**BABEL MARCH 2016 – ANNUAL REPORT TO FIT EC & COUNCIL**

**CURRENT SITUATION (10 February 2016)**

**PUBLICATION:**

Babel vol. 61 (2015): issues 1, 2 and 3 = available

 issue 4 = publication available in February 2016 (second proofs were sent to John Benjamins by January 19, 2016)

 Babel vol. 62 (2016): issue 1 = expecting first proofs in February 2016 (all texts were sent by January 17, 2016) – publication expected April 2016

 issue 2 = in preparation (all texts will be sent to John Benjamins by end of February 2016)

 issue 3 = deadline for sending texts to John Benjamins: May 15

 issue 4 = deadline for sending texts to John Benjamins: Aug. 15

 Babel vol. 63 (2017): issue 1 = deadline for sending texts to John Benjamins: Nov. 15

Conclusion: at the end of 2016, the publication is fully normalised.

**For your info:**

Since Babel 60:1 (my first issue still as assistant editor) and Babel 62:1, some 1250 pages were published.

**NEW EDITORIAL BOARD:**

In Babel 61:3, the 31 members of the new Editorial Board were presented to the readers. The Editorial Board replaces the former Reading Committee and Scientific Advisory Committee. All members of both Committees were invited to join the new Editorial Board. Given their advanced age, some members preferred new ones to take over. In my capacity of editor in chief and on behalf of FIT, I most sincerely thanked the outgoing board members as well as those who had left over the past five years in the preface to Babel 61:3 and wrote that their names would remain forever in the memory and history of FIT.

The new Editorial Board shall ensure that each newly submitted article is now subjected to double-blind peer review.

**NEW BABEL TASK FORCE:**

The members of the new Babel Task Force were also presented to the readers in the same issue 61:3. The Task Force among others helps prepare the texts for assessment by the members of the Editorial Board.

**CONTENT:**

Babel vol. 60 (2014): 26 articles & 4 book reviews for a total of 570 pp.

Babel vol. 61 (2015): 28 articles & 3 book reviews for a total of 605 pp.

In 2014, it was agreed with John Benjamins Publishing Company that each Babel issue would contain +/- 125 pp. When I visited John Benjamins in Amsterdam early in 2015 and explained the problem of a high number of articles waiting for publication, we got an extra 70 pages and thus +/- 2 extra articles.

At the same meeting, it was agreed that for 2015, we would have 150 pp. / issue which means 600pp. per year. In total we reached 607pp. In the same year, colours were introduced for graphics and pictures.

Recently, I had several mail exchanges with Isja Conen, Acquisition Editor at John Benjamins, One of the weak points of Babel, at least for the moment, is the lack of book reviews. However, we regularly receive requests for reviews from the main publishing houses in our field. Unfortunately, we do not have enough available space to include more book comments. Isja Conen was / is very sensitive to the question raised and for this year 2016 (Babel vol. 62) she offered another 25pp. extra per issue, more specifically in order to include more reviews. What we can announce for the first two 2016 issues is this:

Babel vol. 62 (2016): issue 1: 8 articles & 3 book reviews

 issue 2: 6 or 7 articles & 3 to 4 book reviews (provisional content)

**SUBMISSIONS:**

In 2014: 56 articles were submitted;

In 2015: 49 articles were submitted.

In 2016: 10 articles so far…

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:**

I hope to have the new figures when I shall visit John Benjamins at the next editors’ meeting (date still unknown). Anyway, what is important for John Benjamins is the number of individual downloads of articles.

**ADMINISTRATION:**

* In Babel 61:3, the new BLURB of Babel was published for the first time;
* Priority should now be given to elaborate the new guidelines. Much of the work is done but it takes time to type everything…
* By the 2017 Statutory Congress, we hope (with the members of the Task Force) to present the complete instruction manual for Babel;
* More time is needed for the e-management. All documents to be included in the program developed by John Benjamins has to be bilingual EN-FR. That is a matter of hours…

**EXPENDITURES (same as in 2015):**

*In consultation with FIT EC / Council, payment of a fixed fee to the editor in chief was terminated. Necessary operating costs (translation of abstracts EN-FR by a member of the Belgian Chamber of Translators and Interpreters, sending of books for review, paper and ink cartridges to print all electronically submitted articles, 1 trip per year to Amsterdam to attend editorial meeting at Benjamins: intercity train (not HST) second class, 65+ ticket, no hotel…) will be submitted to FIT EC / Council for approval.*

**FUTURE:**

Work on Babel’s presentation on FIT website: in progress thanks to Task Force;

Work on Babel’s visibility via social media: in progress thanks to Task Force;

Work on the e-management of the journal (at the request of Benjamins) (= in the pipeline but progress is currently too slow);

Elaborate ORCID and KUDOS for authors (at the request of Benjamins) (= action continues);

Work on FIT-related content in Babel issues: all non-FIT promotion in Babel has disappeared. Each Babel issue now contains several FIT related items (FIT logo, Translatio, FIT-UNESCO). Section The LIFE of FIT will be made more attractive and relevant thanks to Task Force;

Follow Babel subscriptions: ongoing action;

Focus on Babel’s impact factor: due to irregular publication mainly in 2013-2014 the impact factor went drastically down from 0,146 to 0,041. That is deeply under Babel’s value and calls for careful attention. The fact that Babel was approved in ERIH PLUS according to their new criteria may perhaps be seen as a first step towards more recognition.

**NEW JOHN BENJAMINS PROPOSITION:**

After I discussed the popularity of Babel (based on among others the stable and high number of submissions), after I explained the problem of the significant number of selected papers waiting for publication, after I mentioned the number of books for which we can now provide a review, after I insisted on the increased potential of the new Editorial Board and Task Force, so after I had a long and fruitful discussion with Isja Conen, John Benjamins Acquisition Editor, she started thinking of editing **per January 1, 2017**, **Babel** volumes (1 volume is 1 year) of **6 issues instead of 4 issues.**

That would enable us to publish up to **800 – 900 pp per year**.

Attention: there are **pros and cons** (e.g. workload vs prestige). However, it would also enable us to introduce once (or twice?) per year **thematic issues** in which we would then **publish e.g. representative and selected texts of 100% FIT activities such as the Lima Forum or APTIF8…**

Of course, the **price for subscription** would have to be **adapted**.

I would very much appreciate if I would be given the opportunity to explain this in more detailed way to Executive Committee and Council in Paris.

**Frans DE LAET**

**Editor in chief**

**10 February 2016**