contributions are invited from all writers interested in Italian culture, irrespective of their individual disciplines. Contributions of a less theoretical nature that provide an insight into Italian culture, especially as it manifests itself in southern Africa, are welcomed.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The members of the Editorial Board are well known in the field of Italian studies and the composition of the Board is international. The Editor-in-Chief and the two Co-Editors have a high reputation within the discipline, both nationally and internationally: they are all established researchers.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 23 years (since 1988) and it has come out regularly since inception. About 28 articles and two reviews were published in the period under review. Approximately 36 articles and three review manuscripts were received in the same period and the manuscripts rejected without peer review were five articles and one review. Twenty published papers (57%) and two (100%) reviews had at least one author with a non-South African address.

The number of peer reviewers approached for each manuscript is one or two, depending on whether its subject matter falls under the Editor's/Guest Editor's field of expertise, in which case she/he may also act as reviewer. For the double special issue 1&2/2008, 11 peer reviewers were used. Some 80% of the peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are normally accessibly retained in records. The average period for the journal to appear in both print and on the web is between 12 and 18 months. The journal is published twice yearly in January and July.

The current Editor was Co-Editor from the journal's inception and became Editor in 2003. In theory, the Editor is appointed by election every two years by members of the Association of Professional Italianists (API), the publisher of the journal. However, the current Editor appears to have been appointed by API in 2003 for an indefinite term.

The Editorial Board members advise on editorial policies/practices and conduct peer review of individual manuscripts. They are appointed from outside South Africa for their specific expertise until their contribution is no longer required.

Editorial policy and guidelines are published. The peer-review system follows a conflict-of-interest policy and the editorial/policy guidelines have been largely aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. Errata are published but only for major corrections and editorials are published in special issues only. The journal also contains a section on 'Notes & Gleanings' and publishes some book reviews and lists of books received. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 70%.

**Content:** quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.

**Consensus review:** The standard of articles is considered to be good with some exceptional articles published during the past three years. The quality is comparable with similar journals. The number of articles published in each issue is satisfactory, with only one issue in the last three years containing three articles – the rest published between five and six.

The amount of work done in the field of Italian studies in South Africa is very limited. The nature of the field is such that there is not a strong 'African connection', though some contributions have explored this link. Most articles are drawn from outside South Africa, which is understandable, since the number of Italianists in the country has, unfortunately, decreased in the past decade.

Local NRF-accredited researchers in Italian studies have recently published in the journal and it reflects a fair sample of established and emerging South African researchers in the field of Italian studies.

Not all issues manage to maintain a good balance of local and international contributions; given the very small number of local researchers in Italian literature and language, some issues of the journal comprise only articles from international contributors.

ISSA provides a good sample of the production of the small community of scholars in Italian literature in South Africa.

### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Some of the issues contain lists of 'books received', but the journal no longer carries book reviews. The journal is bilingual, Italian and English. All articles carry abstracts – in English for non-English articles and in Italian for articles in English – and standard citation practice is used. The layout and presentation is clean and easy to use, albeit very simple.

The journal periodically publishes special issues, which contribute to dialogue between experts focusing on specific issues or fields.

In the past three years no *errata* have been published but this has happened in the past. Citation practice is good and adheres to the journal's style sheet.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal offers an important channel for local graduates and young academics to publish their research. However, the field does not attract many local researchers, and the discipline is under constant cost-cutting pressure. This said, as most local lecturers publish research in areas they teach in the journal, it is an easily available source for local students and university teaching staff.

ISSA is not comparable with journals published in Italy. However, it compares favourably with similar journals from Anglophone countries such as *Italica* or *The Italianist*, although it is more restricted in scope than these journals. The somewhat more eclectic nature of this journal is one of its positive features.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 200 copies; it is published by the API in South Africa. Unisa prints the journal and distribution is mostly handled by the publisher.

The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising, nor does it receive financial sponsorship, but Unisa is printing it at a cost. The number of paying subscribers is 60, and about 20 subscribers are organisations. Currently, the journal does not appear free online, but open-access model publishing is under consideration. The journal is hosted on AJOL. So far, the journal has not received offers to purchase from multinational publishers. Contributors cede their copyright to the publisher.

The journal has been accredited by the DHET since 1991. Detailed data has been submitted to DHET in 2004 and to ASSAf in 2005. It has been included in the Australian Research Council's ERA list of accredited journals (Rank: B) in Australia since 2010 after strict reviewing procedures.

The Editor has not received an invitation for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform, but if applicable, this would be considered.

The journal is included in the Modern Language Association (MLA) International Bibliography and Directory of Periodicals (New York). Each article is listed and its abstract included in the yearly publication of BiGLI (General Bibliography of Italian Language and Literature, Rome, Italy). Articles will be indexed by Google Scholar in 2011.

The journal is the only publication in the field of Italian studies in the country and on the continent, and it serves an essential role in providing a forum for academic discussion in such a field and in fostering multi and interdisciplinary study.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The book review section should be re-instated, if possible. The Editor might also consider broadening the scope of the journal from its present literary focus, to include issues of language teaching and Italian culture in general. The journal should consider expanding its scope to represent broader participation from other countries in the region.



The journal could include regular features of work in progress among SA scholars in the field (say one in every two years). It should also try to publish work by Italoophone authors of African origins, of which there are a fairly significant number today.

The journal should not publish poems or short stories by contemporary authors and should focus more on research articles and reviews, as well as unpublished, annotated texts of relevant authors of the past.

**Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should not be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations for improvement.**

#### **4.7.2 French Studies in Southern Africa**

**Focus and scope:** *La revue publie des articles de qualité traitant de tous les domaines concernés par l'étude et la dissémination du français: questions pédagogiques, recherches littéraires et autres, la traductologie, la linguistique...*

Translation: The journal publishes articles of quality that involve all domains concerned with the study and spread of French: teaching matters, literary and other research, translation studies, linguistics, etc.

**Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The Editorial Advisory Board (in French: *Comité scientifique*) is the panel of reviewers. Prior to 2013 the composition of the Editorial Advisory Board was reasonably international, but it was notable that there were no representatives from African countries other than South Africa. From 2013 there have been two African representatives, one from Botswana, the other from Gabon. In addition, there are two further African representatives, but they are based in France.

The Editorial Committee (in French: *Comité de rédaction*) comprises members of the Management Committee of the Association of French Studies in Southern Africa (AFSSA). Currently the membership consists of one from UKZN, two from Wits, one from North-West, one from the Free State, one from UCT and one from Eden College (representing secondary schools). The Deputy Editor is from Rhodes University.

In the past 25 years, and especially during the last 10 years, the journal has moved away from a narrowly defined focus (basically French literature only) to being a sought-after source of information on current research in the field of the didactics of French and Francophone literature. It is especially in the latter field that the journal has had its greatest impact and has managed to attract the interest of scholars of international repute.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 39 years without any significant interruptions in publication. About 25 articles were published in the period under review. Approximately 45 manuscripts of articles, letter-type articles and reviews were received for consideration in the same period, of which eight were rejected without peer review. The proportion of published papers that had at least one author with a non-South African address was 52%.

Two, and sometimes three, reviewers are approached for each manuscript, and approximately 16 peer reviewers were used during the review period. Eight (50%) of these peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in records until one year after publication. The average period for the journal to appear in print is between eight and ten months. The journal is published once a year and it is pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

The previous Editor was in place for four years, and was appointed for an undetermined period following a selection process internal to the association and approval at the AGM of the sponsoring organisation. A new Editor (previously Deputy Editor) took over in 2012. The Editorial Committee members advise on editorial policies/practices on an informal basis. They are not appointed competitively and serve on the Editorial Board for an unspecified period. Members of the Editorial Advisory Board are from both within the country and abroad and provide topical expertise.

The editorial policy and guidelines are published. There is a conflict-of-interest policy. The journal has aligned its editorial/policy guidelines with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

*Errata* are published in all cases where these have become apparent.

The journal does not publish value-added features such as editorials, topical reviews and book reviews. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is more than 90%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** In general, the articles of the 2007 and 2008 issues are of a high scholarly quality, although there is some variation. The 2010 special issue presents a mixture of informative and scholarly articles, as well as opinion articles.

Given that the journal only appears once per year, it carries a satisfactory number of articles which cover a wide range of topics. French studies have a strong 'African connection', which is reflected in the diversity of contributors and topics.

While the number of articles is limited, their scope is also limited. For the 2007 and 2008 issues, almost all articles concern 'French' literature. Nevertheless, in this area, different chronological periods and genres, as well as different geographic regions were represented. The journal evinces a high standard in the handling of themes of comparative literature (i.e. African–European) and textual and intertextual analysis. In recent issues (2011 – 2014) there has been an increasing presence of articles on Francophone African/postcolonial literature.

However, outside of literature, there are almost no articles about the other components of French studies, such as culture, civilisation, tradition and folklore; French history; French linguistic studies; didactics of the French language; the 'art and technique' of translation, and the like.

It is certainly good that the journal has opened its doors to 'French in Africa', and in this area solid articles have been published by black as well as white contributors. Certain contemporary social, cultural, and economic problems of African society are well analysed through the application of conventional literary theoretical and methodological tools. There has also been articles published on the conditions surrounding the teaching of French in southern Africa.

The examined publications include articles from authors – all of which are connected to universities in South Africa, as well as from universities in the rest of Africa and elsewhere.

While open to all literatures in French, special attention is being given to African literature, and the Editorial Advisory Board has recently been changed to reflect this shift in interest. Often contributions were initially presented at the international conference organised every two years by the AFSSA which attracts internationally acclaimed scholars from France and Francophone Africa.

Book reviews appear regularly, but they were restricted to books published by members of AFSSA. However, this restriction no longer applies.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** The journal publishes *comptes rendus* (i.e. book reviews) in a limited way. In view of the small number of published articles (for issues 2007 and 2008), one might say that there is a fair balance between the number of articles (9 for 2007; 8 for 2008) and the number of book reviews.

An editorial – in the shape of an introductory article – as well as a postface are present for the 2010 special issue. There were no other features, such as topical reviews, scholarly correspondence, *errata*, general disciplinary information, and the like during the review period.

There are abstracts for all articles in French when articles are written in English. These abstracts are of high quality. Useful keywords are also given for each article.

Citations, footnotes and references follow the Unisa Press system.

Presentation, layout, style and editing are good – all are according to the Unisa system. The citation practice is excellent.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal offers a channel for French studies specialists in Africa. It is one of very few similar journals on the continent. The journal does not compare unfavourably with international journals, such as *French Forum*.

As the journal of a scholarly and professional association, it produces solid material for its members and for the students of the French departments in South African universities. In this regard, it is without a doubt a strong stimulus for local young staff.

The journal, without being able to rival major publications in France, easily matches any other similar publication outside France in the field of Francophone literature.

### **Business aspects**

The journal's print run is 250 copies; it is published by AFSSA. Production and distribution is done in-house and the journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising.

The journal receives financial sponsorship from the French Embassy in South Africa. The number of paying subscribers is approximately 118; of these, 53 are organisations and 65 are individuals. The journal does not appear online on an open access platform; however, it is published on the Sabinet platform. Membership to AFSSA includes a copy of the journal. Page fees are around R6 000 per year and total expenditure includes printing costs of around R18 000 and postage of around R3 000.

There have been offers to purchase from multi-national publishers, such as from GERFLINT, publishers of the *Synergies* regional scientific journals for Francophone studies, but decisions were made against the merger. Copyright on all published material is vested with the association, whose permission must be sought for the reprinting of articles. The journal has not been independently peer-reviewed in the last four years.

Consideration has been given to indexing the journal on EBSCOhost.

The Editor would be interested in being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The editors should try to increase the number of contributions. The journal should not be limited to 'literary' studies only, but include all aspects of French studies.

The Editors should invite young postgraduate researchers to contribute, as the instruction, training and promotion of young local researchers in South Africa is of long-term importance for the field.

The journal should continue expanding its international influence without losing its local edge: perhaps book reviews should include books published by authors not necessarily affiliated to the AFSSA.

The Editor should seriously consider expanding the material for journal issues. The large size font used has artificially increased the number of pages.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations for suggested improvements.

## **4.7.3 Acta Germanica: German Studies in Africa**

**Focus and scope:** *Acta Germanica* is the yearbook of the Southern African Association of German Studies (SAGV). It allows scholars in South Africa and Africa (and German scholars worldwide) to present their research in the areas of German language and literature, and teaching of German as a foreign language, and comparative studies (Germany and its relation to Africa). It also reviews books in these subject areas.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The Editor-in-Chief and the three Associate Editors are leading local academics in their field. The Editorial Board has four leading academics from four different South African universities. The International Editorial Board has eight leading academics from top universities: four in Germany and Switzerland, one in the USA, and one in Africa. This geographical diversity is impressive.

**Questionnaire:** The journal has been published for 48 years (since 1966). In the early years, volumes were published erratically. Since 2004, the journal has appeared on an annual basis between September and November of each year without interruptions in publication.

In the period under review (2011 – 2013), the journal published 34 peer-reviewed papers, a dozen book reviews and two interviews with authors. In the same period, the journal received 80 manuscripts of which approximately three were rejected without peer review. Three-quarters of the published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Usually, two peer reviewers are approached for each submitted manuscript and more are called upon if the peer reviewers differ vastly in their assessment of the material. In the period under review, 33 peer reviewers were used. Of these, 23 had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessibly retained on the records. The average period between receipt of a manuscript and publication is six months in print and five months for the web.

The Editor has been in the chair since April 2009; he was appointed competitively for a four-year period. The Editorial Board members are not appointed competitively; the Editor and Co-Editors select the Editorial Board with the approval of the SAGV Board. They are appointed for an indeterminate period from within the country and abroad because of their international standing and expertise. The Editorial Board members conduct peer review of individual manuscripts and rarely advise on editorial policies/practices.

The journal publishes editorial guidelines and does not have a conflict-of-interest policy. The journal's editorial and policy guidelines are aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*. *Errata* are not published. The journal contains add-on features such as editorials, topical reviews and book reviews – no correspondence on published articles is entered into. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is between 90 and 95%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The articles are of a high standard and address the mission of the journal: viz "(South) African perspectives on current debates and themes pertaining to German literary and cultural studies, critical theory and the teaching of German as a foreign language".

There is an international focus. Some articles that are drawn from the international world have relevance in Africa and in South Africa in particular. Moreover, the journal is representative, and also draws on presentations made at the bi-annual local German studies conference that are subsequently reworked for publication. Some work is produced in collaboration with international authors, and many articles are produced by researchers in Germany.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, *errata*, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** All articles have informative abstracts in English and the copy is accurate and clean. *Errata* are not published. Endnotes and references follow standard scholarly conventions.

While most contributors are established academics, at least two contributions per issue suggest that younger academics are encouraged to submit work that might have followed on from doctoral study. There are good editorials, topical reviews and book reviews which add more value to the journal. The journal is heavily German, but English translations are provided. Good and acceptable citation conventions are guided by the editorial policy of the journal.

The citation practice is good in terms of scholarly norms, following the citation traditions of German scientific publications. The journal can serve as a good overview of current issues and debates in German studies. The journal offers a publication possibility for those at the start of an academic career.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** In content, theory, style and editorial convention the journal is on par with the general international standard. The unique element is the African-German focus, which offers a valuable extension of the field.

**Business aspects**

The print run of the journal is between 80 and 100 copies in South Africa and approximately 250 copies in Germany. It appears free online, but is also accessible as part of the commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) Sabinet e-publications service with approximately 80 to 100 paying subscribers (members of the SAGV for the South African edition). The German online publication is accessible from Peter Lang via subscriptions.

Peter Lang (the German publisher) does the distribution for paying subscribers and pays if there is a profit. The organisation's subscribers number approximately 130 and this includes university libraries, mainly in Germany and the rest of Europe, but also in the USA and the rest of the world (the German edition).

The publisher SUN MeDIA takes responsibility for the distribution of the African edition, and Peter Lang for the German edition (distributed internationally except in Africa).

The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising and does not receive financial sponsorship.

The copyright arrangements are with the publisher.

The journal would be interested in being included on the SciELO South Africa open access platform; however this may currently conflict with the German publisher Peter Lang's policy, where articles need to be purchased. Peter Lang will be retained as a publisher and distributor of the journal, as all articles are automatically indexed by the *Deutsche Nationalbibliothek* (the German National library) and can be accessed via <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

### Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** *Acta Germanica* is indexed only on the DHET list and not on Thomson Reuters WoS or IBSS. The Editors should seek to be indexed on one of the above-mentioned indices, or on the SciELO South Africa open access platform.

Although there is no formal conflict-of-interest policy, there is one in practice to ensure that the principle of double-blind reviewing is upheld. It is recommended that this policy be published.

### Panel's consensus view

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform. The reviewers indicate that joining SciELO could only be possible if the business relationship between the journal and Peter Lang were to change.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations included in this review.

## 4.8 Linguistics

### 4.8.1 *Literator* – Journal of Literary Criticism, Comparative Linguistics and Literary Studies

**Focus and scope:** *Literator* is a journal of national and comparative linguistics and literature. It publishes research articles on specific languages and specific literatures (like Afrikaans, English or Tswana), but it also publishes articles that compare different languages and literatures and other cultural phenomena across language and cultural boundaries.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** The Editor is appointed through a selection process and has held this post for 10 years. The Editor-in-Chief and Deputy Editor are supported by a panel of national Editors and an Editorial Board that has a good balance of international and local members.

**Questionnaire:** The journal was published in print from 1980 to 2010 (30 years) without significant interruptions in publication. Since 2012, *Literator* has been published online under open access by African Open Information Systems (AOSIS) as an agent of the Literator Society of South Africa. The number of peer-reviewed original papers published from 2006 to 2008 is 75 articles with one review article. A total of 145 manuscripts were received in the same period; only one manuscript was rejected without being peer reviewed. About 5% of the published papers had at least one author with a non-South African address.

At least three peer reviewers are usually approached to review each manuscript. In 2008, a total of 108 peer reviewers were used. Approximately 6% of peer reviewers had non-South African addresses. Peer-review reports are accessible and are retained in the journal's records.

The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in print is between three and nine months and on the web between three and 10 months. The publication frequency of the journal is three times per year. In principle, journal issues are pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

There is a selection process for appointing Editorial Board members, but it is usually not competitive. They are selected by the Board, or nominated through university teaching departments for an unspecified period. Editorial Board members are appointed from both within the country and from abroad; they provide specific expertise. They conduct peer review of individual manuscripts, as well as provide advice on editorial policies/practices.

The editorial/policy guidelines are published in each edition, and the journal has a conflict-of-interest policy. The journal's editorial/policy guidelines have been broadly aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

If necessary, the journal publishes *errata*. The journal contains features such as editorials, especially in the case of special issues and book reviews, and also publishes, in each edition, a section called, 'Litera' that is devoted to creative writing. Articles, book reviews and 'Litera' contributions are published on a rolling basis. About three research articles are published each month. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is about two-thirds ( $\pm 160 - 180$  p = 75 – 80%), apart from reviews and creative writing.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** A high number of quality articles are published in *Literator*. A satisfactory number of contextually good articles are published continually.

Good quality is guaranteed by the large number of reviewers involved. Seventy-five articles have been published over a period of three years, with 20 articles per annum as an average. There is a focus on literature studies in South Africa. New thinking on issues (such as post-colonialism) are addressed and the journal is highly impressive. Authors are drawn from across South Africa. Due to the journal's focus, international authors are almost absent – only producing 6% of articles over a three-year period.

The contents of the journal are of a good quality and the number that are published is adequate. It represents a good sample of the best work done in the country.

**Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** In addition to the academic articles, book reviews are published regularly.

Abstracts in English are published with every article. The journal has more than satisfactory presentation, layout, style and copy-editing.

The editorials are very useful. Owing to the journal's scope, the review articles are important. Abstracts are included in each article. There is no evidence of *errata*. Good citation and reference system are in place and are applied adequately. If articles are not in English, front details like titles, authors, addresses, and abstracts as well as keywords are mandatory.

**Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** In many instances articles by co-authors are published. This provides the possibility for younger scholars to publish alongside well-known researchers. The 'Litera' feature seems to be especially stimulating for younger people.

There is some comparability with leading international journals in the field.

**Business aspects**

The print run of the journal is around 224 copies per issue. It is published by the Literator Society of South Africa through the Bureau of Scholarly Journals, North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus). The journal's production is outsourced, while distribution is handled in-house. The journal does not carry paid or unpaid advertising. The journal occasionally receives financial sponsorship – the main sponsor is the NWU.

The number of paying subscribers is 121, and of this total 51 are organisations and 108 individuals. The journal appears online as part of Sabinet, Gale and the EbscoHost commercial e-publication service. *Literator* has also been indexed in Elsevier's Scopus database since the beginning of 2014. All the articles published by *Literator* since the first volume have also been made available electronically in the archives. See <http://www.literator.org.za>.

The Editor has had no expressions of interest to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright remains with the authors, but they cede publication rights in all media to *Literator* by agreement.

The journal has never been independently peer-reviewed before. The Editor would in principle be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

## Suggested improvements

**Consensus review:** The journal should be included in the SciELO South Africa open access platform.

In addition, the panel believes that the journal should consider expanding its geographical scope to include other countries in the southern African region, both in focus and in authorship.

### Panel's consensus view:

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

## 4.8.2 Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies

**Focus and scope:** *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* publishes articles on a wide range of linguistic topics and acts as a forum for research into all the languages of southern Africa. Original contributions are welcomed on any of the core areas of linguistics, both theoretical and applied. Review articles, short research reports and book reviews are also welcomed. Articles in languages other than English are accompanied by an extended English summary.

**Editing functions:** standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.

**Consensus review:** There has been considerable fluidity on the editorial front in the last four years, with a succession of changes in editorial structures and roles. The Editor and Co-Editors are well established nationally. The current Editor-in-Chief is a senior academic with good national and international standing.

**Note:** None of the reviewers mentioned the fact that the journal is now published internationally by Taylor & Francis. It appears quarterly and is co-published with NISC in South Africa. The journal is the result of the amalgamation of two journals in 2001: the *South African Journal of Linguistics* (1983-2000) and *Southern African Journal of Applied Language Studies* (1992-1999).

The Editorial Team (Editor-in-Chief and Co-Editors) are all South African academics, with four out of seven members drawn from the University of the Free State. There is an Advisory Committee with a wide international spread.

Review articles and book reviews were published in two of the 2012 issues. The journal appears in print and online (subscription-based, with a few contributions available through open access).

There are 12 members on the Editorial Committee (as distinct from the Advisory Committee). Together, they constitute a competent group of linguists, who cover a number of bases within linguistics – less so in applied linguistics.

**Questionnaire:** The questionnaire was not completed by the Editor.

**Content:** quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.

**Consensus review:** The quality of articles varies, ranging from short preliminary essay-type studies lacking in data, of which there are a number, to studies that are more empirically grounded. A number of more prominent academics in linguistics and associated departments do not appear to publish in this journal.

In 2008, the journal featured 37 articles, four book reviews and a preface. In 2009 the journal comprised 32 articles, one book review, a preface and an introduction, while in 2010, 32 articles, an editorial and introduction and a book review were published. These numbers must be regarded as satisfactory.

The focus of the journal is predominantly on local and regional studies. There are a fair number of contributions over the period under consideration that are region-specific (roughly, 34 out of a total of 107). There are many that deal with aspects of the South African language situation (39 out of 107) and there are others (24 out of 107) that deal either with contexts other than South Africa, but still within southern Africa, or with the description of aspects of indigenous languages.

The authors are located at institutions across South Africa but there are collaborative efforts with scholars from institutes from neighbouring countries.

## **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** 'Extras' are restricted to a minimum. There are no instances of topical reviews or scholarly correspondence. There are, as indicated earlier, a few book reviews as well as introductions to special issues.

Where they are relevant, useful editorials are included. All articles have abstracts. *Errata* are not published. The citation and reference systems used are of high quality.

## **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journal is suitable as a general ongoing stimulus for graduate students. There is evidence of co-publishing by more experienced scholars and their postgraduate students.

The journal is unique, particularly given that it straddles the fields of linguistics as it is broadly conceived. It has a 'local' orientation and 'feel' to it, which is a desirable feature, but it lacks perhaps the rigour and solidity of contributions to the leading international journals.

## **Business aspects**

The questionnaire was not completed by the Editor.

## **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** Both the composition and role of the Advisory and Editorial Committees needs to be reconsidered to ensure greater vigour in the general shaping of the journal. The journal also needs to reconsider the membership of the editorial team, to reduce the dependency on a single institution and, simultaneously, catering for wider regional spread of members.

Most importantly, the journal has to decrease the turn-around time of submissions (i.e. from submission to response from the Editor) based on reviewers' feedback, which is currently too slow and is proving a disincentive to potential authors.

The scope of articles should be broadened to cover more African countries.

This journal has the potential to be included in the SciELO South Africa open access platform. The Editorial Board should consider publishing the journal fully online as this would attract more international authors.

## **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.**
- II The Publisher/Editor should be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform.**
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations provided in this review.**

### **4.8.3 SPiL: Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics**

**Focus and scope:** *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics (SPiL)* is an annual open access, peer-reviewed international journal, published by the Department of General Linguistics of the eponymous university. The papers published in *SPiL* are intended for scholars with an interest in linguistics and related disciplines. It offers a platform for scholars to share knowledge in the form of high-quality empirical and theoretical research papers, case studies, literature reviews and book reviews.

*SPiL Plus* originated as a supplement to *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics (SPiL)* however it is now a completely separate journal. The *SPiL Plus* series has two main aims. First, it serves as a vehicle for the distribution of new and relatively inaccessible information in the field of modern linguistics and second, it aims to stimulate critical discussion in southern African linguistics.

## **Editing functions: standing, spread, international participation, peer review, etc.**

**Consensus review:** The editorial team is the same for both *SPiL* and *SPiL Plus* and the members are listed on the journals' respective websites. There are three senior Editors, one of which is a professor, although a less senior member of the department (with or without a PhD) has regularly acted as Guest Editor during the last ten years. Since 2011, there has been an online journal manager who performs many of the tasks usually undertaken by journal editors.



The Editorial Board consists of senior academics from both local and international institutes.

**Questionnaire:** The journals have been published for 30 – 31 years. The four non-consecutive years in which no *SPiL* or *SPiL Plus* issues appeared (1997, 2001, 2003 and 2006) can be ascribed to problems relating to: (i) the availability of articles, because at the time only students and staff from the Department of General Linguistics at Stellenbosch University were eligible to publish in the journal, and (ii) the availability of editors owing to staff shortages. It must be noted, though, that each such two-year interruption was immediately preceded or followed by a year in which more than one volume of the journal was published.

Only five articles were published in *SPiL Plus* in 2011. In 2012, six articles were published; in 2013, 17 articles; and in 2014, 26 articles were published, with another nine articles that were due to appear in the final issue of 2014.

During the period under review, there were 15 peer-reviewed original articles published in *SPiL*. In the same period, 17 article manuscripts were received. None of the submitted manuscripts were rejected without peer review. Six articles that were published had at least one author with a non-South African address.

Nineteen peer-reviewed original papers were published in *SPiL Plus* during the review period and 23 article manuscripts were received. Two articles were deemed unsuitable for review by the Editor in their current form and were returned to the authors with extensive suggestions for editorial changes and changes to content, together with a note inviting resubmission. Three articles that were published had at least one author with a non-South African address.

At least two reviewers are approached for each manuscript (for both journals), at least one of whom is from outside Stellenbosch University. If there is a significant discrepancy between the two reviewers' judgments of an article, a third reviewer is approached.

Approximately 18 peer reviewers were used in a single year for *SPiL*. Two of these had non-South African addresses. Eight peer reviewers were used in a single year for *SPiL Plus* and none of these reviewers had non-South African addresses. This is a consequence of the focus of the journal, which is to publish articles that specifically concern linguistic and related issues in South African languages and the southern African linguistic context, where some of these articles are written in Afrikaans and reviewers are required to have expertise in specifically southern African issues.

Peer-review reports are accessibly retained in the journal's records.

The average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication in both print and on the web is approximately six months. The publication frequency of the journals varies between one and two issues per year. Issues of the journal are not pre-scheduled to appear on given dates.

The Editors of both journals have been editing the journal for over five years; they were not appointed competitively. The Editor-in-Chief is selected from the permanent staff of the home department and they are appointed for an unspecified time. Guest Editors are regularly used – this is determined by availability and the main focus of a given issue of the journal.

Editorial Board members are also not appointed competitively and their appointment period is not specified. They are appointed from within the country and from abroad to provide topical expertise. Members of the Editorial Board conduct peer review of individual manuscripts and also advise on editorial policies/practices.

Editorial/policy guidelines are published on the inner pages of the cover of each issue. There is a conflict-of-interest policy. These guidelines have been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*.

*Errata* are published in all cases where these have become necessary. The journals contain features such as topical reviews, book reviews as well as correspondence on published articles. The proportion of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material is 100%.

**Content: quality, focus, spread within domain, sample of best work in SA, enrichment features, etc.**

**Consensus review:** Articles in both journals are of a high quality. There is a tendency to publish articles that focus on local and regional issues. Not surprisingly given its base, this journal is a strongly university-based publication. However, authors specialising in general linguistics from across South Africa also publish in its pages.

The journals provide a good sample of the work on general linguistics done in South Africa. Articles are published by both South African and international authors.

### **Essential technical features: English abstracts, errata, citation practice, presentation**

**Consensus review:** Both websites provide necessary information, announcements and other important administrative detail. All articles have English abstracts. The reference and citation system are of a high standard.

There are no additional scholarly features. Abstracts and the use of keywords have recently been introduced. No *errata* were noted in the review period.

### **Usefulness in capacity development, and international comparability**

**Consensus review:** The journals provide a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students and young staff in the discipline concerned. There is some degree of comparison with leading international journals in the field. There is clearly a definite purpose to support postgraduates, apart from its scholarly (general linguistics) interests. The panel agrees that *SPiL* and *SPiL Plus* can be commended on their developmental role and departmental focus.

### **Business aspects**

*SPiL* and *SPiL Plus* are published by the Department of General Linguistics, Stellenbosch University. Production was outsourced while distribution was handled in-house. The journal does not carry either paid or unpaid advertising. Up to 2008, a grant from Stellenbosch University's Sub-Committee covered the production and distribution of the journal; from 2009, the journal receives limited sponsorship from the *Fonds Neerlandistiek*.

Both journals have been freely available online from 2006. Prior to 2006, *SPiL*'s print run was approximately 225 copies per issue and *SPiL Plus* had a print run of approximately 50 copies. As from 2012, *SPiL Plus* was only available online, with a very small (between 20 and 30 copies) print run for delivering copies to authors, and to a small number of institutions that have indicated that they would still like to receive print copies. The journals are completely open access, hosted by SUNJournals, as part of the Stellenbosch University Library and Information Services.

*SPiL* has no paying subscribers; 210 of the subscribers are organisations as opposed to individuals. *SPiL Plus* had five permanent paying subscribers (organisations) and 45 issue-by-issue subscriptions.

The journals have not received offers to purchase from multi-national publishers. Copyright is retained by the authors, as set out in the editorial guidelines. All articles are published in English. The copyright of each paper is held by its author. Front details like titles, authors, addresses, and English abstracts are not mandatory, as all articles are in English (mandatory as of 2010).

The journal has been independently peer-reviewed. The Editor and Publisher would in principle be interested in the journal being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform.

### **Suggested improvements**

**Consensus review:** The online publication of the journals has certainly increased visibility, and it has probably been beneficial that more international scholars have published articles in these journals. However they should consider increasing the number of contributions per issue.

The Stellenbosch-based editorial focus should be broadened to include other experts in the field.

It is recommended that *SPiL* and *SPiL Plus* be amalgamated.

### **Panel's consensus view:**

- I The journal should continue to be listed on the DHET list of accredited journals.
- II The Publisher/Editor of *SPiL* should not be invited to consider joining the SciELO South Africa platform but *SPiL Plus* should be invited to join.
- III The Editor should consider the recommendations in this review.

# Appendix A:

## Questionnaire Sent to Each Editor of Journals being Peer Reviewed

Please type in a short answer, just after each question, and send us your consolidated response as an MSWord document.

1. **Editorial process-related criteria (generally based on the *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review* developed by ASSAf):**
  - For how many years has your journal been published?
  - Have there been significant interruptions in publication?
  - How many peer-reviewed original papers have you published during the last three years:
    - Articles?
    - Letter-type articles?
    - Reviews?
  - How many manuscripts (of all three types) were received in the same period?
  - Approximately how many manuscripts of all three types were rejected without peer review?
  - What proportion of papers of all three types that you published had at least one author with a non-South African address?
  - How many peer reviewers are usually approached for EACH submitted manuscript?
  - How many peer reviewers were used in total, in any ONE of the last three years?
  - What proportion of these had non-South African addresses?
  - Are peer-review reports accessibly retained in your records?
  - What is the average period between receipt of a manuscript and its publication:
    - in print?
    - on the web?
  - What is the publication frequency of your journal, per year?
  - Are issues of your journals pre-scheduled to appear on given dates?
  - If scheduled, do the issues in fact appear regularly on the scheduled dates?
  - How long have you been Editor/Chief Editor of this journal?
  - Were you appointed competitively (i.e. following advertisement and a selection process)?  
For what period?
  - Do members of your Editorial Board:
    - handle peer review of individual manuscripts?
    - advise on editorial policies/practices?
  - Are they appointed competitively (i.e. following advertisement and a selection process):
    - for a given period?
    - from inside and outside the country?
    - to provide specific topical expertise?
  - Do you have published editorial/policy guidelines?
  - Is there a conflict-of-interest policy?
  - Have your editorial/policy guidelines been aligned with ASSAf's *National Code of Best Practice in Editorial Discretion and Peer Review*?
  - Do you publish *errata* in all cases where these have become apparent?
  - Does your journal contain value-adding features such as:
    - editorials?
    - 'news and views'?
    - topical reviews?
    - book reviews?
    - correspondence on published articles?
  - What is the percentage of pages in each issue that represents peer-reviewed original material?
2. **Business-related criteria:**
  - What is the regular print run of your journal?
  - Who is the publisher?
  - Is production and distribution outsourced?
  - Do you carry advertising which is:
    - paid?
    - unpaid?

- Do you receive financial sponsorship(s)?
- What is the number of paying subscribers?
- How many of the subscribers are organisations as opposed to individuals?
- If your journal appears online,
  - is it free online (open access)?
  - is it part of a commercial (pay-to-view and/or pay-to-subscribe) e-publication service?
  - is it part of a non-commercial e-publication mechanism (e.g. Medline)?
- What is your journal's (average) total income per annum?
- What is your journal's total expenditure per annum?
- Have you had offers to purchase from multi-national publishers?
- What are your copyright arrangements?

### 3. **Bibliometric assessments:**

- Is your journal indexed in Thomson Reuters Web of Science (WoS) and/or the International Bibliography of Social Sciences (IBSS)?
- Have Thomson Reuters WoS-type impact factors (e.g., Google Scholar or Scopus) ever been determined for your journal?
- If articles are not in English, are 'front details' like titles, authors, addresses, and English abstracts mandatory?
- Has your journal ever been independently peer-reviewed before?

### 4. **General:**

- Would you (and your publisher) in principle be interested in being considered for inclusion in ASSAf's SciELO South Africa open access platform as a free online, open access journal (project description recently circulated to all editors)?
- Have you any other information or comments that may be useful to the panel?

## Appendix B: Requests to Independent Peer Reviewers

- 1 Do the hard copies of the last 2 – 3 years of issues of the journal reflect:
  - 1.1 high national/international disciplinary reputations/standing of the Editor-in-Chief/Associate Editors/members of the Editorial Board?
  - 1.2 a high/good (general/average) quality of the articles accepted/published?
  - 1.3 a (contextually) adequate/good number of articles per annum?
  - 1.4 an (adequate/good) sample of the best work done in the country in the discipline/field?
  - 1.5 a focus on local/regional kinds of materials/problems?
  - 1.6 publication of articles by authors from across the country, and internationally?
  - 1.7 useful additional scholarly features like editorials, topical reviews, book reviews, scholarly correspondence, etc.?
  - 1.8 proper (English-language) abstracts for all articles?
  - 1.9 suitable publication of errata?
  - 1.10 good citation practice?
  - 1.11 good presentation, layout, style and copy-editing interventions?
  - 1.12 suitability as a general ongoing stimulus for local graduate students/young staff in the discipline concerned?
  - 1.13 some kind of comparability with leading international journals in the field?
- 2 Please list your suggestions for an improvement programme for the journal.

