238

Knowl. Org. 46(2019)No.3
Letters to the Editor

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Annual Progress in Knowledge Organization (KO)? Annual Progress in Thesaurus Research?

Earlier we had the publication *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology*, ARIST, published from 1966 to 2011. It belongs to a family of *Annual Reviews* that are very popular (and highly cited) in almost any discipline (and often such *Annual Reviews* exists in subfields too). I have always been interested in this kind of research synthesis (along with many other kinds). But it has struck me that they almost never live up to their names—or at least what I expect from publications with such titles. They almost never consider progress in the same field year by year (this is also true for my own contributions in this genre, Hjørland 2007; Hjørland and Capurro 2003; Hjørland and Kyllesbech Nielsen 2001). (This does not make them an unnecessary scholarly genre, however; they are still very fruitful by presenting and reviewing publications in the field on a more or less regular basis).

Have a look at Table 1:

2019 (1)		2003 (11)		1987 (7)		1972 (24)
2018 (10)		2002 (9)		1986 (17)		1971 (13)
2017 (9)		2001 (7)		1985 (10)		1970 (20)
2016 (13)		2000 (6)		1984 (11)		1969 (14)
2015 (12)		1999 (12)		1983 (14)		1968 (12)
2014 (10)		1998 (19)		1982 (22)		1967 (5)
2013 (11)		1997 (14)		1981 (20)		1966 (4)
2012 (9)		1996 (7)		1980 (13)		1965 (5)
2011 (9)		1995 (25)		1979 (15)		1964 (3)
2010 (22)		1994 (32)		1978 (18)		1962 (3)
2009 (10)		1993 (19)		1977 (13)		1961 (4)
2008 (12)		1992 (27)		1976 (18)		1960 (1)
2007 (14)		1991 (26)		1975 (20)		1958 (1)
2006 (17)		1990 (38)		1974 (16)		1957 (1)
2005 (15)		1989 (21)		1973 (13)		1947 (1)
2004 (15)		1988 (24)				

Table 1. Publications indexed in *Web of Science*.

This table shows the number of publications indexed by *Web of Science* in the subcategory "of information science and library science" containing the word "thesaurus" or "thesauri" in the title (total of 824 documents). Now my question is: what progress has been made concerning thesauri year by year by all these publications? Can we say that specific kinds of progress have been made each year, or each year with more than five publications, or could we characterize progress in thesaurus research for each five-year interval (including, of course theoretical and metatheoretical contributions), or are all such ideas of identification specific progress in thesaurus research problematic and unrealistic? I guess they are. One reason could be that we have a culture when we do not expect of publications to contribute new knowledge to the field, but just to write papers about something in the field. If this is the case, it is, of course, a sign of a crisis and a problematic scientific culture. In my opinion, this may also be related to another problem: that research too little takes its point of departure in the research literature, and considers its knowledge

Knowl. Org. 46(2019)No.3
Letters to the Editor

239

base, including, of course, unsolved problems and problematic conceptions and methodologies. My main motivation to edit *ISKO Encyclopedia of Knowledge Organization* (IEKO) and the Reviews of Concepts in KO series in the present journal is to make it easier to orient oneself in the knowledge base of KO (including unsolved problems and problematic conceptions and methodologies).

I have not looked into these publications about thesauri year by year, but perhaps this letter entry may inspire somebody to do so? i.e. having a look at the history of thesaurus research from this point of view.

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