On lists

Corné Janse van Rensburg

#LockdownLists

In previous contributions to *PEGboard* I have confessed my rather obsessive interest in lists, especially all kinds of word lists. For me, as for many language practitioners, word lists are like miniature – or sometimes very major – repositories of specialised information (and what a bonus if they are explanatory or bilingual). And even if a specific list's information is not needed at the moment it arrives, you simply feel it in your verbal bones that you will be needing that list one day in the future.

It seems to me that lists have been a much larger part of my life in 2020 and, at times, have taken on a life of their own. Three of my lists (on legislation and on resources for text editing in English and Afrikaans), which have been given the 'PEG makeover', were published on the Guild's website during lockdown. They are now available to everyone in a handy searchable format as e-guides, which will be maintained, updated and expanded continuously with members' help. You are most welcome to contribute to PEG's repository of knowledge by contributing to these lists. If you have not explored them yet, have a look under the 'Resources' tab on the home page.

In addition to the lists I maintain for translating and editing purposes, I found that I had started making lists last year of all the things around me: my collection of books, my collection of music and my collection of movies. And the to-do lists, do-not-forget lists and how-I-regret lists also started to vie for attention on the edge of my desk. Was it the COVID-19 restrictions that had caused this introspection, or the time (too much of it?) at home that had inspired the renewed organisation of my quotidian existence into lists? After initially finding the restrictions intended to prevent the spread of the coronavirus very difficult to cope with, I would like to share with you the solace I found in a piece of editing on classical architecture that was entrusted to me and the journey through long and short lists that had sprouted interest, instruction and inspiration during the pandemic.

Very old lists

My pandemic journey of lists took me to classical architecture literally at the centre of the world: Delphi, and especially the Athenian Treasury (built sometime between 510 and 480 BCE), a kind of miniature copy of the Temple of Apollo (the remains that are visible today also date back to the 4th century BCE) that is situated just above the treasury. My amanuensis for this technically daunting editing task was primarily the comprehensive, comparative and beautifully illustrated *The classical orders of architecture* (first edition of 1985 and second edition of 2005); Vitruvius's indispensable *On architecture*, published in a Penguin Classics translation by Richard Scofield in 2009; and Michael Scott's enthralling *Delphi: A history of the center of the ancient world* (2014). With these sources that provided me with interest and instruction, it must have been the Pythia herself who inspired me to see the lists all around me.

The Athenian Treasury, a distyle in antis building with fluted Doric columns built of Pentelic marble, is decorated with metopes with relief carvings between the triglyphs on the entablature. The 30 metopes pictorially list the labours of Herakles (Hercules for Latinists) and Theseus, the mythical king of Athens and its founder, in a show of Athenian identity. These Thesean and Heraklean metopes reminded me of the cultural knowledge that not only informs but also enriches my life and work as a simple text editor in another time, in another hemisphere and in another language.

If the Athenian Treasury presented me with the relatively short lists of what kept Theseus and Herakles busy, the Temple ❯

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org

The Athenian Treasury

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of Apollo presented me with a far more extensive list. This enormous temple was also built in the Doric order with columns in peristyle (six on the short and 15 on the long side). According to ancient writers, three of the Delphic maxims – the entrance maxims – were inscribed on a column in the pronaos (the porch in front of the temple's cella). These famous injunctions are: 'Know yourself' (γνῶθι σεαυτόν), 'Nothing in excess' (Μηδὲν ἄγαν) and 'Surety brings ruin' (Ἐγγύα, πάρα δ᾽ ἄτα).

They were, however, just the start of a list of 147 maxims originally said to have been given by the Pythia.

Johannes Stobaeus, who lived in the 5th century CE, collected the maxims in Book 3 of his *Anthology* (or *Florilegium*) and he ascribes the maxims to the Seven Sages of Greece. Have you heard of them? Let me list them for you: they are Thales of Miletus, Pittacus of Mytilene, Bias of Priene, Solon of Athens, Cleobulus of Lindos, Periander of Corinth – or Myson of Chenae and Anacharsis the Schytian – and Chilon of Sparta. (For a very interesting discussion of these wise men, have a look at question 45 in a whole book of lists: *What are the seven wonders of the world? And other great cultural lists – fully described* by Peter D'Epiro and Mary Desmond Pinkowish, published in 1999.) And I could not have asked for better pithy and sagacious advice during lockdown, such as these 12 personally applicable maxims:

15.	Φίλοις βοήθει	Help your friends
23.	Σοφίαν ζήλου	Be eager for wisdom
40.	Ὅρα τὸ μέλλον	Look to the future
45.	Ἔχων χαρίζου	If you have, give
72.	Δαπανῶν ἄρχου	Control your expenditure
73.	Κτώμενος ἥδου	Be happy with what you have
85.	Χρῶ χρήμασιν	Use what you have
92.	Πέρας ἐπιτέλει μὴ ἀποδειλιῶν	Complete the race and don't chicken out
106.	Εὐγνώμων γίνου	Be grateful
121.	Μανθάνων μὴ κάμνε	Never tire of learning
122.	Φειδόμενος μὴ λεῖπε	Never cease being thrifty
147.	Τελευτῶν ἄλυπος	At your end, be without sorrow

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org

The Temple of Apollo

More modern lists

It was my editing of the text about the Athenian Treasury that brought me to another treasury on my shelf: *Roget's thesaurus*. Peter Mark Roget (1799–1869), a British physician, natural theologian and lexicographer, published the famous book that became synonymous with word lists of this kind.

As you know, a thesaurus is basically a word list of synonyms and semantically related concepts. The first list of this type that I know of is the list of synonyms prepared by Ammonius Grammaticus of Alexandria (or perhaps Herennius Philo of Byblus) in the 4th century CE, called *On the differences of synonymous expressions* (Περὶ ὁμοίων καὶ διαφόρων λέξεων). My copy of this list has 525 entries arranged alphabetically in 136 pages. Compare this with Roget's first draft of his famous book, published in 1852, that contained about 15 000 words in 99 pages, excluding a two-page index listing all the concepts along with their 'page numbers', which was inserted in the beginning. My 150th
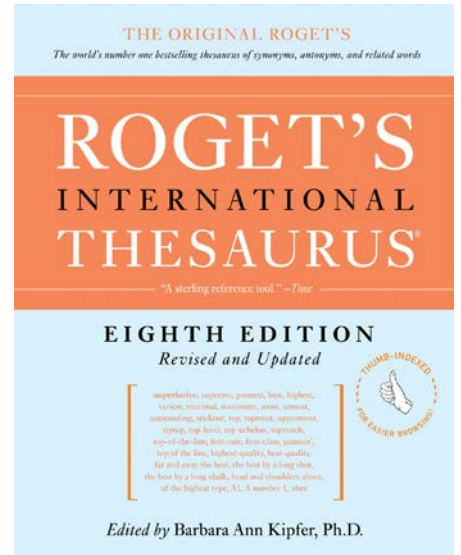
anniversary edition of *Roget's thesaurus of English words and phrases* (2002) is 1 232 pages long, the second half of which is the index. The newly revised and updated 8th edition of this book (*Roget's international thesaurus*), published in November 2019, includes more than 443 000 words and phrases in 1 392 pages, grouped into 1 075 categories. If you were looking for a comprehensive, exhaustive and impressive word list, this is probably it. While it is probably true that most of us will use Roget's, starting with the index, it is even more rewarding to study the organising principle of this remarkable list: the division of all of our words into six classes, subdivided into divisions and sections. This is part of an epistemological attempt to organise the words of the known world in a tradition that can be traced back to Aristotle. The next time you consult Roget's, take the time to look at the outline of the book (16 pages in my copy) and the way in which he organised all our words into classes, divisions and sections.

The most revolutionary achievement of Roget was his development of a completely new ❯
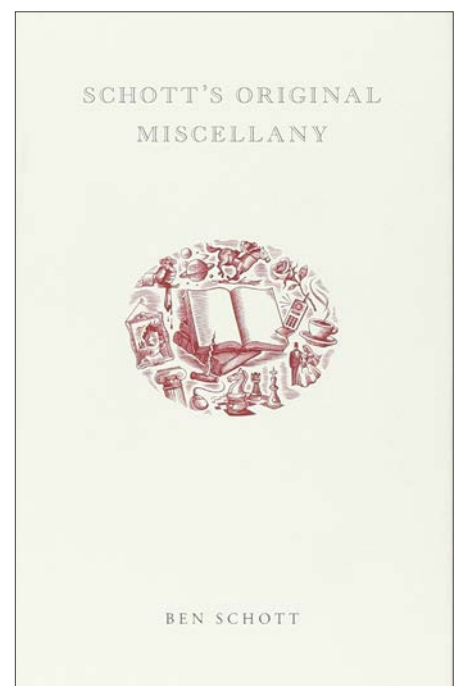
organising principle: instead of listing synonyms as Ammonius did, he grouped words according to ideas or semantic domain. If I cannot find something in a reference book, it is often because of my cranial restriction of searching alphabetically by 'known' headwords. *Roget's thesaurus*, however, reversed the access to allow me to find a word from another word, a concept or an idea. When Roget published the first book ever to realise this concept with thoroughness and precision, he called it a 'thesaurus' (from the Greek θησαυρός, meaning 'treasure', 'treasury' or 'storehouse'), just as the one in Delphi. And just as we can visit the Athenian Treasury today, Roget's publication has remained to this day a thesaurus for me and for every language practitioner.

If you have time during our extended lockdown to do leisure reading, consider *The man who made lists: Love, death, madness, and the creation of Roget's Thesaurus* (2008) by Joshua Kendall. You will never look at lists in the same way again!

Shorter lists

A treasury of another kind that I rediscovered because of too much time during 2020 is Ben Schott's *Miscellanies*. In *Schott's original miscellany* (2002:6), the author asks what this miscellany is:

> An encyclopaedia? A dictionary? An almanac? An anthology? A lexicon? A treasury? A commonplace? An amphigouri? A vade-mecum?

And he provides the following answer:

> Well … yes. *Schott's original miscellany* is all of these and, of course, more. *Schott's original miscellany* is a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. Its purpose is to gather the flotsam and jetsam of the conversational tide. Importantly, *Schott's original miscellany* makes very few claims to be exhaustive, authoritative, or even practical. It does, however, claim to be essential. It is, perhaps, possible to live one's life without *Schott's original miscellany*, but it seems a curious and brave thing to attempt.

Are you interested in antiquarian book sizes (from Foolscap octavo to Imperial folio) or writing paper sizes (from Emperor to Pott) (2002:56), typographical terms (2002:64) or Churchill and rhetoric (2002:98–99)? If so, do not overlook this little book of fascinating lists. There are three equally fascinating companion books: *Schott's food & drink miscellany* (2003), *Schott's sporting, gaming, & idling miscellany* (2004) and *Schott's quintessential miscellany* (2011). And for a South African version, consider *Van Lill's South African miscellany* (2004) where you will find, inter alia, all the trees of the year from 1975 to 2015 (2004:132–133).

Having found the time to read these miscellanies in the 'year of the great pandemic', I confess that I find it indeed impossible to attempt life without these most surprising lists.

Very short lists

I mentioned at the beginning of this editorial that I would not have been able to complete my editing request without the help of the Roman writer Vitruvius and his *De architectura* (*On architecture*). And it was while studying Vitruvius that I was struck by his three rules for architecture: *firmitas* (structural stability), *utilitas* (appropriate spatial use) and *venustas* (attractive appearance). According to him – remember that he lived in the 1st century BCE (from about 90 to 20 BCE) – these three elements form the ultimate synthesis of a successful building.

Two things struck me about Vitruvius's view on architecture: the similarity between architecture and editing, and the importance of rhetorical devices, in particular the tricolon.

My editing practice, and I am sure many of your approaches too, also uses this triad. First, you make sure that you edit the text so that the structure is unassailable: there are no spelling, grammar or composition mistakes. You set the text as it were on a firm footing. Then you look at the appropriateness of the text for the context. Is the language appropriate for its use? Is it formal or academic or literary enough? Or is it informal,

natural and accessible enough? Lastly, you try to make the text as pleasing and enjoyable as possible for the reader by not only making sure the language is pleasing, but also by ensuring the presentation is as aesthetically pleasing as possible. Where these three elements overlap, you achieve the most successfully edited text. The well-considered recommendations that Vitruvius formulated for builders more than 2 000 years ago are equally applicable to our language practice today.

One of the elements of *venustas* that struck me is the rhetorical device called a 'tricolon'. In essence, the tricolon is a very short list: a series of three words, phrases or sentences that are parallel in structure, length and/or rhythm. Not only is the use of a tricolon pleasing, but it is also a mnemonic device and can emphasise a writer's words in a pithy and remarkable way.

Having just made a list of all my movies, I am reminded of this tricolon in *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl* (2003) when Captain Jack Sparrow says to Weatherby Swann:

> I actually feel rather good about this. I think we've all arrived at a very special place, eh? Spiritually, ecumenically, grammatically.

It is probably the use of 'grammatically' that strikes me as particularly successful and funny. (My sense of humour is rather lowbrow, undemanding and simplistic.) But the use of the tricolon is definitely not one of these. In fact, the use of tricola can be very advanced and sophisticated. A tricolon can, for example, consist of parts of increasing size, magnitude or intensity (called a *tricolon crescens* or ascending tricolon) or the parts can be of decreasing size, magnitude or intensity (called a *tricolon diminuens* or descending tricolon) and can often express one thought through three elements (called 'hendiatris'). A tricolon can also consist of the repetition of the same word three times for greater emphasis, such as 'consistency, consistency, consistency', the title of one of PEG's best-selling guides.
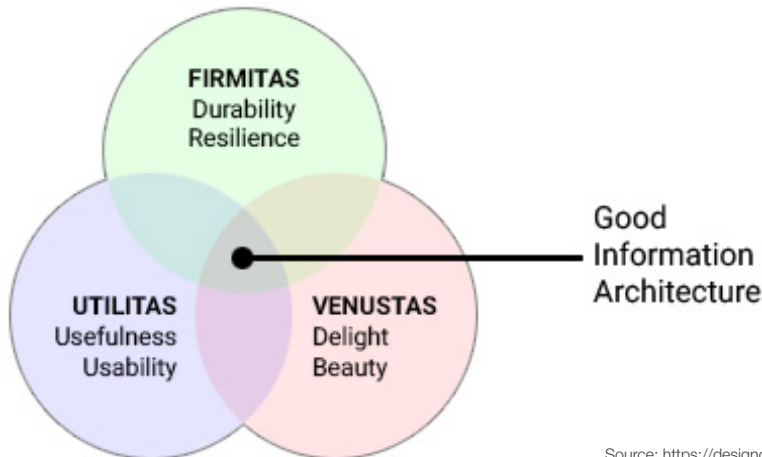
Because the tricolon can be used as a very successful rhetorical device, which can add to the quality of writing and can support meaning, every language practitioner needs to be aware of this device (and ideally many others!) and should be able to edit this rhetorical element (and ideally many others!) appropriately. Perhaps it is time for us to make lists of all the rhetorical devices that can be studied during lockdown?

I hope Advent brought you much respite; I hope you made it onto Santa Clause's nice (and not naughty) list; and I hope you found joy in the company of family, loved ones and friends, the true gold, frankincense and myrrh of Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar. And my wish for you is a new year filled with good health, much happiness and great (long or short) surprises.

If we continue to wear our masks, to sanitise our hands and to maintain our social distancing, I am sure we will grow, prosper and flourish in 2021.

With warm wishes that are spiritual, ecumenical and, of course, grammatical.

Corné

FIRMITAS
Durability
Resilience

UTILITAS
Usefulness
Usability

VENUSTAS
Delight
Beauty

Good Information Architecture

Source: https://designosis.com

#WelcomeTo2021!

Editor's expressions

Wilna Swart

Good day, fellow editors, and welcome to a bumper issue of your favourite editing newsletter! This is *PEGboard* January 2021.

In this edition, you will find a wealth of brilliantly presented and useful articles, some very interesting commentaries, informative and educational English and Afrikaans grammar editorials and many wonderful book prizes to be won.

Corné Janse van Rensburg, PEG's valiant Acting Chairperson kicks off this edition with his 'On' article series, this time 'On lists'. It is conclusive: you will never look at lists the same way again. This is but one of the articles in this *PEGboard* worth putting into your own online library.

The Executive Committee responds to the feedback on the Annual Report 2019/20 received from members and puts on record its initial undertakings in respect of each point listed.

Big news is PEG's inaugural Accreditation Test, which ran from 23 to 29 August 2020. John Linnegar's report on the evaluation of the test gives important insight into the test and how those who sat the examination experienced it. This article is recommended reading for anyone who intends taking the test this year.

The Guild makes every effort to ensure our members are compliant with legislation. This time we consider the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act 4 of 2013). Make a point of reading this article as it gives you the answers to the 'what and why' questions relating to POPI.

As always, this *PEGboard* also includes a wonderfully written English grammar article, this time on plain language. The cherry on the top is the chance to win a copy of Bittie Viljoen-Smook's brand-new *Plain Language: The practical guide to easy-to-understand language*. Visit the 'Competition corner' on page 36 for the question.

The ever-popular Afrikaans grammar series has reached the letter S. Now this contribution is sigh-of-relief-inspiring. It contains the answer to the prickly question: 'Skryf mens dit vas of los?' I want to be so bold as to say you will never again struggle with this conundrum. And to sweeten the deal, you can win a copy of the latest edition of the Pharos *Klein woordeboek/Little dictionary*. Go to page 16 for the details.

Ken McGillivray entertains and enlightens us with his article on the relationship between Afrikaans and Flemish on page 19. Whether or not you work in Afrikaans, I am convinced you will enjoy reading this piece.

Laetitia Sullivan presents a well-crafted commentary, accompanied by screenshots, on editing in PDF. She also lets a few design cats out of the bag. This is excellent preparation for the webinar Laetitia is presenting on the subject on 20 January 2021. (The invitation to this webinar has been sent to members.)

Have you often wondered whether LinkedIn is worthwhile? Wonder no more. Elize Cookson gives us a succinct analysis in her article 'LinkedIn: the why and how in 11 steps'.
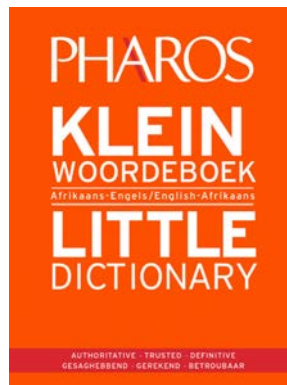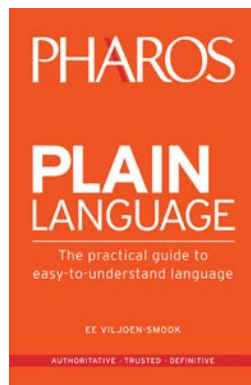
In the July 2020 edition of *PEGboard*, Alexis Grewan launched a series of articles about the cost of editing, and she does not mean only fees. In this issue she writes about 'The real cost of editing', which is a follow-up article. Moreover, the results of an informal online survey, which are well worth considering, are dealt with in this opinionista's contribution.

Our country's 11 official languages are always in the news, but now we are bringing you new insights in a 2020 webinar entitled 'Language and the criminal justice system', which was presented by the Indigenous Languages Action Forum (ILAF).

The 'Chat of the month', a regular feature, elaborates on a word that you thought you knew: *plethora*. Visit the page and be prepared to engage with a veritable plethora of explanations of this overlooked word.

Your answers to 'Competition corner' on page 32 not only announces the winner of the last competition, but also includes a few answers to the gerund, participle and infinitive question that are fileworthy. A new question is put to members and another book prize is up for grabs! Visit page 36 for this.

In conclusion, the Proust questionnaire will be alternated with Preferences. On page 37, Corné takes centre stage with his preferences. You may be surprised as you get to know this PEG stalwart a little better.

We would like to get to know more about the members of PEG and would be delighted to receive your list of preferences for publication in *PEGboard* in 2021.

Surprise! Win a copy of *Brunch*: Visit page 37 to see how.

Until we meet again, keep safe and keep well!

Wilna

#ExcoResponds

The Executive Committee responds to the Annual Report 2019/20 feedback

Members of the Guild were asked to respond to the Annual Report 2019/20 and the responses were circulated on the PEG chat group. This is a summary of that feedback and serves as a guide for future planning. The Executive Committee (Exco) remains committed to PEG's members and all responses will receive attention and consideration in due course.

While only 4% of our members responded to the request, a number of issues were raised. This is invaluable in assisting PEG to meet your needs, as members, and to keep the organisation at the forefront of editing matters.

Webinars: The move to webinars has been an excellent way to maintain commitment to continuing professional development. It has also allowed members who could not attend in-person workshops to benefit not only from training but also from interaction with colleagues. Exco has responded to members' requests for a range of presenters and the updated webinar programme looks very exciting.

Website: There is a need to update the website. A needs assessment is underway – a survey was sent to all the members on the chat group – to establish the extent of the upgrade needed.

Social media: Members expressed a need for a stronger online presence. Elize Cookson has taken charge of establishing a LinkedIn profile. If you are not yet following, please do so. As the LinkedIn presence unfolds, Exco will continue to look at other platforms and assess the benefits of a stronger online presence. PEG's Facebook page is regularly updated on forthcoming events and Exco intends exploring a more coordinated use of this platform.

Code of conduct: Members agree that we are each responsible for our own professional conduct and that PEG cannot police its members. Matters needing attention include bullying, kindness and inclusivity; appropriate and ethical business transactions; and levels of skill among members (for public benefit). The proposed amendments to the existing code of conduct were published in the July issue of *PEGboard*. Members were also invited to compare PEG's code of conduct with the code of conduct in the South African Language Practitioners' Council Act, 2014 (Act 8 of 2014), and to consider a completely new set of rules. Members are all encouraged to periodically peruse the present code of conduct as a reminder of the professional and ethical practice that is expected of members. You can find this on the 'About' page of our website (www.editors.org.za).

POPI Act: The Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act 4 of 2013), commonly called the POPI Act, came into effect on 1 July 2020 and all service providers must be compliant by July 2021. The Act deals with the matter of consent to use personal information. Please see the article in this edition of *PEGboard* for more information about the Act.

The Executive Committee thanks members for responding to the request for feedback. The success of PEG as an organisation, for its members and the public, is more meaningful and beneficial when its purpose aligns clearly with its members' expressed needs.

#LiftOff

Evaluation of PEG's inaugural Accreditation Test, 23–29 August 2020

John Linnegar

This year, PEG's long-awaited and keenly anticipated Accreditation Test was launched. Because it was a first for both the examiners and the examinees, we felt it necessary to gauge the opinions of those who took the test with a view to considering whether any refinements were needed to the entire process and, if so, how and where. The views of those who responded to the post-test survey form the basis of this article.

No fewer than 41 members took the test during the window period of 23–29 August. Of those, 31 responded to the evaluation questionnaire that was distributed to them afterwards – a very satisfactory response rate (75,6%). The responses were anonymous: we still know the test candidates only by their reference numbers.

The survey solicited their opinions on five major aspects of the inaugural test experience: preparation prior to the test; communication prior to the test; administration of the test; taking the test (the experience overall); and content of the test.

These responses are reported on here to give a clear initial idea of the ways in which the inaugural test was received overall by those who took it. These survey results will also serve to provide guidance on the way in which future Accreditation Tests should be administered and devised with a view to refining them further.

In this report, the number of candidates who selected an item on the seven-point Likert-type scale is indicated and I have added my interpretation of the responses, where appropriate. I begin with the section headed 'Preparation for the test', which was essentially about the efficacy of the series of webinars presented between September 2019 and July 2020 in helping members to prepare themselves.

Preparation prior to the test

1. I feel that the workshop(s) and webinar(s) I attended between September 2019 and August 2020 prepared me sufficiently for the PEG Accreditation Test.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	1	-	5	12	11	2

[NA = not answered]

Here, 90% of the respondents (28; scores 5, 6, 7) found that PEG provided them with the wherewithal to prepare them sufficiently for the test. This is revealing, considering that seven of the candidates did not indicate that they had attended one or more webinars (see Statement 5 below).

What also emerges from subsequent responses is that those who took no part in the webinars complained either of not knowing about the test or of being ill-prepared for it.

2. I feel that more should be done to prepare members for the test.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
13	5	5	6	-	-	-	2

In response to this statement, 23 out of 31 respondents (74%) felt that little or nothing more should be done to prepare members for the test. Only six had no strong feelings either way.

3. The webinars I attended in preparation for the test bolstered my confidence to take the test.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	3	5	10	11	2

A total of 26 out of 31 respondents (84%) felt that the webinars served to bolster their confidence. This is an important point to bear in mind – this is also something that the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) and Editors Canada (EC) have experienced: boosting confidence to take the test is an important aspect of the preparation for and success in it. Similar programmes will have to be a feature of future tests. ❯

4. Most of my expectations regarding the nature and content of the test were confirmed.

1.	1	2.	-	3.	2	4.	1	5.	9	6.	7	7.	10	NA	1

As could probably be expected, the opinions in response to this question were fairly mixed. This is largely because attendees at webinars had only other societies' tests to work on and not a PEG test. That will be different from 2021, when the preparatory webinars will include one on PEG's 2020 test. There was some correspondence between those who attended some or all of the webinars and expectations, though. It is also noteworthy that the different grammar webinars helped members with their preparation – quite a number of the respondents indicated their expectation and happiness that language/grammar had featured prominently in the test in one way or another (see responses to Statement 24 below).

5. The workshop(s), webinar or webinars that were most helpful in preparing me for the test were:

5.1 IPEd	16	5.4 Nitty-gritty grammar	18	Other	4
5.2 SfEP	13	5.5 Connectors	15	None	7
5.3 EC	14	5.6 SATI	1		

Attended only 1	3	Only 2	6	Only 3	5	Only 4	0	All 5	8

These statistics are illuminating: of the 31 candidates, attendees at the IPEd, SfEP and EC webinars were in the teens (roughly half the respondents) and among the highest numbers of candidates who attended workshops were those who signed up for the grammar workshops. There seems to be an implied need among members to hone their English grammar – and not only with the test in mind. The next batch of questions homed in on communication about the test beforehand.

Communication prior to the test

6. The pre-test communication was sufficient to prepare me for the test.

1.	-	2.	1	3.	1	4.	4	5.	4	6.	6	7.	14	NA	1

Whereas almost 50% of the candidates were completely happy with the pre-test communication (14/31), they seem to be mainly those who had also attended the webinars. It was surprising how many had not read the announcement and details in *PEGboard* or on the chat group. There is no doubt that announcements about the test date must be made both early in the year and repetitively to ensure that as many members as possible are informed.

7. The pre-test communication was sufficiently well timed to prepare me for the test.

1.	1	2.	1	3.	1	4.	5	5.	1	6.	5	7.	16	NA	1

Admittedly, the announcement in *PEGboard* was made a mere month beforehand, but anyone who had read the Accreditation Report for the 2020 AGM, had attended several webinars and had kept an eye out for official emails or chat group postings would have known about the August dates in advance.

8. The instructions sent out beforehand through various channels were clear and helpful, and easy to follow.

1.	-	2.	-	3.	-	4.	3	5.	3	6.	8	7.	17	NA	-

Of the respondents, 28 (90%) expressed satisfaction with the pre-test instructions.

9. Additional comments or suggestions

These were the typical comments or suggestions recorded in response to Statements 6–8:

- 'I think there should be notification further in advance of when the test will take place.'
- 'I somehow almost missed the announcement of the test. After all the preparation in workshops and webinars, I thought it would be "shouted from the rooftops" when the test was finally announced, but it was only in the one PEG official email from Kim, and that almost passed me by, for some reason.'
- 'Comment on preparation: only in the month or two ahead of the test was I aware that the Accreditation Test was definitely happening …. So as far as doing webinars or workshops with the specific aim of preparing for the test is concerned, I only did two, and that was not enough.'
- 'The grammar section was very similar to the grammar webinar, so those webinars were very helpful, but doing another country's test was only partly helpful.'
- 'I think it would be fair to have old papers and other exercises on the PEG website, free to members, as every webinar costs money. … I discovered while preparing that it's not really the theory that you need, it's practice.'
- 'In future it would be nice if the test dates can be determined early (3–6 months prior), posted on the website and communicated 2–3 times by email.'

Administration of the test (including the Accreditation Officer's role)

Generally, this battery of questions received the most resoundingly positive responses – mainly 7s and some 6s for Statements 10–15, with less than a handful of responses to

Statement 16 – mainly compliments and thank-yous. Clearly, candidates were happy with the general administration of the test, including the registration, payment, timings, anonymising, and the submission and return of the scripts. All credit to the Accreditation Officer!

10. Registration and payment for the Accreditation Test were handled competently.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	1	-	1	29	-

11. The registration fee is reasonable.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	1	1	6	23	-

Here, 29 out of 31 respondents (94%) felt that the fee was completely reasonable, which is most heartening, because that was an important requirement – other comparable tests are virtually unaffordable. Yet we are still more than covering our costs for the administration and marking.

12. Emailing my test paper and the Acknowledgements and Confirmation form to me proceeded smoothly.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	-	-	4	27	-

13. Returning my test paper and completing and returning the Acknowledgements and Confirmation form proceeded smoothly.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
1	-	-	-	1	3	26	-

14. The process of anonymising the test paper worked well.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	1	1	3	2	2	22	-

This process entailed having the Accreditation Officer remove all traces of candidates' names or initials to ensure that the markers had no inkling of whose script they were marking. That has worked exceptionally well: the markers really had no idea whose scripts they were marking.

15. In my experience, the Accreditation Officer was efficient and prompt.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	-	-	1	30	-

16. Anything that could have been done better or differently?

'It was difficult for me to work in the text document itself when answering some of the questions. … I would have preferred to answer the questions separately, by creating and providing my own "answer sheet".'

Having solicited responses about the preparation, communication and administration, we were interested in ascertaining the candidates' overall experience of the test itself, in Statements 17–22 and Statement 30.

Taking the test: your experience overall

17. The modus operandi of sitting the test in my home environment generally worked well.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	-	-	3	28	-

This statement received a unanimous thumbs-up! The alternative was the IPEd and EC models, which require members to sit the examination in a venue on an appointed date and during a fixed time period. Because of this, IPEd had to cancel their examination this year, whereas, beset by COVID-19 though we were, PEG's could go ahead without any trouble. What's more, the home environment and fitting the text into members' work routine found favour with the respondents.

18. Being given 48 hours to complete the test was sufficient.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	1	3	1	2	2	21	1

Of the respondents, 21 (68%) gave the duration a 7, and combined 5, 6 and 7 scores (80%) either agreed or fully agreed that the time allocated was sufficient. But time management seemed to be a problem for some candidates: one or two planned their time badly, others found it difficult to combine the test and work commitments within the allotted time. Yet others handed back their scripts hours before their deadline. The Accreditation Officer has an accurate record of the actual time the candidates spent on the test (to the extent that recording their receipt and return times can indicate that), should we need to analyse those data.

Here are some of the responses:

- 'Possibly prepare members for time needed to write the test. I underestimated how many hours I would need to complete it (even though we were given 48 hours). This is my own fault …'
- 'Another 6 hours would have helped. I worked till midnight on the first day (and had no work or other commitments).'
- 'I felt that the proofreading question (the proofread itself) was rather long, and that I did not have time to go over it again sufficiently.' ❯

- 'More opportunities to take the test would have assisted with balancing work and taking the test.'
- 'Candidates should be given more time to specifically read through the questions and the texts to better prepare themselves for how they would approach the whole process and their answers.'
- 'I could have done with another day; it took much, much longer than I expected.'

As the varied responses indicate, some candidates struggled with even the 48-hour period. One important lesson we have learned this time round is to make it clear in advance that those with a genuine medical condition should inform us beforehand and we will make suitable allowance for them to take the test under appropriate conditions.

19. Being given choices for some of the questions was fair and largely accommodated my experience as an editor.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	1	-	-	3	2	25	-

Many respondents were relieved that the editing and proofreading questions gave choices between academic and other texts or questions. These choices seemed to cater for the specialisations of most of those who took the test. This is reflected in Statements 20 and 21. One respondent commented, 'The test was comprehensive'.

20. The spread of topics tested was reasonable.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	1	-	1	2	4	23	-

21. The skills and knowledge tested were reasonable and appropriate.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	1	1	-	1	7	21	-

22. The test was suitably exacting, and by passing it I feel that I will have earned the elevated status of Accredited Member.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	1	-	-	-	2	27	1

These responses (approval by 27, 28 and 29/31, respectively) were most gratifying, because we had aimed at setting a high standard comparable with international benchmarks but also with setting questions that would test appropriate knowledge and skills and accommodate as wide a range of experience and expertise as possible. These responses more or less tally with those to Statement 30, where 21 (68%) candidates rated the test between 'difficult' and 'extremely difficult' and 13 (43%) found it either 'very difficult' or 'extremely difficult'. But 10 rated it 'fair/moderately difficult', and it would be interesting indeed to learn who they are, because one would assume that they are more experienced, and possibly more competent, well-rounded editors.

30. Finally, on a scale of 1–7 (1 extremely easy; 4 fair/moderately difficult; 7 extremely difficult), please rate your overall experience of the test.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	NA
-	-	-	10	8	12	1	-

23. In my view, the following aspects of the test could have been done differently:

- 'Apart from a compulsory section testing basic grammatical knowledge, perhaps rather than different sections with choices, require the applicants to answer a certain number of questions in total?'
- '… the question on proofreading was somewhat unfair, because I have never been involved in the publishing industry. … A webinar needs to be offered that focuses specifically on the publishing industry, the terminology eg proofs, etc.'
- 'I was forced by circumstances to do the last section, about ethics of an editing job, in the very last two hours of my time allowed …'
- 'Could have included one paragraph to edit in full as a "real"' example rather than, or in addition to, demonstrating different skills by answering questions.'
- 'My area of experience is academic editing, so I did the academic editing question for the second section. The only slight issue I had with it is that the accepted norms for academic writing differ somewhat across fields and between books and journal articles … I would hope that some leeway might be given for candidates applying the norms from their own field rather than those of the field in which the piece is written.'
- 'I felt that the proofreading question (the proofread itself) was rather long, and that I did not have time to go over it again sufficiently.'
- 'Candidates should have been given the freedom/opportunity to create their own, separate document to answer the questions.'
- 'Test English language skill and editing skill – not skills required to be a printer or a publisher.'
- 'Some editors work only with light ladies' novels, some only with academic papers, some only with marketing material, some only with magazine articles, etc. The test does not take this into account.'
- 'Much more focus needs to be put on English language skill at a very deep level.'
- 'I think the paper was very well put together and there were enough choices to find something that suited me in each section, where there were options. The possible exception was Question 4, where if ethics and conflict of interest were not your thing, you might have had trouble [answering them].'
- 'I think the format for how to answer the paper needs some thought. Mostly, the track changes issue …'
- 'I think it was very long in places. However, I did appreciate having extra content and questions, knowing that by completing them I was increasing my chances of giving more correct answers.'

Content of the test

In this set of statements, we tried to ascertain the pleasant, or unpleasant, surprises in the test and perhaps where, in the candidates' opinions, the test was found wanting. Here are their responses, which speak for themselves.

24. Appropriateness of questions generally

24.1 In particular, I was pleased to find the following included in the test:

- 'I appreciated all aspects of the test. I was impressed with the range and depth of questions. I was relieved that there were options as not all aspects of editing suit all editors.'
- 'A choice between a more general topic for editing text and an academic text.' Versus 'Material to edit not of an academic nature'.
- 'I enjoyed editing the article on *pastéis de nata*. It gave me the chance to research, fact-check and learn something new and interesting.'
- 'Ethical behaviour & PEG code of conduct as I learned a lot from this exercise.'
- 'Grammar. In the form of the first 20 questions. I enjoyed that section. I also liked the question on ethics, as it raised my awareness of the issue (even though I could not access the site, which was annoying).'
- 'Grammar questions and formal texts.'
- 'A long editing question and the proof-reading of a pdf question.'
- '… some structural editing (but not too much, which was great, since I think that requires a different level of thinking and it would have been hard to do both copy editing and structural editing in that time frame).'
- 'I was glad to see questions about grammar, stylistic, structural and copy-editing that were all covered in the webinars and workshops that I attended over the past few months.'
- 'I enjoyed the question on ethics/code of conduct as this is an area that is so important but often glossed over in formal training situations.'
- '… some academic proofreading and editing, which I am familiar with.'
- 'Practical testing of knowledge and skills in various areas.'
- 'Grammar questions that were familiar to me just because I had worked through several similar sets from the webinars.'
- 'Question 2A's [editing] questions that followed the text which allowed me to comment on issues in the text which I enjoyed, and which I think added to my opportunity to show my understanding of various issues with language and structure.'

24.2 I was surprised to find the following included in the test:

- 'The choice to answer questions on proofreading, rather than completing a proofreading test.'
- 'Questions on PEG's conduct rules.'
- 'An academic text.'
- 'Questions about typesetting a book – the printer/typesetter's work.'
- 'Nothing came as a surprise. I appreciated the practical applications of editing and proofreading theory in the questions.'
- 'Academic responses to certain questions as opposed to being expected to perform the functions, for example, Question 3 [proofreading].'
- 'Question on ethics. Surprising but good. The questions pertaining to the PEG code of conduct. Not that I think it was inappropriate – I was simply not really expecting it.' ❯

- 'So many questions dealing with the publishing and book production process. (But perhaps this is just because my experience of editing does not include that.)'
- 'I wasn't expecting to have options within each question and really appreciated that, as I could then focus on sections that I felt I would be able to answer well in the time allocated.'

24.3 I was surprised to find the following excluded from the test:

- 'No direct questions on grammar and parts of speech, except maybe one. I had revised this area in quite some detail. Perhaps if I'd attended the webinars, I might have known not to bother.'
- 'I thought maybe the code of conduct could have been asked of everyone. But then I'm not sure the other options would've been equally suited to all applicants.'
- 'I was quite happy with the content of the questions. They were balanced and reflected the work expected from an editor and a proofreader.'
- 'I was not surprised by the exclusion of anything. I thought it pretty comprehensive.'
- 'I was "relieved" (not surprised!) that not many questions were asked about the correct presentation of units, currencies and measures (Chapter 11 in *New Hart's rules*).'
- 'Rewriting of paragraphs together with explanations of what was done and why. These types of question are required to really reveal the editor's ability to ensure correct English …'

Fortunately, the topics chosen for the three sub-questions in Question 4 [general] of the test seemed to suit most of the candidates: unethical conduct on the part of a freelance editor and the applicable sections of the PEG code of conduct; the question of confidentiality and conflict of interest when dealing with more than one client; and then general questions on the publishing process (based more or less on the EC Accreditation Test's sections on copy-editing and proofreading). The first two questions were a test not only of the candidates' knowledge but also of their ability to think through the scenarios and the issues at stake that needed to be grappled with, and to express their considered opinions.

One or two expressed surprise that plagiarism and the editing of student theses did not feature in the test – although they did, not as major questions but as part-questions. Perhaps these topics will receive fuller treatment in future tests.

29. I am glad that I decided to take the inaugural Accreditation Test.

1.	-	2.	-	3.	-	4.	1	5.	1	6.	3	7.	25	NA	1

Very few candidates had any regrets about taking the test; indeed, 81% rated this statement a 7 and 90%, 6+7 together. Those who added a comment said that even if they did not pass this time round, this would be an appropriate practice opportunity for taking the next test, and so they were glad to have taken it, whatever the outcome.

Lessons learned and refinements

Regarding the actual completion of the test, some lessons learned are: possibly including more multiple-choice questions to make the answering a little less laboursome and certainly the marking less so. Also, we had not anticipated the numbering problems that arose when candidates inserted their answers to questions. Considering a separate answer sheet would be the way to go (not that candidates could not have done so this time round). Also, requiring the candidates to copy and paste the questions they have opted to answer could in itself be a useful exercise in using an editorial skill.

Asking candidates to delete those questions they did not answer will not only help with the marking but would also make navigating around the test script less cumbersome.

Giving clearer instructions about exactly how to answer the editing and proofreading questions has also become apparent.

In Q1 – correcting errors in sentences – several candidates overstepped their brief by rewriting whole sentences rather than simply correcting the one, two or three errors in them. Not only should that not happen in most cases in reality, but in the process these candidates earned themselves negative points for creating errors of their own or changing the author's meaning entirely.

We were genuinely taken aback at the number of candidates who indicated they have little or no experience of the publishing industry and its workings from an editor's or a proofreader's perspective. For this reason, some candidates could answer only Q3A and Q4A (and to a lesser extent Q4B). So, as has been suggested, we will need to consider including a webinar on how editors and proofreaders fit into the publishing process before future tests.

Some also indicated they had little or no experience in proofreading, either on hard copy or on PDFs using Adobe Acrobat, which also came as a shock to the two examiners. Others have had little or no exposure to the publishing industry, so that should also be taken into account, despite the preparation we did for this year's test (ie exposing members to the EC examination in particular). Future webinars will have to be devised to demystify the editor's and the proofreader's roles.

Using Track Changes also proved to be a challenge for less than a handful of candidates, but a mastery of this and the Comments function should surely be a key tool in their editor's armoury. So, in preparation for future tests, we must surely not assume knowledge and skills but provide CPD training opportunities in skills such as these.

We also need to make it clear from the outset that anyone with a medical condition that is likely to disadvantage them in their taking the examination successfully (eg not being able to work under pressure or to work with certain software) must approach the Accreditation Officer for a special dispensation. Their working from home, it was thought, would help such members alleviate some of the stress and inconvenience of typical examination conditions.

Buoyed by the relative success of the 2020 Accreditation Test, preparations for the 2021 test can begin in earnest if they have not already commenced. 🌿
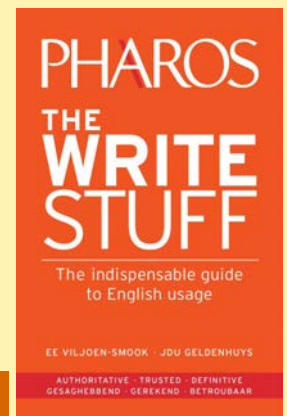
Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act 4 of 2013)

This is an introduction to the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act 4 of 2013), also known as the POPI Act or POPIA. Please take the time to understand how it might affect your services and what you need to have in place to ensure compliance by 30 June 2021. Compliance pertains specifically to people who might distribute newsletters, advertise training courses, or make referrals from a central database, for example. The crux of the matter is that the reason for using someone's personal information must be aligned with the purpose of the initial service offered, and any alternative or subsequent use of personal information requires permission.

Why is the POPI Act important?

The POPI Act protects people from harm, such as theft and discrimination. Non-compliance on the part of responsible parties (organisations and independent service providers) could lead to penalties. The industries most affected are financial services, healthcare and marketing. This does not mean others should let compliance slide, however. For this reason, we, as editors, need to be informed.

What is the POPI Act?

a. The Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (Act 4 of 2013), commonly called the POPI Act or POPIA, became effective on 1 July 2020. There is a one-year grace period to become compliant – the deadline is 30 June 2021.
b. Protection of personal information applies to the processing of all personal information of a human being or juristic entity (companies, CCs, organisations, etc). The information can be in any format, including paper, electronic, video recordings, audio recordings and even WhatsApp. The POPI Act serves to regulate the use of personal information by businesses, organisations, service providers, etc.
c. Personal information includes contact details, demographic information, personal history, biometric information, opinions about the person and personal correspondence.
d. Processing of information means collecting, using, storing, disseminating, modifying or destroying information.
e. The POPI Act is not a consent-driven law. Its default position is that you do not need to get someone's consent to process most of their personal information (there are exceptions, however).
f. Special protection of personal information applies to that of children and sensitive personal information such as criminal records, health data and sexual history – any personal information that could be used to discriminate against a person unfairly. You may not use sensitive personal information without authorisation.

Easy-to-read information about the POPI Act

User-friendly explanation of the POPI Act: https://popia.co.za
Free plain language infographic: www.michalsons.com
Quick reference: www.popicompliance.co.za

Purpose and contravention of the POPI Act (https://popia.co.za)

The following information has been taken from the Act, for quick reference. Please visit the website for all relevant information.

Purpose: Chapter 1 section 2:

The purpose of this Act is to:

1. give effect to the constitutional right to privacy, by safeguarding personal information when processed by a responsible party, subject to justifiable limitations that are aimed at –
   a. balancing the right to privacy against other rights, particularly the right of access to information; and
   b. protecting important interests, including the free flow of information within the Republic and across international borders;

2. regulate the manner in which personal information may be processed, by establishing conditions, in harmony with international standards, that prescribe the minimum threshold requirements for the lawful processing of personal information;

3. provide persons with rights and remedies to protect their personal information from processing that is not in accordance with this Act; and

4. establish voluntary and compulsory measures, including the establishment of an Information Regulator, to ensure respect for and to promote, enforce and fulfil the rights protected by this Act.

Contravention: Chapter 11 section 101:

Any person who contravenes the provisions of section 54 (Duty of Confidentiality), is guilty of an offence. ✎

LinkedIn: The why and how in 11 steps

Elize Cookson

As a professional platform, LinkedIn is invaluable; whether you are searching for employment or potential candidates, or want to establish a professional network. LinkedIn is an ideal place to present your talents and skills. I know of many full-time employees and freelancers who have received job offers through LinkedIn. But to be visible, there are a few things you should consider.

1. Safety

You probably know that safety and privacy are important when using social media. So should you include your phone number and/or email address? I would include an email address, because it would lend credit to you as an individual. However, I find that interested parties will mostly contact you using the LinkedIn message option.

Don't accept invitations to connect with people who have a scant profile. A LinkedIn profile can be private, but I don't see the benefit of that as nobody will find you.

It is comforting to know that LinkedIn will contact you if they find any irregular behaviour on your account.

2. First and second names

It is better to use the name by which you are known. To use an example, I am known as Elize Cookson. Had I used Elizabeth, most of my existing and potential contacts would not find me.

Remember, you may use 20 characters for your first name and 40 characters for your surname.

3. Headline

Your headline is the first thing searchers notice about you. You have 120 characters in which to explain who you are. To give you an idea, here are a couple of good examples:

Erudite Senior Manager: operations and marketing management, applying knowledge of strategy, risk, finance, contracts, projects

Executive Manager and Director: international leader, strategy expert, marketing, sales and business developer

4. Vanity URL

You may want to create a personalised URL. Mine is https://www.linkedin.com/in/elize-cookson-cv-writer-editor/. However, I have no evidence that it makes a difference. You have 29 characters to play with.

5. Profile photograph

Don't use a photograph taken of you where you're sitting next to the pool with a drink in hand or visiting a spa. Leave that for Facebook. The photograph should be professional: head and shoulders, and against a neutral background. Another option is a photograph that shows you in an area of your profession. (For editors, at your desk, hard at work.)

6. Etiquette

Good manners apply to LinkedIn too. Try to accept (or reject) connection requests as soon as possible. And acknowledge or respond to comments on your articles or posts.

7. Summary or introduction

A summary is vital for establishing a search presence. Explain who you are and what you can offer in at least 40 words (maximum 2 000 characters), and don't forget to use a few industry-specific keywords. You may also want to upload your website and/or elements of your corporate identity.

8. Your profile

Complete your profile. Your chances of being found in a search will increase exponentially if you do this. To achieve an 'All-Star' rating, you must include:

- a photograph;
- an industry and location;
- a detailed current position;
- two previous positions;
- your skills; and
- 50+ connections.

9. Skills

Don't be afraid to list all your skills. LinkedIn offers predictive typing and it's better to use their options where possible. ❯

Endorse and recommend your connections, and they will hopefully do the same in return. You can ask to be recommended by clicking on the 'Ask for recommendations' button.

You have 3 000 characters available for writing a recommendation for someone.

10. Participation

Be active on LinkedIn and participate in discussions.

You don't always have to create your own content. Share articles written by your connections or articles that are pertinent and interesting. Connect with others in your industry and follow interest groups.

Once you interact frequently, you will receive emails from LinkedIn in which the service will inform you of the number of times you appeared in searches and which keywords were used.

11. Posts and articles

You can, of course, prepare your own posts to use as a showcase for your projects, skills and achievements. You have 1 300 characters per post or article.

There are various thoughts on the best time to post on LinkedIn. I have found no evidence of its success. My recommendation is always to post on the same day at the same time. You can also schedule your posts.

Use hashtags. LinkedIn will recommend a few once you've written your article. However, don't use too many; three is a good number.

Market research has shown that if you use a number in the title, it will generate better reception and more interaction. You will notice I used that advice in the title of this article.

You may want to include a question in your title or in the body of the article. This gets people involved, which in turn can increase your standing.

However, remember that LinkedIn is a professional profile. Leave photographs of your baby and dog for Facebook.

LinkedIn has much to offer and it can also be interesting and informative. I encourage you to use it. And don't forget to follow PEG on LinkedIn (https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-professional-editors-guild/)! 🖋
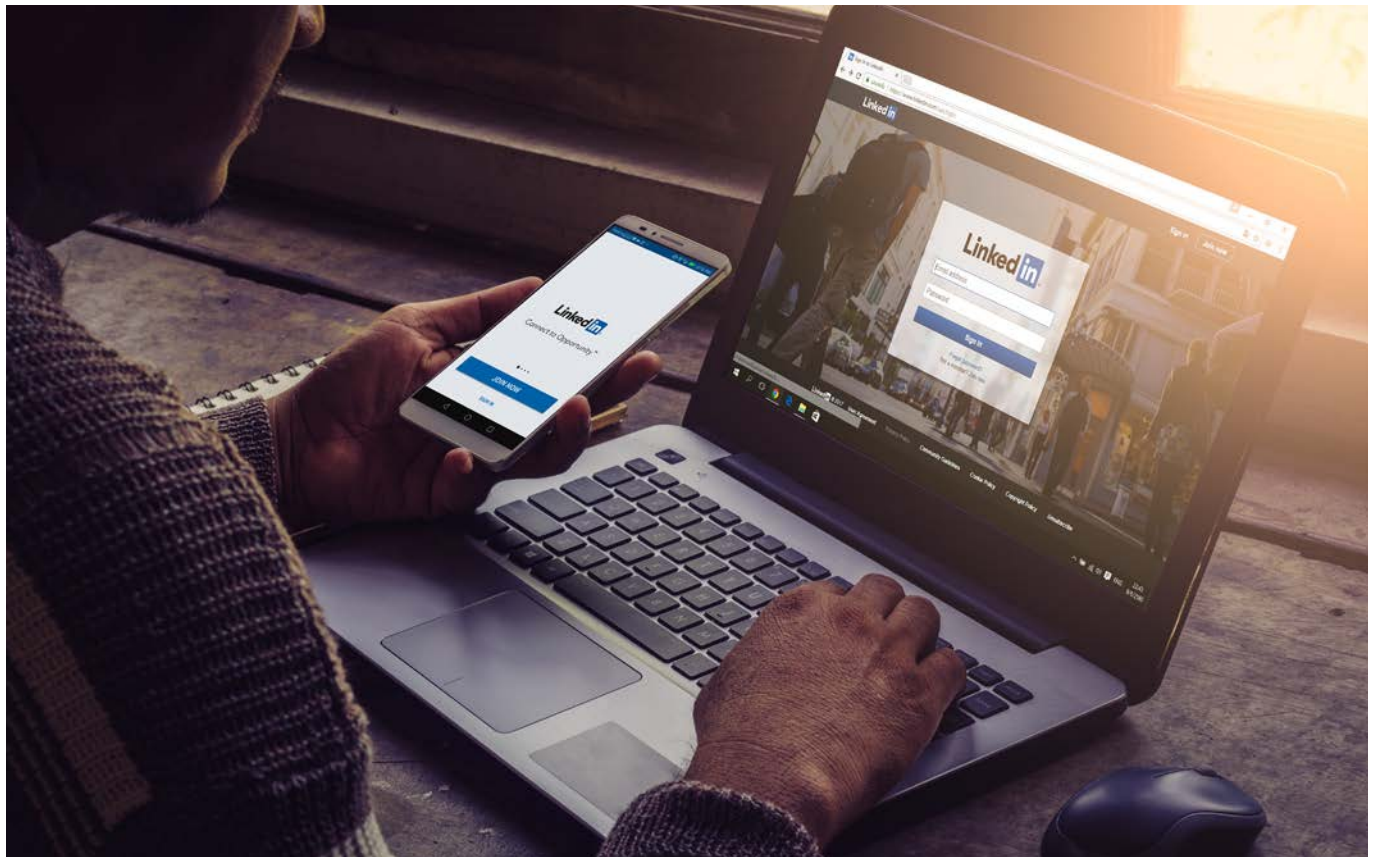
Plain, plainer, plainest: Plain Language is here to stay
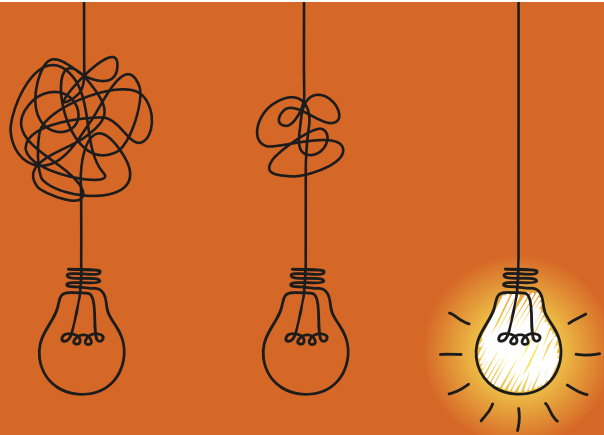
Lyn Aecer

The 10th anniversary of the passage of the Plain Language Act in the United States was celebrated on 13 October 2020. It seems appropriate, therefore, to deal with the ways in which we language practitioners can promote plain language in the texts we are called upon to improve. In a South African context, applying plain language or plain English to informative texts is now more important than ever, given the lead taken by our own national parliament.

'Improve' nowadays – in the aftermath of the passing into law of the Consumer Protection Act in 2008 and the National Credit Act of 2005 – should mean 'make it accessible to the average reader with some knowledge of the product, service or subject-matter at first reading'. Easier said than done, that's for sure. But there are some fundamental 'plain language principles' that we text editors should follow in order to achieve this desirable end product. In this article I share eight of them with you.

Principle 1: Adopt a reader orientation from the outset.

At your first read-through of a text, place yourself in the shoes of the identified average reader or consumer. Ask: 'Will the reader understand or make sense of this word, sentence or paragraph at first reading?' If the answer is no, then you need to detect the reasons for that. They could lie in any of the following barriers unwittingly put in place by your author.

Principle 2: Reduce overlong, verbose sentences to shorter, accessible sentences.

For most adult readers, the average sentence length should be about 15 words. Sentence lengths ranging from 30–60 words cannot be understood 'at first reading' and therefore they fail a basic test of plain language. These verbose sentences are usually also complex in the sense that they contain embedded subordinate clauses that also make it difficult for the reader to take in the main idea the author wishes to convey. Such complex sentences should be split into two or three simple or, at most, compound sentences if they are to pass the plain language test.

For example, here's the opening paragraph to a job advertisement:

> The Public Investment Corporation is Africa's largest asset manager, investing funds across asset classes *on behalf of* the GEPF, *as well as* its other, mainly public sector, clients *which* focus on *the provision of* social security. (36 words)

Reconstructed in plain language, this could so easily have been made more accessible to potential Information Officer applicants:

> The Public Investment Corporation is Africa's largest asset manager. (9 words) It invests funds across asset classes for the GEPF and its other, mainly public sector, clients. (16) These clients focus on providing social security. (7)

As a text editor, you should be looking out for conjunctions and relative pronouns in such sentences and making those the points at which to break up long sentences into shorter ones. Where and how to shorten sentences:

> At conjunctions: if, and, but, although, while, however, as well as
> At relative pronouns: that, which, when, where, who
> At present participles: assuming, starting, realising …

Principle 3: Convert long, 'difficult' words to their simpler equivalents.

By long, difficult words we mean polysyllabic words that comprise three or more syllables.

Why write 'endeavour' (three syllables) when 'try' or 'attempt' will do as well? Or 'remuneration' (five syllables) when 'pay', 'wage' or 'salary' would fit the bill? Many authors seem to think that choosing the longer, more difficult word sounds more impressive or official or important when all it's doing is obfuscating (to also use a four-syllable 'difficult' word) their meaning and making it a whole lot less accessible to readers.

Another example is using the word 'Verification' (five syllables) on a mobile application when users have to register and are asked to confirm that their personal details are correct. Is the average user of that app on their cellphone likely even to understand what the word means? Why not use the stronger verb form, 'Confirm' or 'Check' (even 'Verify' could present problems to those users unfamiliar with the word).

'Verification' is a classic example of a nounism (or nominalisation), that is, a noun formed from a more direct or stronger verb by adding '-tion', '-sion' or '-ent' to it. Worse still, nounisms are usually located in three-word phrases – 'the verification of', 'an extension to', etc – which simply leads to ❯

wordy sentences! Using their vigorous verb alternatives – 'verify', 'extend' – has the immediate effect of shortening sentences and making the author's meaning come across more directly and clearly.

Compare 'He asked us for an extension to his contract upon its expiration' against 'He asked us to extend his contract when it expires'.

Other wordy phrases can often be replaced with a perfectly acceptable single word: come in possession of = *get*, *obtain*, *receive*; make an application = *apply*; give consideration to = *consider*.

My personal pet peeves are two seemingly innocuous words that are overused by lazy authors: 'address', which we can easily replace with better synonyms such as 'deal with', 'solve', 'resolve', 'consider' or 'discuss'; and 'furnish', which can be substituted by more direct words such as 'provide', 'give', 'supply' or 'send'.

Principle 4: Replace passive-voice constructions with the active voice.

Related to the problem of nounism usage is the passive-voice construction: they often occur together in sentences. This construction creates difficulties for readers because it reverses the normal subject-verb-object (S-V-O) order that readers can follow easily. Instead of an author writing:

Jim is studying Political Science,
S　　　 V　　　　 O

for instance, they write:

Political Science is being studied by Jim.
　　 O　　　　　 V　　　　 S

So Political Science can be or do something, can it? Of course not! The first, and more serious, problem with this passive (or O-V-S) construction is that the reader has to read through the sentence to get to the real actor, having been led to believe that the actor is 'Political Science' simply because it is in the subject position in the sentence. Confusing. The second problem is that it is wordier than the active voice construction.

Fortunately, even academia is beginning to see the foolishness of such seemingly 'objective' writing, especially in the hands of writers of English as a foreign or a second language. They are now permitting students and colleagues to write papers and articles in the active voice. Giving that article or study animate qualities ('This paper analyses …'; 'The study set out to …') is simply absurd and about as unplain as one can get.

Even worse is the passive-voice construction in which the actor (or doer) is absent:

The investigation has been carried out satisfactorily.

Here, first, the object 'investigation' has been placed in the subject position, being treated as the actor, but we are not told who the actor is. Redrafted, it fulfills the requirements of plain language:

The forensics team carried out the investigation satisfactorily

Principle 5: Replace jargon and technical terms that the average reader likely struggles to understand with more commonly understood equivalents.

Jargon and technical language are fine when the writing is aimed at readers who understand them implicitly as part of their everyday vocabulary. But when this is not the case, we need to help our authors use more everyday words that convey the same meaning.

The legal writer who uses 'deems' and 'cedes' in writing intended for a non-legal readership should be persuaded to replace them with 'considers' and 'gives up' instead; and why use 'perform', 'grant' and 'settle' when 'do', 'give' and 'pay' would convey the meanings as clearly, yet much more simply and directly?

Principle 6: Avoid or eliminate occurrences of archaisms.

Which words qualify as archaisms? The list includes 'aforesaid', 'thereby', 'therefrom', 'whereafter', 'notwithstanding' and even 'thus' and 'hence'. Replace them all with modern equivalents such as 'stated above/previously', 'by that', 'from there/that/it', 'after which', 'in spite of' or 'despite' and 'therefore'.

Principle 7: Avoid dense noun strings.

Readability levels plummet when three or more words that are ordinarily separate nouns follow in succession. For example:

response performance problem

There are two problems for the reader to deal with here. First, in order to grasp the writer's meaning, after first reading the string from left to right they then need to read it in reverse order to unpack the meaning of the components. Immediately, the string

will have failed plain language's 'at first reading' test. But, secondly, clustering nouns in this way turns all but the last noun into adjectives:

hospital employee relations improvement programme.

Many users will think they've found the noun when in fact they're still reading adjectives, and will become confused as a result. It's only when they reach the last noun that the meaning begins to be revealed: 'Ah, it's actually a programme of some sort!'

The editorial solutions we need to bring to such writing are these: eliminate non-essential descriptive words; open up the construction by inserting prepositions, articles and/or relative pronouns to clarify the relationships between words:

programme *to* improve relations *between* hospital employees.

So help your author to avoid the use of noun strings; remember that, sometimes, using more words (especially connectors) makes the author's meaning clearer.

Principle 8: Wherever possible, use vertical lists and other visual devices.

Whereas authors tend to think verbally, we need to help them present certain information or ideas both verbally and visually. Adding a visual element to the author's words can often enhance their intended meaning for readers by enhancing readability and accessibility. For example, your author has written:

Training in developing and implementing case plans and developing the following related tools should be considered a priority: guidelines for writing goals and action steps; an eco-map; a generic case-management plan.

We editors could reconstitute it as:

Training in developing and implementing case plans and developing the following related tools should be considered a priority:

- guidelines for writing goals and action steps;
- an eco-map; and
- a generic case-management plan.

Since the passage into law of consumer-protection legislation, plain language has become a priority from the top down: all our laws have to be drafted in plain language; similarly, any contract has to be written in a style that enables the 'average consumer' to understand every sentence at first reading. The term 'contract' includes that cellphone-user agreement or the terms and conditions of usage that are attached to your shopper or credit card and even the lease agreement you sign as a tenant.

But it doesn't – and shouldn't – end there. From textbooks to newsletters, instructions to guidelines and training manuals: they must all be written in a way that the identified average reader or consumer will understand at first reading. That's a serious gauntlet that's been thrown down to us as 'improvers' of others' texts, but it is a challenge we must accept as well-informed and reader-oriented improvers of others' texts.

S: Samestellende samestellings

Corné Janse van Rensburg

In die laaste uitgawe van *PEGboard* het die klem op reekse en lyste geval, veral op die manier waarop leestekens by reekse en lyste gebruik moet word. In hierdie uitgawe van die nuusbrief kom ons by die 19e letter van die alfabet en aandag word geskenk aan samestellende samestellings. Omdat samestellende samestellings dikwels die een woordvorm is wat redigeerders aan die ortografie laat twyfel, is dit baie belangrik om die grammatika en reëls van samestellende samestellings te verstaan, want dit dra regstreeks by tot die gehalte van jou vertaal- en redigeerwerk.

1. Wat is samestellende samestellings?

Kyk na hierdie drie vrae wat onlangs deel van die daaglikse Beter-Afrikaans-taaltoets (www.beterafrikaans.co.za) was:

Ná die … sal ons hoor of die Reserwebank van plan is om rentekoerse te verhoog.
- ☐ monetêre beleid vergadering
- ☐ monetêrebeleidsvergadering
- ☐ monetêre beleidsvergadering
- ☐ monetêre beleids-vergadering

Daar is amptelik begin met die bou van 'n … wat Thailand en China met mekaar sal verbind.
- ☐ hoë spoed spoorverbinding
- ☐ hoëspoedspoorverbinding
- ☐ hoë spoedspoorverbinding
- ☐ hoëspoed spoorverbinding

Die … is verantwoordelik vir verlof en nuwe aanstellings.
- ☐ menslikehulpbronbestuurder
- ☐ menslike hulpbron bestuurder
- ☐ menslike hulpbron-bestuurder
- ☐ menslike hulpbronbestuurder

Weet jy dat 'monetêrebeleidsvergadering', 'hoëspoedspoorverbinding' en 'menslikehulpbronbestuurder' die regte antwoorde was en weet jy dat hierdie woorde as 'samestellende samestellings' beskryf word?

Volgens die *Afrikaanse woordelys en spelreëls* (2017:721–722) is samestellende samestellings een van die vyf soorte komplekse of gelede woorde in Afrikaans, saam met afleidings en fleksievorms (bv. ontwater), samestellende afleidings (bv. ondergronds), samestellings (bv. biologie) en woordgroepsamestellings (bv. laat-maar-loop-houding).

Die *AWS* (2017:721) omskryf dan 'n samestellende samestelling as ''n samestelling waarvan die bepalergedeelte bestaan uit 'n woordgroep van byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord plus selfstandige naamwoord'. En die voorbeelde wat gelys word, is: korttermynhulp, tweedevlakregering, tweetermynstelsel en veelvuldigekeusevraag.

As 'n mens hierdie voorbeelde ontleed, is die dele van die samestelling duideliker:

- korttermynversekering: (bepaler: b.nw. 'kort' + s.nw. 'termyn') + (s.nw. 'versekering')
- tweedevlakregering: (bepaler: rangtelwoord 'tweede' + s.nw. 'vlak') + (s.nw. 'regering')
- tweetermynstelsel: (bepaler: hooftelwoord 'twee' + s.nw. 'termyn') + (s.nw. 'stelsel')
- veelvuldigekeusevraag: (bepaler: b.nw. 'veelvuldige' + s.nw. 'keuse') + (s.nw. 'vraag')

Die ontleding toon aan dat die semantiese verband tussen die twee dele van die bepaler (die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord en die selfstandige naamwoord) nouer is as die semantiese verband tussen die selfstandige naamwoord wat deel van die bepaler is, en die selfstandige naamwoord wat bepaal word.

Hierdie ontleding toon ook aan dat die twee dele van die bepaler (d.w.s. die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord en die selfstandige naamwoord) as woordgroep gewoonlik los geskryf word. In Afrikaans word die byvoeglike naamwoord en die telwoord immers altyd los van die selfstandige naamwoord geskryf (kort termyn, tweede vlak, twee termyn(e), veelvuldige keuse). Die skryfprobleem wat by samestellende samestellings opduik, is dikwels juis hieraan toe te skryf. Dit is belangrik om in gedagte te hou dat hierdie soort samestelling uit 'n woordgroep van telwoord of byvoeglike naamwoord plus selfstandige naamwoord (wat as woordgroep dus gewoonlik los geskryf word) bestaan wat gesamentlik verbind met 'n verdere selfstandige naamwoord. ›
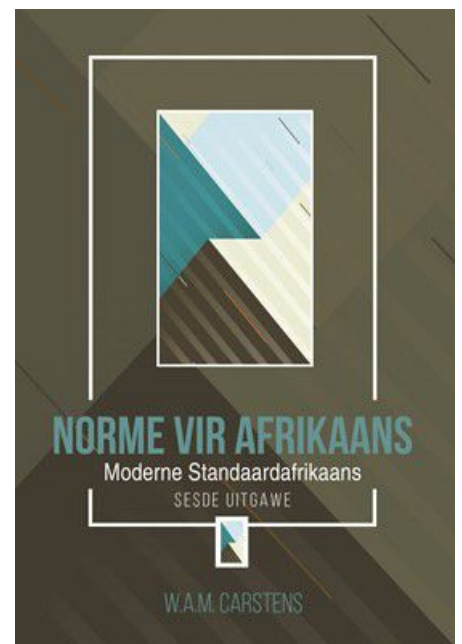
2. Is daar 'n taalreël wat samestellende samestellings bereël?

Ja, twee reëls (12.6 en 15.27) in die *AWS* gee duidelike riglyne oor samestellende samestellings.

In hoofstuk 12 van die *AWS*, wat oor koppeltekens handel, vind 'n mens reël 12.6 (2017:82) onder die opskrif 'Lang samestellings' wat die gebruik van koppeltekens by samestellende samestellings bepaal:

> In samestellende samestellings word 'n koppelteken nie tussen die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord en die daaropvolgende selfstandige naamwoord geskryf nie, tensy die opeenhoping van vokaalletters dit vereis.

Die voorbeelde wat daar aangebied word, plaas die klem op die korrekte gebruik van die koppelteken:

- ekonomieseklaspassasier (of ekonomieseklas-passasier, maar nie *ekonomiese-klaspassasier nie)
- informelesektorbedrywighede (of informelesektor-bedrywighede, maar nie *informele-sektorbedrywighede nie)
- intensiewesorgeenheid (of intensiewesorg-eenheid, maar nie *intensiewe-sorgeenheid nie)
- maatskaplikewerkstudente (of maatskaplikewerk-studente, maar nie *maatskaplike-werkstudente nie)
- en voorbeelde van opeenhoping van vokaalletters wat die gebruik van die koppelteken noodsaak: ekonomiese-eenheidsbeplanning, elektriese-impedansiemetode, intellektuele-eiendomsreg en lae-inkomstebehuising

In die opmerkings wat op die reël volg, word daar spesifiek verwys na die nou semantiese verband tussen die twee dele van die bepaler (my onderstreping):

> Bostaande tipe samestelling, wat dikwels bestaan uit 'n byvoeglike naamwoord + selfstandige naamwoord + selfstandige naamwoord (byvoorbeeld **sekondêre** + **skool** + **leerling**), word vas geskryf (byvoorbeeld **sekondêreskoolleerling**) <u>omdat die byvoeglike naamwoord die eerste selfstandige naamwoord bepaal en nie die tweede nie</u>.

Die opmerking bepaal verder dat as die skryfvorm van hierdie samestellende samestelling na die oordeel van die gebruiker leesbaarheidsprobleme weens die lengte van die samestelling kan oplewer, 'n leesbaarheidskoppelteken gebruik kan word. Die plasing van hierdie leesbaarheidskoppelteken is dan ooreenkomstig reël 12.6. (Om die samestellende samestelling aan die einde van 'n reëltjie af te breek, kan 'n koppelteken wel tussen die twee dele van die bepaler geplaas word), bv.

> ekonomiese-klaspassasier

As die samestellende samestelling egter nie leesprobleme skep sonder 'n koppelteken nie, laat die koppelteken weg.

In hoofstuk 15 van die *AWS*, wat oor los en vas skryf handel, bereël reël 15.27 (2017:184) samestellende samestellings soos volg:

> Indien 'n woordgroep van byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord plus selfstandige naamwoord wat op sigself nie gekoppel word nie, in 'n samestelling optree as bepaler by 'n volgende selfstandige naamwoord, word al drie elemente van die samestelling vas aan mekaar geskryf.

Weereens word daarop gewys dat die semantiese verband tussen die dele van die bepaler nouer is en dat die bepaler as geheel die selfstandige naamwoord bepaal (2017:184, met my onderstreping):

> In 'n samestellende samestelling bepaal die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord die eerste selfstandige naamwoord <u>en dié twee gesamentlik bepaal die laaste selfstandige naamwoord</u>, byvoorbeeld **kort** en **termyn** bepaal saam **voordele**: **korttermynvoordele**, **maatskaplike** en **werk** bepaal saam **studente**: **maatskaplikewerkstudente**.

Voorbeelde van woordgroepe bestaande uit 'n byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord en selfstandige naamwoord wat saam met 'n selfstandige naamwoord 'n samestellende samestelling vorm, word daarna ter illustrasie van die reël aangebied (2017:185).

3. Is daar enige uitsondering op die skryfwyse van samestellende samestellings?

Opmerking (d) van reël 15.27 (2017:185) bepaal dat hierdie reël nie van toepassing is op meerledige geografiese of ander eiename wat uit twee of meer losgeskrewe dele bestaan en waarvan die hoofdele gewoonlik met hoofletters begin nie.

In hierdie gevalle word die spasie tussen die eerste twee dele (die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord en die selfstandige naamwoord wat met hoofletters begin) behou en die meerledige geografiese of eienaam word met of sonder 'n koppelteken aan die selfstandige naamwoord wat bepaal word, gekoppel.

Voorbeelde om hierdie uitsondering te illustreer is byvoorbeeld:
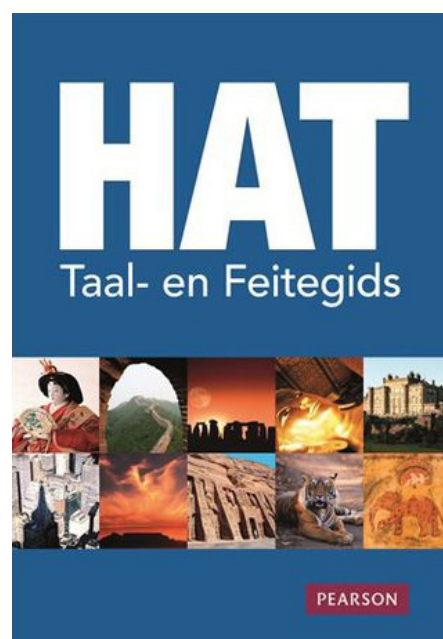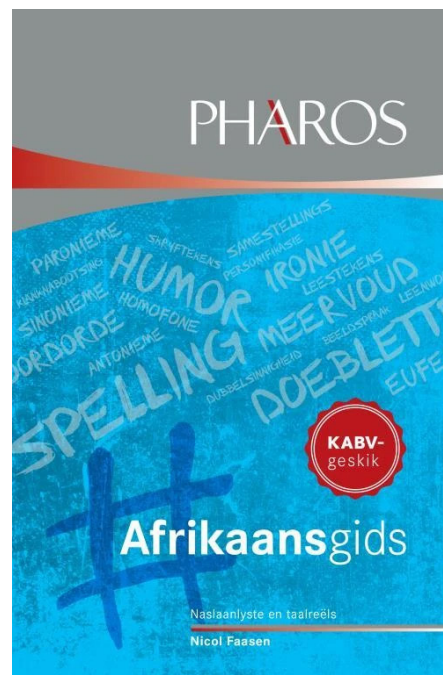
- Demokratiese Alliansie + kandidaat = Demokratiese Alliansiekandidaat of Demokratiese Alliansie-kandidaat
- Historiese Monumente + kommissie = Historiese Monumentekommissie of Historiese Monumente-kommissie
- Middellandse See + gebied = Middellandse Seegebied of Middellandse See-gebied
- Nasionale Vrouemonument + kommissie = Nasionale Vrouemonumentkommissie of Nasionale Vrouemonument-kommissie
- Tweede Konsilie + besluit = Tweede Konsiliebesluit of Tweede Konsilie-besluit

Opmerking (e) van reël 15.27 (2017:186) wys verder op die skryfwyse wanneer 'n samestellende samestelling 'n afstandsamestelling word. In hierdie geval word die samestellende samestelling deur die invoeging van 'n byvoeglike naamwoord geskei en 'n afstandskoppelteken word benodig. ›

Voorbeelde om hierdie skryfwyse te illustreer is byvoorbeeld:

- derdejaarstudent + teologiese = derdejaar- teologiese student
- hoëspoedwasmasjien + outomatiese = hoëspoed- outomatiese wasmasjien
- langtermynplan + finansiële = langtermyn- finansiële plan

4. Kan 'n samestellende samestelling verkeerd geskryf word?

Die nouer semantiese verband tussen die twee dele van die bepaler van 'n samestellende samestelling hou betekenisimplikasies in. As 'n mens egter verkeerdelik 'n spasie tussen die twee dele van die bepaler invoeg, kan die woord 'n heel ander betekenis kry. Vergelyk byvoorbeeld die verwarrende of verskillende betekenisse wat 'n spasie tot gevolg het:

- gouemedaljewenner (goue + medalje + wenner) = 'n wenner van 'n goue medalje
  *goue medaljewenner = 'n medaljewenner wat van goud gemaak is
- langafstandatleet (lang + afstand + atleet) = 'n atleet wat lang afstande aflê
  *lang afstandatleet = 'n afstandatleet wat besonder lank is
- rooiwynglase (rooi + wyn + glase) = glase wat vir rooiwyn bedoel is
  maar rooi wynglase = wynglase wat rooi is (nie groen of blou nie) en wynglase wat nie noodwendig vir rooiwyn bedoel is nie

Die beklemtoning van die dele van 'n samestellende samestelling help 'n mens ook om die regte betekenis te bepaal. As 'n mens 'n spasie tussen die woorddele van 'n samestellende samestelling plaas, kan 'n mens ook verkeerdelik die woorde elk met hul eie klem uitspreek, terwyl 'n samestellende samestelling eintlik net een klem het. Vergelyk byvoorbeeld:

rooi wynglase (rooi en wyn het dieselfde klem)
rooiwynglase (rooi het meer klem as wyn)

Die fout wat gewoonlik met samestellende samestellings gemaak word, soos hier bo

Bronne

Carstens, W.A.M. 2018 (6e uitgawe). *Norme vir Afrikaans: Moderne Standaardafrikaans*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Faasen, N. 2018. *Afrikaansgids*. Kaapstad: Pharos.

Luther, J. (uitg.) 2013. *HAT Taal- en feitegids*. Kaapstad: Pearson.

Taalkommissie van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns. 2017 (11e uitgawe). *Afrikaanse woordelys en spelreëls*. Kaapstad: Pharos. (*AWS*)

uitgelig, is dat die byvoeglike naamwoord los geskryf word.

Die teenoorgestelde gebeur egter ook soms wanneer die byvoeglike naamwoord vas geskryf word, terwyl dit los moet wees. Vergelyk byvoorbeeld:

privaat kragverskaffers en
*privaatkragverskaffers

In hierdie geval bepaal die byvoeglike naamwoord 'privaat' nie die eerste selfstandige naamwoord nie (nie privaat krag nie), maar die twee selfstandige naamwoorde saam (kragverskaffer).

Ter wille van die regte betekenis en die korrekte ortografie moet 'n mens altyd na die semantiese verband tussen die dele kyk.

Vra jouself af watter selfstandige naamwoord deur die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord bepaal word. Het die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoord betrekking op die eerste of tweede selfstandige naamwoord? As die byvoeglike naamwoord of telwoorddeel die eerste selfstandige naamwoord bepaal en daar nie hoofletters of 'n afstandskoppelteken ter sprake is nie, skryf die woord vas as 'n samestellende samestelling.

### 5. Waar kan ek nog hulp oor samestellende samestellings kry?

Benewens die omvattende riglyne in die *AWS* word samestellende samestellings ook in die volgende toeganglike bronne toegelig: Wannie Carstens verwys na samestellende samestellings in *Norme vir Afrikaans* (2018:234–235), Nicol Faasen bespreek samestellende samestellings in die *Afrikaansgids* (2018:288) en Tom McLachlan skenk aandag aan samestellende samestellings saam met ander samestellings in Afrikaans in die *HAT Taal- en feitegids* (2013:100–101). 🖋

#KompetisieCompetition

Afrikaanse boekprys en kompetisievraag
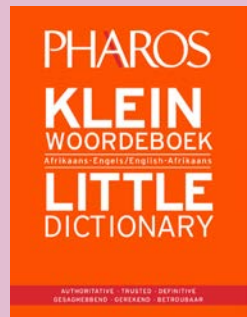
The Pharos *Klein woordeboek/Little dictionary* boasts a brand-new orange cover!

It is compact and wonderful to have as a quick reference guide for thousands of contemporary words and expressions, synonyms, derivatives and compounds, plus the names of South Africa's nine provinces and 11 official languages, which makes this dictionary very useful. This obviously benefits not only Afrikaans speakers, but the bilingual community as well.

We nevertheless thought we should put the competition question in Afrikaans:
Waarom skryf ons soms 'n byvoeglike naamwoord vas aan 'n naamwoord?

We thank Arleen Stone from Pharos for suggesting the question for our competition and for sponsoring this gift book. *PEGboard* appreciates Pharos's interest in the Guild.

If you would like to win a copy of the dictionary, please send your answer to Wilna at wilnaswart7@gmail.com to reach her by Friday 26 February 2021. 🖋

Afrikaans and Flemish: Close siblings, long-lost cousins or comrades-in-arms?

Ken McGillivray

The Flemings (or Flemish) are Belgium's ethnic majority who live in Flanders, northern Belgium. The language is Flemish – designated by some as Belgian-Dutch or South-Dutch – and now conclusively proved to be the origin of Afrikaans.[1]

During the period from the 9th to the 12th centuries the two Flemish and Walloon cultures of Belgium developed independently. The 14th century saw the rise of the cities of Bruges, Ghent and Antwerp as major international centres of European trade, music and art. From the 16th century both Flanders and the French-speaking Walloons to the south were ruled by a series of foreign powers: Spain, France and, finally, the Netherlands. The revolt of 1830 against Dutch rule then led to the independence of the Kingdom of Belgium.

For most of the 19th century the Walloons dominated culture, politics and economics. This was due in most part to the rich coal and steel industries of the south, whereas Flanders remained primarily an agricultural area.

The struggle for the acceptance of Flemish has much in common with the struggle of Afrikaans for recognition as a language of learning. The cultural dominance of the French-speaking Walloons meant that Flemish was considered a *keukentaal* or the language of the uneducated. (Sound familiar?) Attempts were made to give the language equal status to French (difficult to accept that the first Afrikaans Bible was published as late as 1933; however, only by the 1930s were the Flemish finally able to have their language legalised in education, the courts and local government. Its final recognition as the sole official language of northern Belgium came in 1938 – more than a century after Belgium's independence.

Changes in the 20th century which saw the rise of the economic power of Flanders – owing in no small part to the growth of the Port of Antwerp into what is now the fifth largest port in the world – have drastically inverted the power pyramid. This led to the Flemings and Walloons gaining political, social and cultural autonomy over their respective regions in the 1960s. Furthermore, in 1993, Belgium's constitution was amended, making Flanders and Wallonia self-ruling regions within the Kingdom – finally ensuring that any official government or municipal documents in Flanders have to be issued in Flemish only (likewise in French only in the south).

This all has striking contemporary parallels not only to the struggle of Afrikaans against the hegemony of English (dating from the early 1800s), which led eventually to the 1925 proclamation of Afrikaans as an official language,[2] but also to the ongoing struggle of our indigenous languages (not forgetting South African Sign Language [SASL] and Braille) for their equal status as languages of learning in South Africa as laid out in ❯

our Constitution.[3] The woeful record of the Pan South African Language Board's[4] and provincial governments' lack of significant progress in this area since the 1994 dawning of the democratic era is to be regretted by all language practitioners of whatever cultural background.

But I digress … Have you heard the one about the wordsmith who walked into a bank and at the *balie* was confronted by this sign: *Cash is passé*? Which country, do you think, they were in? South Africa? England? France?

Actually, none of these. The bank is KBC[5] and you don't get more *echt* Flemish than that! But how's that possible, you may ask? Well, *cash* is just that in Flemish ('kontant' is unrecognisable); *is* could be English or Dutch and *passé* is of course French (meaning: Cash not accepted). And somehow this trio symbolises the 'ware potjiekos' that is Flemish, as spoken in Flanders!

The diversity of different Flemish dialects also complicates the issue, meaning there is a variety of spoken languages. These range from those showing a distinct influence of English on the west coast – the Ostend to Zeebrugge coastline being popular English holiday destinations from early Victorian times (to the point that Marmite was a menu item!) – to the German-speaking cantons on the eastern border. This diversity can perhaps best be illustrated by *lunchen* in Ghent – a mere 20-minute train ride west of Antwerp – and not understanding the waitress's local dialect. This explains the 'hindernis' to learning the language (or, rather, unlearning Afrikaans) entails. Which set us wondering: What are the differences?

First, it is common for Flemish speakers to use simple verb forms to describe activities one would normally associate only with nouns. In contrast to Afrikaans where one would say 'Ek gaan swem', Flemish sportspeople (and those who regard *winkelen* as recreation!) can *fietsen*, *golfen*, *netballen*, *skateboarden*, *tennissen*, *voetballen* and *zwemmen* – or *sporten* generally. An entrepreneur can also *starten* or *runnen* a business. And an all-time favourite summer activity is *terrassen* – sitting in the sun at a sidewalk café drinking (more than likely, beer or *kriek*!).

In Flanders, working life is characterised by many borrowings, and so *manage* is, well, *manage*; a senior executive is a *top(man)*, who will probably participate in a *topconferentie* or even the odd *topoverleg* (high-level talks). They may even agree to an *interview* (*onderhoud* is maintenance, plain and simple) or appear at a *training* and carry their notes in a *map* (a folder) – a *folder* being a brochure or a leaflet! At a *training*, your *trainer* might make use of a *beamer* (a digital projector) and their excuse for arriving late might be that they were caught in the *files* on the *verkeersweg* (the queues of traffic on the highway); now, if only they and others had *carpoolen* and not *gecrashed*, that might not have been the case. Or perhaps they should have taken the *metro* (not the 'moltrein', unless it is the *Moltrein* – the train to Mol). Once underway, trainees will be asked to switch off their *gsm's* (cellphones) for the duration. During breaks, they may be able to warm up their 'boeretroos' in a *magnetron* (microwave oven) and discuss the latest *best sellers* they picked up at the *Boekebeurs* (the annual Antwerp Book Fair).[6]

And if you are *surfen* on the internet or *mailen* anyone an *e-mail* (email means enamel), you're expected to break up your text into more than one *alinea* (paragraph). A business may have a *magazijn* (stockroom – 'magasyn' would be where military hardware is stored) in which *stock* is stored, which could also be a multi-storied building boasting a *lift*.

Many other words also have different meanings in the two languages. For instance:

	in Afrikaans	in Flemish
'amper'	almost	hardly, scarcely, barely
'eerder'	rather	earlier, previously
'enkel'	single	only (*enkel volwassenen*)
'klomp'	whole lot of	clog (wooden shoe)
'gewoon'	usual, ordinary	common, usual, simply, just, as usual
'opgewonde' (n)	excited	excited, heated (debate), sexually aroused

And just as 'maak' is so universally used in so many contexts in Afrikaans, so the same can be said for *doet* or *doe* in Flemish – it can mean do, take, close, make, put, hurt or touch, help:

Je doet de deur of venster/raam dicht – you close the door or window
Je doet de lig af – you turn the light off
Mensen doen laggen – make people laugh
Doen dit in je zak – put it in your pocket
Er is niets aan te doen – I cannot help it OR I can do nothing about it (in the matter), as opposed to 'Jy kan niks daaraan doen nie.'
Wat doet hij? – what is his business (trade, profession)?
Wat is hier te doen? – what's going on? OR What's up?
Vreemd doen – act strangely
Hoelang doe je over dat werk? – how long does it take you?

Some other Flemish words that are likely to befuddle or trip up the Afrikaans speaker include:

beu – fed up or tired of, sick of – *Ik ben beu die muziek*
even – just, a bit (of): *even pause* = a short break (eg a sign on a bus, just when you are in a hurry!)
er – the equivalent of 'daar': *als ik er al van weet*
jarig, as in *hij bent jarig* – it's his birthday
leuk – fun, jolly, cool: *Ik vind het leuk* – I think that's funny; *Die is leuk, zeg!* – That's a good one!
stipt – exact (cf 'stip aangekyk', 'stiptelik' [punctual])
tof – great, fantastic, super
vrij – rather, fairly, pretty; *vrij goed* = pretty good
zot – foolish, crazy, ridiculous, insane; *iets zot* – something crazy (cf ''n sot' [idiot])

Pronunciation, of course, can be a huge problem and enunciation is perhaps even more vital in Flemish than in Afrikaans. A major barrier is the difference between the use of the *v*, the *f*, the double *oo*, the *ing* and the *itie* in Flemish and Afrikaans. This is always the most prominent 'verklap' for an ex-pat 'Kapenaar'. Image the scene: just when you think you have all your constructions, tenses and vocabulary one hundred per cent 'klinkklaar', you ask a shopkeeper a question and the only response is: *Bent meneer Zuid-Afrikaans?* What follows inevitably is an immediate switch to English. So much for all that 'geswoeg'!

What the two languages do have in common is the widespread use of the diminutive form, though, perhaps it is even more pervasive in Flemish, formed by the suffix -*eke*, -*ke* or -*je*:

Join me for a biertje, een bolleke of een glasje wijn, of misschien een koffietje. Moet het vormpje of briefje nie plooien. Welke boekske wil je lessen?

All this means machine-translator aficionados beware! Meanwhile, this 'afvlerkeendjie-Engelsman' will just 'neuk maar voort'. 🍃

Notes

1. WAM Carstens (with EH Raidt) *Die storie van Afrikaans: Uit Europa en van Afrika* Deel 1 (2017) and Deel 2 (2019) (Protea Boekhuis).
2. Official Languages of the Union Act, 1925 (Act 8 of 1925).
3. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.
4. Established by the Pan South African Language Board Act, 1995 (Act 59 of 1995) (amended by Act 10 of 1999), and referred to in section 6 of the Constitution, where language rights are described. The function of the Pan South African Language Board was stated to be to develop the 11 official languages and to promote multilingualism in South Africa.
5. The bank's Antwerp headquarters are in the *Boerentoren*, an art deco masterpiece from 1931. This was Europe's first skyscraper; overtopped in height by Stalinist structures in Moscow and Warsaw only in 1953.
6. A sign of a highly literate nation? The annual, two-week *Boekenbeurs* would have had its 84th showing this year had it not been cancelled owing to the COVID-19 crisis.

The PEG mentoring scheme offers a world of opportunity

Why consider a mentorship?

Do you want Full Membership of PEG? Do you have a degree in publishing studies or have you attended short courses in copy-editing and proofreading? But what now? Have you been editing without formal training for years and now need to equip yourself for a career or genre change? Did you move from an in-house position to freelance, and feel you need support? You have the required knowledge and skills but you probably lack two important ingredients for success as a professional practitioner: experience and self-confidence. Add to that guidance and support. This is precisely where a PEG mentorship is regarded as a great investment in yourself.

What is mentoring, and how does it differ from training, coaching or counselling?

Training usually involves one or many interactions, a defined syllabus or course content and a fixed course duration, predetermined exercises and some form of evaluation. *Coaching* normally entails an expert collaborating with an individual who needs to work on a specific problem, weakness or skill. One resorts to *counselling* typically to resolve a specific personal or professional problem.

While *mentoring* can include elements of all three of these interventions, it is different from them all. An important aspect of mentorships is that they are mentee-driven. You identify your needs and you will be given a suitable mentor with whom to partner, who will focus on your needs, deal with your weaknesses (including a lack of self-confidence) and employ your strengths.

'My mentor has guided me through my career change in a way I would never have had the confidence to do alone.'

Formal, informal, 'semi-structured', 'reverse' mentoring?

Mentorships can be categorised as formal, informal or 'structured', even 'reverse'.

Professional associations of editors such as PEG offer a different model, one that can best be described as 'semi-structured'. Through PEG's mentoring scheme, we find suitable mentors from among our more seasoned members and, through coordinators, help to match mentees to mentors.

The Guild stipulates the fee for a mentorship and its duration, providing a safety net where difficulties may arise in a mentorship. However, the process is largely mentee-driven. The mentor ensures that the mentee's objectives are met and that the momentum of the mentorship is maintained. Many mentorships are extended beyond the initial formal period by mutual agreement, some even developing into firm friendships.

'Being mentored successfully through a number of real texts and exercises has offered me professional peace of mind.'

A more recent phenomenon in the field is 'reverse' mentoring. Someone with specialised knowledge that the mentor needs to acquire hooks up with them for that specific purpose. The mentee may be young and generally inexperienced but may nevertheless be the 'expert' in their field (for example at using MS Word Styles or cloud-storage technology?).

Online or e-mentoring

With so many practitioners, especially during the COVID-19 era, working as freelancers and using electronic media such as email, WhatsApp and Zoom, a natural development from the traditional face-to-face mentorship has become either an exclusively virtual mentorship or a blend of the two. In a large country such as South Africa, it is often difficult for mentors and mentees to meet in person. ❯

'Having a mentor – someone who is more experienced or has greater expertise – can really help an editor along the way.'

The result is asynchronous mentoring across or between continents, where it is convenient to communicate with one another by email at variable times across different time zones, and where Zoom, Skype or WhatsApp meetings can be arranged at mutually suitable times, no matter who lives where in the world.

Lifelong autonomous learning

If ever there is a profession to which the concept of 'lifelong learning' applies, it is ours! We continually need to keep abreast of linguistic developments, especially those deviations from the prescriptive norms. And when Client A has followed the Harvard style of referencing but new Client B requires us to standardise on the Vancouver, MLA or APA house styles, we have to adapt if we are to survive professionally.

But we also have to be flexible enough to switch between disciplines (that is, from earth sciences to archaeology to biomedical research). We as copy editors and proofreaders should never stop acquiring new knowledge and skills. Continuous professional development (CPD) through mentoring is recommended for a confidential, nurturing, supportive experience that one can fit into a busy schedule.

Much about our learning as text editors is 'autonomous'. It is on this basis that successful mentoring occurs: mentees are autonomous learners whether they are expressing their need for mentoring or working on an editing assignment set by their mentor, selecting the content and determining the pace of the mentorship.

PEG's mentoring offer

These are the minimum requirements for entering a PEG mentorship:

● Membership of the Guild; and
● The completion of formal training in copy-editing and proofreading.

Duration: A minimum of 10 hours of interaction time, spread over a maximum of five months, at times and intervals agreed upon by the two parties.

Cost: The cost in 2020/21 (effective from 1 March 2020) is R2 600.

This amount is payable as a non-refundable registration fee of R600 plus the balance of R2 000 upon acceptance as a mentee. Arrangements may be made for payment in two instalments.

'I've been able to grow faster within a safer space than I could have done on my own.'

Performance report and evaluation

At the end of a successful mentorship, both mentor and mentee evaluate their experience and the mentor compiles a report on the mentee's performance. The mentee is issued with a certificate on the successful completion of the mentorship.

Positive outcome of a mentorship

The successful completion of a PEG mentorship fulfils one of the criteria for Full Membership of the Guild.

Contact details for the PEG mentoring scheme:

Email mentoring@editors.org.za for further information or to register or visit PEG's website at https://www.editors.org.za/Mentoring.aspx.

We look forward to hearing from you. 🌱


#Mentees

Successfully completed mentorships

PEG warmly congratulates the following members who successfully completed their mentorships in 2020:

1. Amour Venter
2. Nathaniel Davidson
3. Marisa Burger
4. Rachel Read
5. Cathy Laing
6. Delphine Hlungwane
7. Carrie Milton
8. Morgan Engelbrecht
9. Nicole Lochner 🌱

'Pretty darn frustrating' or PDF: Best practices for text mark-up in Adobe Acrobat Reader DC
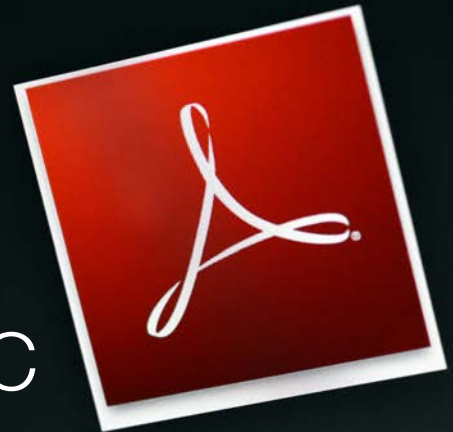
Laetitia Sullivan

The PDF is the 'lingua franca' of documents in the age of the internet. For editors, it is therefore very important to know how to indicate text corrections in a PDF. Adobe Acrobat Reader DC is the most widely used (free!) tool for marking up corrections in PDF while protecting the integrity of the original document. This article provides a brief overview of its main mark-up tools and techniques all editors should know.

The PDF is the 'lingua franca' of documents in the age of the internet.

Reasons for following a certain mark-up technique

Few editors may realise that Adobe Acrobat Reader DC and InDesign CC are part of the same collection of software: Adobe Creative Cloud. InDesign CC is the industry standard for designing anything from books and reports to brochures and adverts, and much more. Its latest version has a function that many graphic designers and layout artists have been clamouring for, for years – the ability to import text changes directly from a PDF into InDesign without having to wade through hundreds, if not thousands, of editor mark-ups and manually applying them one by one. (DTP Tools' Annotations plug-in can import notes, but not text changes.)

There are some caveats, however: the new import function *only* works for PDFs that were exported from InDesign CC 2019 or newer. The Annotations plug-in from DTP Tools can import comments from earlier versions of InDesign CC, and *only* corrections using three specific tools (Strikethrough, Replace Text, Insert Text) will import directly. Several bugs in the software still need to be ironed out as this is its first iteration, and very long documents (as books tend to be) might cause the program to crash or lag.

For us as editors, it is worth knowing how to use at least the three main mark-up tools correctly, in order to make the importing of corrections less of a chore for our clients, as well as to improve our own speed and accuracy (because time is money).

Ŧ Strikethrough   Ŧ₽ Replace Text   Ŧ Insert Text

The three main mark-up tools for directly importing text changes

First things first

If you wish to differentiate between different editors or reviewers or keep comments anonymous, it's best to change the reviewer identity *before* you start marking up changes, as it will be very time-consuming to do so afterwards. Here are the steps to follow:

- With the PDF open in Acrobat Reader, click on Comment in the sidebar on the right (this causes a Comment toolbar to open at the top).
- Using the mouse, select a word for deletion. On the Comment toolbar, click on Strikethrough (the fourth icon from the left).

- A correction box will appear in the side bar on the right. Right click on the author's name in the correction box and select Properties > General.
- At Author, insert the preferred name, eg 'Anonymous', or leave it blank.
- Tick Make Properties Default (this setting does not affect previously entered comments).
- Click OK.

Using the three importable mark-up tools

Despite the fact that only crossed out, replaced and inserted text can be imported into InDesign, it's worth repeating that learning how to use these three mark-up tools will go a long way towards establishing 'good habits' when it comes to marking up corrections in PDF. There is merit in learning how to use the keyboard to mark-up corrections, although for the purposes of this article, I'll be using the mouse only. So, let's look at each of the three tools in turn.

Strikethrough:
This tool allows you to delete a letter, word or phrase by scoring a red line through the selected text. Here are the steps to follow for using the Strikethrough tool:

- Using the mouse, select the text to be deleted.
- On the Comment toolbar, click on Strikethrough (the fourth icon from the left).
- OR right click the selected word and select Strikethrough Text.

Tip: Remember to delete any punctuation or extra spacing after the word or phrase to avoid unnecessary spaces or to prevent text from running together in your final copy.

Replace Text:
This tool is easily the number-one tool in the editor's mark-up toolbox because it performs three functions in one: inserting, deleting and replacing text. On the Comment toolbar, it's the fifth icon from the left. Do yourself a favour and customise your Comment toolbar ❯

Anonymising or changing reviewer identity

Using the Replace Text tool

Using the Strikethrough tool

(right click on the toolbar and select Customize Comment Tools) so that it only shows your most used tools, or at least arrange your tools so that this tool ends up in first position.

Here are the steps to follow for using the Replace Text tool:

● Using the mouse, select the text to be replaced (to quickly select only one word, double click that word).
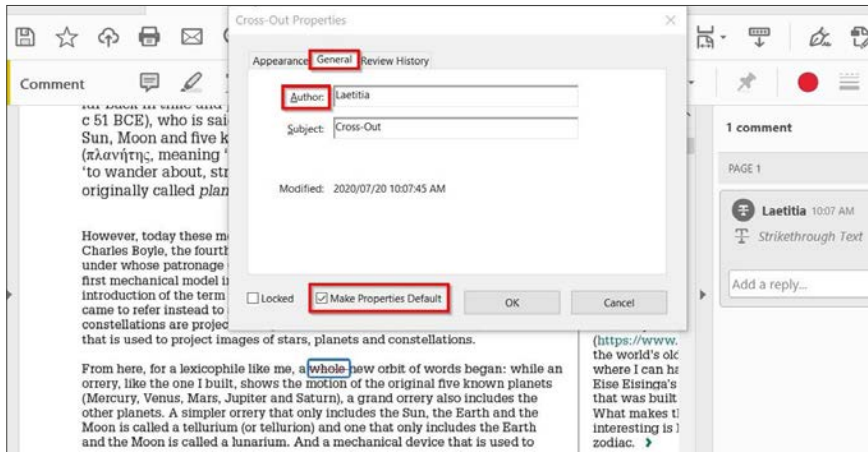● On the Comment toolbar, click on Replace Text (the fifth icon from the left).
● OR right click the selected word and select Add Note to Replace Text.
● A correction box will appear in the side bar on the right. Type the new text into the correction box and click Post.

Tip: Don't use the Strikethrough tool and the Insert Text tool together to replace text. It will only create unnecessary correction boxes in the sidebar, and you run the risk of changes not importing correctly into InDesign.
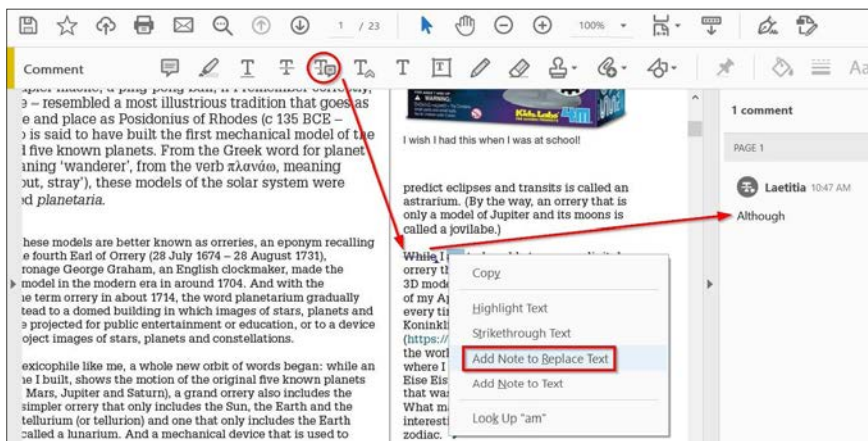
Insert Text:
This tool allows you to add text, spacing, paragraph breaks and even special characters. Here are the steps to follow for using the Insert Text tool:

● Using the mouse, place the cursor where you want to insert the new text.
● On the Comment toolbar, click on Insert Text (the sixth icon from the left).
● A correction box will appear in the side bar on the right. Type the new text (plus necessary spacing!) into the correction box and click Post.

To add a space or paragraph break, follow the same steps as for inserting new text, but instead of typing any text in the correction box, simply press the Spacebar or press Enter and click Post. The caret mark will appear, followed by a blue symbol that indicates a space or a paragraph mark. For a space, it's a square bracket that maybe had too much to drink and had to take a nap lying down. For a paragraph mark, it's the more familiar pilcrow. Both symbols may seem like they're in the wrong spot, but don't panic – they will import as they should!

Tip: In general, if a special character has a keyboard shortcut in Microsoft Word, this will also work when typing in the correction box (eg ALT + 0150 for an en dash or ALT + 0176 for the degree symbol).

Formatting text in the correction box

As with all things PDF, there is more than one way to indicate formatting of new or replacement text. Here are the steps to follow for indicating different text styles such as **bold** or *italic*:

● Follow the steps as for using the Replace Text or Insert Text tool.
● *Before* typing the replacement text or new text in the correction box, press CTRL + B for bold or CTRL + I for italic to activate your formatting choice.
● Press the shortcut again to deactivate your formatting choice.
● OR: Type the text in the correction box, then select the text, and press CTRL + B or CTRL + I.

To make formatting changes to text that is already in the correction box, follow these steps: ❯
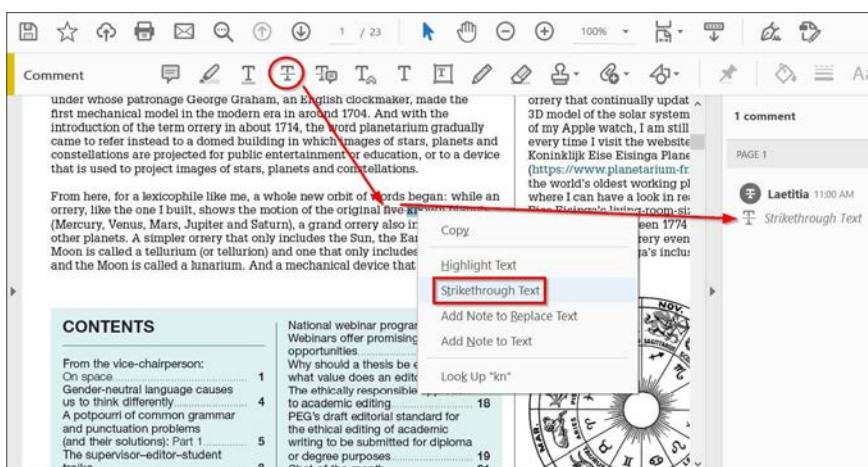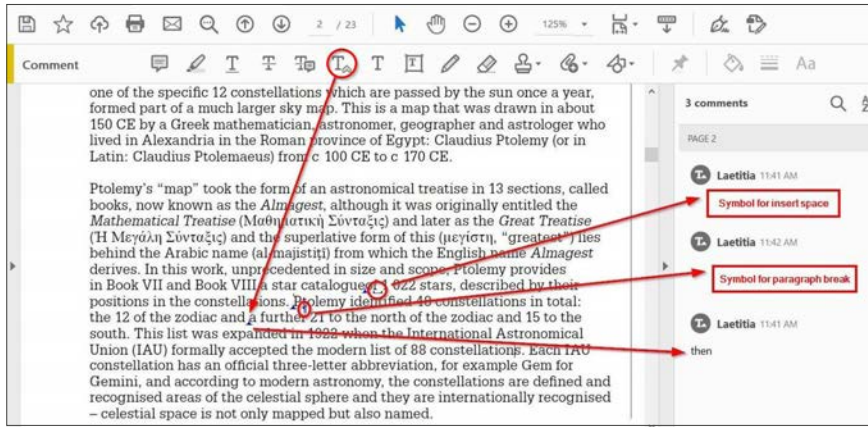
Using the Insert Text tool
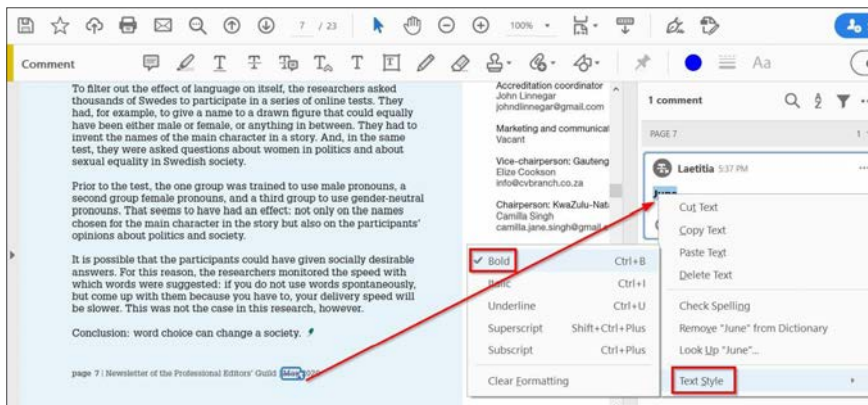
Formatting text in the Comments sidebar

- Double click the relevant correction box to open the mark-up comment.
- Select the text that you wish to format, right click on the text and select Text Style > Bold (or Italic).

Tip: Formatting such as bold or italic can be seen by the layout artist in InDesign, but will *not* be imported directly.

Other useful (non-importable) tools

There are several other tools to indicate text changes and other changes on PDF, but it is very important to remember that changes indicated with these tools will *not* be imported directly into InDesign, and therefore will *not* change the text automatically in InDesign. Here are some of my favourites:

|		
Highlight	Highlight	• To indicate formatting changes • To indicate text for comment
Text Callout	Text Callout (under Drawing Tools on the Comment toolbar)	• To comment on graphics or locked text • To indicate text movement
Line	Line (under Drawing Tools on the Comment toolbar)	• To indicate text alignment • To indicate graphics to be deleted
Stamps ▾	Stamps	• To insert traditional proofreading symbols (eg Nikki M's PDF Proofreading Marks) • To indicate corrections not easily shown by available tools

Tip: To access the Drawing Tools dropdown list, you may need to click three dots on the right of the Comment toolbar.

Tip: Drawing marks can be grouped to make them appear in a single correction box. After adding drawing marks, click and hold CTRL while clicking each drawing mark, then right click one of the marks and select Group.

The Sticky Note is a bad idea!

Long-time editor, I see you! Step away from the Sticky Note! The Sticky Note is a very bad tool and should *not* be used to indicate text changes. Why? Because it can visually block text, and it has a tendency to move around, ending up in the wrong place most of the time, making for a very imprecise way of indicating changes at word or sentence level. It should only be used as a type of electronic Post-it note for general comments or global changes at page level.

Note the Sticky Note tip!

Tip: Warning: Use this tip with caution! Can't bear to let go of the Sticky Note? CTRL + 6 is the keyboard shortcut to quickly place a Sticky Note.

Creating a summary of PDF comments

Sometimes editors will find themselves working with clients with limited technical know-how. It is therefore important to know how to display editorial comments when a client has difficulty dealing with mark-up comments, or when experiencing software compatibility issues. Summarised comments can also be used as a record or for version tracking of proofs.

Here are the steps to follow for creating a summary of editorial comments:

- The comments print setting in Acrobat Reader is not enabled by default, so first go to Edit (in the top menu) > Preferences > Commenting, and tick the option 'Print notes and pop-ups'.
- Now open the Print dialog by clicking on File (in the top menu) > Print OR press CTRL + P.
- At the top of the Print dialog, make sure that Microsoft Print to PDF is selected as the printer.
- At the bottom of the Print dialog, under Comments & Forms, choose Document and Markups from the dropdown list.
- Click on Summarize Comments and then answer Yes.
- Acrobat Reader will process the comments in the background. When it is finished, the Print dialog will open again, with the print preview showing small numbered boxes next to the comments.
- Now press Print. A new PDF will be created with numbered comments on separate pages.

Tip: Mark-up one PDF page as a sample and ask the client *at the start of the project* if your technique will suit their workflow. This will avoid much unnecessary frustration down the road.

This was just a brief overview of the text mark-up possibilities of Adobe Acrobat Reader DC. For more comprehensive training on the software and best practices for indicating corrections in PDF, consider signing up for PEG's upcoming webinar (20 January 2021) on this specific topic. ✎
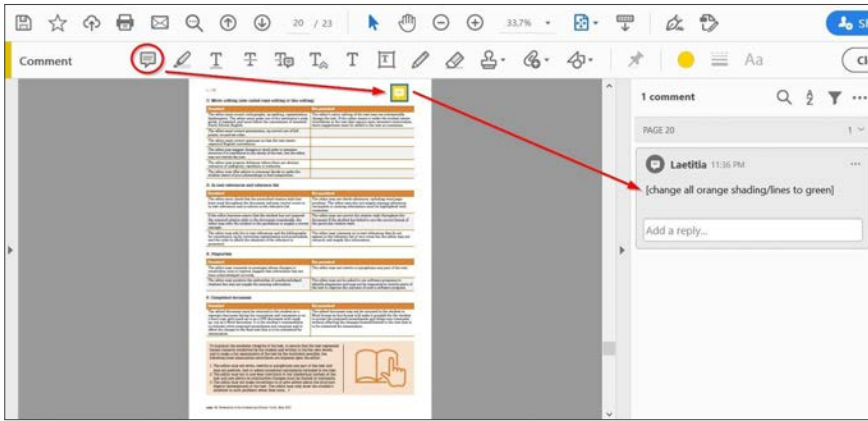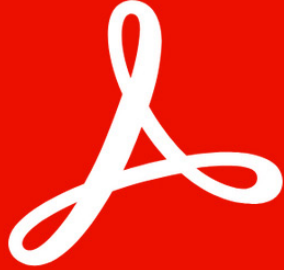
Use the Sticky Note only for general/global comments
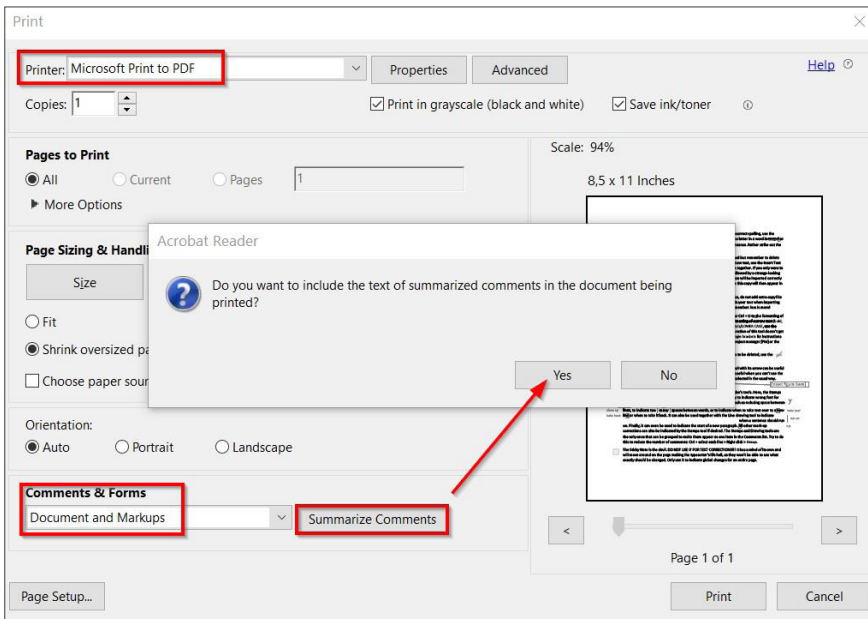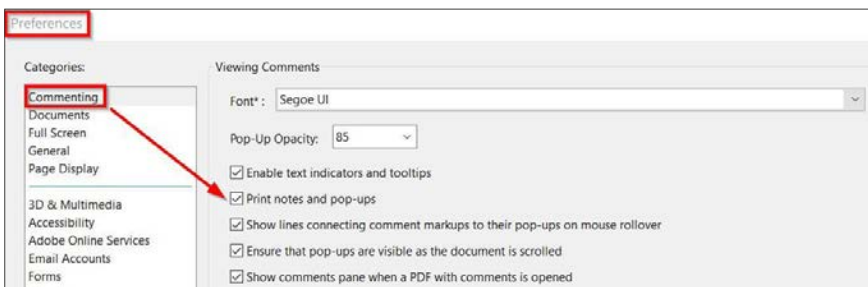
Creating a PDF comments summary

Adobe Acrobat Reader

What's included:

Anywhere PDF Productivity
Make it happen from anywhere, knowing you have the right PDF tools and files close at hand.

All-in-one form filling and e-signatures
Save time with Acrobat DC to quickly and easily get a form filled out, signed and sent - no printer, no paper, all digital - from anywhere, on any device. Acrobat DC is the all-in-one solution for filling & signing forms electronically and getting signatures from others - reliably, securely, and legally.

Maximize how PDFs work for you
What's your PDF: - Acrobat has a solution for every need from free desktop, mobile and online apps to the most complete PDF solution across desktop, web, and mobile. Start here.

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Note to readers: This serves as excellent preparation for the webinar on editing in PDF that Laetitia is presenting for PEG on 20 January 2021.

National webinar programme for 2021		
Online: January to August 2021		**Presenters:** Various
First quarter 2021	**Title: Proofreading on PDFs in Adobe Acrobat documents** Date: Wednesday 20 January 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: Laetitia Sullivan
	Title: Editing for the self-publishing market Date: Saturday 30 January 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: Sheena Carnie
	Title: Formatting with Styles in MS Word Date: Thursday 4 February 2021, 13:30–17:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: Monica Bosman
	Title: Branding and online marketing for freelance language practitioners Date: Tuesday 16 February 2021, 19:00–21:00 (to accommodate the 9-hour time difference) Presenter: Sarah Notley, Visual Designer, based in Denver, Colorado, USA	
	Title: PEG 2020 Accreditation Test (Part 1 – Grammar and editing) Date: Saturday 20 February 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand; or bring your 2020 test script along	Presenters: Cathy Robertson and John Linnegar
	Title: Developmental editing: What it entails; expanding your editorial repertoire Date: Wednesday 24 February 2021, 13:30–17:00 Material to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: Linda Pretorius
	Title: Editing for the self-publishing market Date: Thursday 4 March 2021, 13:30–17:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: Sheena Carnie
	Title: PEG 2020 Accreditation Test (Part 2 – Proofreading and general topics) Date: Saturday 13 March 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand; or bring your 2020 test script along	Presenters: John Linnegar and Cathy Robertson
Second quarter 2021	**Title: Formatting with Styles in MS Word** Date: Saturday 10 April 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: Monica Bosman
	Title: IPEd accreditation examination (different content from the 2020 webinars) Date: Thursday 22 April 2021, 13:30–17:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: John Linnegar
	Title: Differentiating between a light, a medium and a heavy edit Date: Wednesday 5 May 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: John Linnegar
	Title: Marketing yourself and your freelance business in the 2020s Date: TBA Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: TBA
	Title: Applying Plain Language principles when editing texts Date: Saturday 22 May 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: John Linnegar
	Title: Editors Canada accreditation examination Date: Tuesday 1 June 2021, 13:30–17:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: John Linnegar
	Title: The challenges of editing academic texts generally Date: Saturday, 12 June 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: TBA
	Title: The challenges of editing examinable academic texts Date: Saturday 26 June 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: TBA
Third quarter 2021	**Title: PEG 2020 Accreditation Test (Part 1 – Grammar and editing)** Date: Thursday 8 July 2021, 13:30–17:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand; or bring your 2020 test script along	Presenters: Cathy Robertson and John Linnegar
	Title: Principles and practice of systematic proofreading Date: Wednesday 21 July 2021, 13:30–17:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand	Presenter: TBA
	Title: PEG 2020 Accreditation Test (Part 2 – Proofreading and general topics) Date: Tuesday 3 August 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand; or bring your 2020 test script along	Presenters: John Linnegar and Cathy Robertson
	Title: Referencing systems and styles in academic texts Date: Thursday 19 August 2021, 09:30–13:00 Exercises to be emailed to registrants beforehand; or bring your 2020 test script along	Presenters: John Linnegar and Cathy Robertson
NOTE: The dates and times of the webinars in this programme are subject to change at short notice or, where necessary, without notice. Also, if the number of registrants is fewer than 15 as at two business days before a scheduled webinar, the webinar will either be postponed or cancelled.		

African Indigenous Languages Forum webinar report

Access to criminal justice: Language as gatekeeper or facilitator?

Report on a webinar entitled 'Language and the Criminal Justice System' hosted by the Indigenous Languages Action Forum (ILAF)

Friday 25 September 2020

This webinar produced some really interesting insights and challenges, not only for language practitioners and those interested in language usage in this country but also for (would-be) translators and interpreters.

The Gauteng-based Indigenous Languages Action Forum (ILAF) describes itself as a pressure group and resource for championing South Africa's indigenous languages towards linguistic equity in the use of the 11 official languages. This webinar formed part of its Language and Justice Project.

On 25 September it hosted a fascinating webinar on the subject of 'Language and the Criminal Justice System'. Essentially, the dilemma facing both ILAF and our indigenous languages in the criminal justice system is this: there is a gaping void between government policies on language and the Constitution's protection and promotion of the official languages on the one hand and actual practice in many spheres on the other. In particular (for the purposes of this webinar), the justice system appears to be unable to give preference to a language of choice in our courts and our police stations.

The contributing speakers were retired Justice Johan Kriegler, and two academics, Professor Monwabisi Ralarala (University of the Western Cape) and Dr Zakeera Docrat (Rhodes University). After their presentations, the speakers responded to several searching questions by the attendees. Chairing the proceedings was freelance journalist Natasha Joseph.

South Africa has moved from the pre-1994 bilingual setup, where both English and Afrikaans were accepted as the lingua franca of the SAPS and the courts, to a de facto monolingual regime.

Justice Kriegler spoke first, bringing his hands-on experience of 'the system' to the discussion. Essentially, he pointed out (and much to his regret as an Afrikaans speaker) that South Africa has moved from the pre-1994 bilingual setup, where both English and Afrikaans were accepted as the lingua franca of the SAPS and the courts, to a de facto monolingual regime. Following a pronouncement on this by no less than the Chief Justice himself in 2017, English became the language of record of all our courts, from the apex, the Constitutional Court, right down to magistrates' courts and police stations (where the gathering of statements and evidence usually begins). To illustrate the reasoning behind this decision, as far as the adversarial proceedings in criminal matters are concerned, Justice Kriegler painted some pictures for us.

Imagine a criminal case taking place in Sannieshof, where the language of the accused and their counsel, the prosecutor and the magistrate is Afrikaans. It is fine that they should conduct the case in their mother tongue: all the evidence could be taken down in ›

Source: https://www.chr.up.ac.za
Justice Johan Kriegler

Source: https://www.cput.ac.za
Professor Monwabisi Ralarala

Source: https://twitter.com
Dr Zakeera Docrat

that language and everyone involved – from the investigating officers to the magistrate – would understand the proceedings. What is more, the accused and their counsel could communicate without any hindrance in a common language.

But what would happen, explained the Justice, should the case go on appeal to a High Court and the judge hearing the case is not proficient in Afrikaans, being more comfortable with hearing and speaking their mother tongue or English? What would the language of the court, and of all the lawyers, then be?

A second, linguistically more complex, situation that Justice Kriegler sketched involved an accused who, say, is a Sesotho or a Setswana speaker and whose counsel speaks another language. How do they communicate with each other? On top of that, what if the presiding officer speaks yet another tongue? A lingua franca then has to be found in such a case so that the matter can be conducted in a language that all of the parties can understand. Generally everyone except the person in the dock! This lingua franca is usually English, and this disadvantages such an accused, not only in court but in their and others' having to give evidence in a language that is not their mother tongue.

As both Professor Ralarala and Dr Docrat pointed out, the quality of the corps of available interpreters is substandard and uneven, and their working conditions are poor, so using either translators or interpreters as support during court proceedings is not a solution – not until, that is, the training and qualifications of such support personnel are upgraded and cover all the indigenous languages adequately. But that's also not a quick-fix solution for as long as the education system – at the levels of both basic and higher education – does not require learners and students to become proficient in at least one indigenous language.

In addition to these practical issues, added Justice Kriegler, our legislation, legal textbooks, records of court cases in the form of law reports and the arguments presented by the prosecution and the defence in such adversarial matters are now all in English. This forces the proceedings to be monolingual and exclusionary. This is when language takes on an unfortunate gatekeeper role.

So, whereas the language provisions of the Constitution (especially section 35(3)(*k*)) are inherently transformative, in practice, after 20+ years of the democratic dispensation, in the realm of criminal justice in particular, the system is seen to be both untransformative and unfair. Furthermore, it doesn't help that the drafters of the relevant legislation have inserted 'escape phrases' into it such as 'where practically possible', which leaves the obligation to enforce mother-tongue usage open to interpretation. The result is an 'uncomfortable linguistic compromise' between the idealism of the Constitution and the pronouncement by the Chief Justice.

Professor Ralarala reminded us that the legal process is to a large extent a linguistic matter, by posing the question, 'How do we create a space for the multilingualism that the Constitution aspires to in the legal system?' He took us back to the language of the accused and other parties in giving evidence or making sworn statements about the circumstances surrounding a crime: if they are not able or allowed to give evidence in their mother tongue, how will the originality of their narrative be protected and an accurate record be presented in court? And this problem is by no means a hypothetical one either: Dr Docrat cited examples of recent court cases in which the evidence presented in English (and not the mother tongue of the provider) bore little resemblance to the actual facts of the matter and led not only to conflicting evidence that the court had to weigh up and make sense of, but also to an injustice being committed.

What arises out of this is a conflict between a citizen's language right (English in the criminal courts) and their interpretational right (to the majority of South Africans, non-English), which leads to an anything but level playing field, made even less level by

inadequate and substandard interpreter support in the justice system. This, in turn, severely affects the average citizen's access to justice.

… An anything but level playing field, made even less level by inadequate and substandard interpreter support in the justice system

Are there any solutions to this impasse? Certainly not in the short term. But the professor sees embracing technology as offering one: where, by recording statements and evidence initially in an individual's mother tongue, through which the intralinguistic translation preserves the originality of a narrative, and then having them translated faithfully and accurately into the language of the courts (mainly English), through interlinguistic translation, satisfactory documentation should be arrived at.

But a longer-term solution seems the only viable route to take: government no longer paying lip service to language, and curriculum innovation that includes the compulsory learning of African languages at all levels of the education system, including the education of lawyers.

Furthermore, this is too gargantuan a project to implement at a national, 11-language level. Since each province has (or should have) a language policy in place, those languages (eg English, Afrikaans and IsiXhosa already in the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape), argued Dr Docrat, should be introduced as the languages of court proceedings; and, if necessary, court officials and police personnel should be deployed on a rotational basis in order to accommodate the different languages in each province.

Clearly, ILAF and the proponents of a more linguistically equitable criminal justice system have their work cut out for them.

Indigenous Languages Action Forum

The real cost of editing

Alexis Grewan

This is a follow-up to 'The cost of editing' that appeared in *PEGboard* July 2020.

For a brief moment I believed that editing was a fair job – one that balances time, quality and price.

When I was writing on this topic, I asked colleagues on the PEG chat group about the dilemma of what to charge, how to determine a reasonable rate and how to estimate a time frame for delivery. Admittedly, I assumed we all offer quality. Little did I know the horrid truth I was to be faced with:

- Editing has no average rate.
- Editing is not a quick job (whoever thought it was?).
- Rate and quality are not necessarily interrelated.
- Editing is not a fair job.

I am wondering where this leaves us.

I'm writing this in semi-blog style as I have now turned my attention to other avenues of work (a lockdown-related decision that deserves a whole article on its own). Back to our role as editors … We all need to consider what I discovered. I'm going to break it down as follows:

- *Editors work for different reasons.* While many editors work full-time, some editors are working to fill time, while others are working to supplement an income. Many seem to have a love for language or red-lining print and feel 'called' to this honourable pursuit.
- *Editors have different financial needs.* Editors may choose this line of work after retiring or to fill their mornings while the children are at school. Not all editors rely on their income for primary needs such as rent and groceries.
- *Editing rates vary tremendously.* When considering rate surveys (such as the recently released SAFREA Rates Survey and information offered on the chat group), it would seem that rates range between 10 and 40 cents per word. I guess that accounts for a possible 25 cents per word on average, even though there is little evidence that new clients will pay that. I understand someone even found an editor to edit their PhD at R10 a page.
- *Editors are at least honest about issues of time.* It is clear that services advertised through editing organisations offer rates that seemed unreasonable, for example, editing 1 700 words of an academic text in an hour. Another confirmed job was a 240-page PhD thesis that was invoiced at R7 200 (R30 a page), including referencing and formatting, and to be completed in seven days (34 pages a day). Members of the Guild agreed that time is needed to perform an adequate editing job and that the examples included did not seem remotely realistic.
- *Quality remains an enigma.* I have yet to work out how one knows which editor offers quality and which not, as the rates or time of delivery do not seem relative to this. (I do not intend to offend anyone; it's just an observation.)

The light at the end of the tunnel

Now that my bout of cynicism is over, here's the good news:

- *Lockdown:* Enough of my colleagues have mentioned how busy they have been during lockdown. This suggests that, once established as an editor, the workflow remains pretty constant, even in changing and uncertain times. Consistent income possibly trumps a higher rate or reasonable working hours, but I'm hoping long-standing effort, professional skill and exceptional service might also be the key to a successful editing practice.
- *Quality and fair rates do exist:* There *are* editors among us who command a living wage! Many editors recognise that a professional service requires a professional rate. These editors also maintain that, regardless of the reason one edits, professional rates promote the profession and prevent the value of editing services from being misunderstood and/or undermined.
- *Fair time:* Editors do have estimates for calculating delivery time. The following example is proof of this: 100 pages edited with a commitment to a minimum time period for the completion of five days (or 400 words per hour) for academic editing, including citations and referencing (45 minutes without citations and referencing). Another respondent noted that it was reasonable to levy a 50% increase on work of a time-sensitive or urgent nature and that editors can apply a scale of rates relative to the nature of the editing service and client base.
- *PEG accreditation:* With the first Accreditation Test done and dusted, we are well on our way to standardising and confirming the issue of quality in editing. I think this is where the answer really lies.

… Long-standing effort, professional skill and exceptional service might also be the key to a successful editing practice.

So what can we conclude?

I'm truly still dithering, but I can tell you this: PEG as an organisation upholds professional practice. As members, we should too. I think I'll bide my time until the rates reflect real work and the market accepts this. I'm unfortunately not in a position to work long hours for supplementary purposes. I think I'll just keep writing … at least there are affordable editors all around us.

Chat of the month

This answer was posted on the chat group in response to a question about the correct agreement or concord when 'plethora' is used with a definite article or with an indefinite article.

If you are unsure about the correct agreement when you encounter 'plethora' or if you want to get to grips with notional concord, have a look at this answer again.

When you consult the example sentences in Lexico (https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/plethora), you'll find the following:

> There is a plethora of things …
> A plethora of books have appeared …

The first sentence regards a plethora + genitive plural (*things*) as singular (*is*) while the second sentence regards a plethora + genitive plural (*books*) as plural (*have*). There seems to be the same inconsistency in the dictionary.

The solution probably has to do with notional concord.

If an indefinite article precedes a noun expressing quantity, the emphasis is placed on the noun (genitive) following the quantity. This is called notional concord.

Compare:

> A number of books have appeared …
> The number of books is fixed …

I would treat plethora, meaning a large or excessive amount or number, in the same way.

> A plethora of studies show …
> The plethora of studies shows …

I would then argue that the correct concord in your example is:

> There exist a plethora of studies (the verb *exist* is plural because the notional subject is *studies*).

Remember: If you have the construction *article + quantum + genitive*, the use of an indefinite article often places the focus on whatever follows (notional concord), eg *a mix of preconditions are* …, but *the mix of preconditions is* ….

See NHR (2014:191), par 11.1.5, about singular and plural (my underlining, and easy to find on PEG's website):

11.1.5 Singular or plural?

Whether they are written as words or figures, numbers are pluralized without an apostrophe (see also 4.2.2):

the 1960s	the temperature was in the 20s
they arrived in twos and threes	she died in her nineties

Plural phrases take plural verbs where the elements enumerated are considered severally:

> Ten miles of path are being repaved.
> Around 5,000 people are expected to attend.

Plural numbers considered as single units take singular verbs:

> Ten miles of path is a lot to repave.
> More than 5,000 people is a large attendance.

When used as the subject of a quantity, words like *number, percentage,* and *proportion* are singular with a definite article and plural with an indefinite:

> The percentage of people owning a mobile phone is higher in Europe.
> A proportion of pupils are inevitably deemed to have done badly.

Answers to the previous Competition corner question

In the last issue of *PEGboard*, we asked members to distinguish between a participle, a gerund and the infinitive. Thank you to everyone who sent in an entry – you have proven your grammatical mettle. We appreciate the time you took to put together excellent answers, which made the selection of a winner very difficult.

Congratulations to Lexi Lawson for a very interesting perspective and excellent examples. Your gift book will make its way to you very soon.

We publish Lexi's answer for your reading pleasure, together with the answers submitted by Judy Scott-Goldman and Cathy Robertson, whose contributions deserve special mention.

For those members who are interested in the morphological and syntactical, and differences and similarities between participles, gerunds and infinitives, please have a look at the comprehensive model answer that Corné put together. I think you will find his 'Some general remarks' very useful when editing.

Wilna

Lexi Lawson

A participle, a gerund and an infinitive are non-finite verb forms; they are not limited by tense or subject and can be used as nouns, adjectives or adverbs.

The **infinitive** is the base form of a verb and is usually, but not always, preceded by 'to'.

In order *to write* well, a quiet room may be helpful.

The infinitive, 'to write', has no subject and is not constrained by the past, the present or the future. In the following sentence, 'to write' is part of a noun phrase. It is the object of 'like'.

I like *to write in the evenings*.

Split infinitives are unacceptable to many grammar purists, and it is best to avoid them unless – as in the famous opening sequence of the Star Trek television series: 'To boldly go where no man has gone before' – the sentence is clearly improved by the split.

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Participles are verbal adjectives, although they can also be used in an adverbial sense.

Past participles end in *-d*, *-ed* or the irregular verb forms like *-n* or *-t*. Although the past participle usually mimics the past tense of a verb, it does not always do so. The difference between past participles (a) and verbs in the past tense (b) is illustrated in these two sentences:

(a) It was a *written* confession.
(b) He *wrote* a short story.

The past participle (a) acts as an adjective, describing 'confession'. In (b) the verb is in the simple past tense and has a subject and an object.

The past participle forms the perfect tense – perfect, because the action is completed – when combined with the finite auxiliary verb 'to have':

Present perfect (or perfect): He *has completed*.
Past perfect (or pluperfect): He *had completed*.
Future perfect: He *will have completed*.

Note that while the auxiliary takes a subject and changes its form to suit the tense, the participle remains unchanged.

The passive voice **is formed** by combining the past participle with the auxiliary 'to be'.

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Present participles are a form of verb and end in *-ing*. They describe the current activity of a subject and act as adjectives.

Writing furiously, he managed to finish the article on time.
Gardening in the dusk, she saw an owl on a branch high above her.

It is essential to link the participle to the pertinent noun. You may come across constructions like this:

Gardening in the dusk, an owl perched on a branch high above her.

If there is confusion around the noun (is it the owl gardening?), the sentence needs attention.

Whether to choose the infinitive or the *-ing* form of the verb is often idiomatic and the correct choice can be easier to detect by removing surrounding words.

The owl is capable, in the dark, *to catch* prey at night.

By removing the phrase 'in the dark', it becomes obvious that the participle (of catching) would be correct.

We link the auxiliary verb 'to be' with the present participle to create the continuous (or imperfect) tense:

Present continuous: We *are gardening*.
Past continuous (or imperfect): We *were gardening*.
Future continuous: We *will be gardening*.

***

Verbal nouns, called **gerunds**, also end in *-ing*.

I buy her books because I enjoy her *writing*.
She has different interests and one of them is *gardening*.

You can identify a gerund by adding an adjective to the word ending in *-ing*.

I enjoy her *fast-paced writing*.
Her interest was in *organic gardening*.

The gerund is a noun and can be the subject or object of a sentence. When you are uncertain about the need for a possessive, turn the noun phrase into a simple noun to check.

The neighbour was annoyed by his *gardening at night*.
The neighbour was annoyed by his dog. ❯

The possessive with a verbal phrase can, in some cases, make a sentence sound rather pedantic and stuffy, even awkward. It can also introduce subtle shades of meaning and is helpful in identifying whether a word is a present participle or a gerund. If it all becomes too confusing, rather restructure the sentence.

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Judy Scott-Goldman

English has three non-finite verb forms:

- The *-ing* participle, as in the word 'editing'.
- The *-ed* participle, as in the word 'edited'.
- The infinitive, as in the word 'to edit'.

Non-finite verb forms do not change with person or number. English grammar uses the *-ing* participle to form the present continuous. Therefore the sentence 'She is editing' consists of the subject 'she' followed by the verb phrase 'is editing', where the verb phrase consists of the auxiliary verb 'is' which changes with person and number, followed by the lexical verb 'editing' in the unchanging *-ing* participle form. In the sentence 'I have edited', the subject is followed by the auxiliary verb 'have', followed by the *-ed* participle 'edited'.

An infinitive usually begins with the word 'to' and is followed by the base form of a verb. The *-ed* participle replaces the base form of the verb in the passive infinitive, eg 'to be lost'.

Infinitives and *-ing* participles can be the subject of a sentence, as in the following sentences:

> *Dancing is good for you.*
> *To dance is good for you.*
> *To be loved is a great blessing.*

Infinitives and *-ing* participles can also be the object of a sentence.

> *I like dancing.*
> *I like to dance.*
> *She asked to be forgiven.*

Confusion arises because it is difficult sometimes to decide if a word such as 'dancing' is a verb participle or a gerund.

If you look up the term 'gerund' in the online Oxford Dictionary's grammar A-Z section, it redirects you to 'verbal noun'. The entry under verbal noun reads as follows:

> The present participle of a verb when it's used as a noun (eg 'smoking' in *smoking is strictly forbidden*). Also called gerund.

Why is it called a verbal noun? Quirk et al. (1972) point out that it is a common word-formation pattern in English to form nouns from verbs by taking the base form of the verb and adding *-ing*, therefore 'administer medicines' can become 'the administering of medicines'; 'transport goods' can become 'the transporting of goods'; and 'Trump evades taxes' can become 'Trump's evading of taxes'. Note that there is an alternative mass noun with the more common *-ion* noun ending in all these cases: 'administration', 'transportation', 'evasion'.

The difficulty in deciding whether a word ending in *-ing* is a gerund or a participle relates to disputes about the correctness of the second sentence of the following pair.

> *Jane does not mind my taking the car.*
> *Jane does not mind me taking the car.*

In the first sentence, the possessive 'my' is used. In the second sentence, the object pronoun 'me' is used. Some writers argue that you must use 'my' because the possessive case is required before a gerund. However, one could argue that 'taking' is not a gerund here but a verb participle in the non-finite clause 'me taking the car', which is the object of the main clause 'Jane does not mind x' (subject+verb+object) where x is the fact of the person taking the car, just as 'taking' is a verb participle in the adverbial non-finite clause 'taking his time' in the following sentence:

> *Taking his time, he dawdled slowly to the bus stop.*

Look at the following two sentences:

> *My husband's loud snoring wakes me up.*
> *My husband's snoring loudly wakes me up.*

I would analyse 'snoring' as a verbal noun in the first sentence. It is preceded by a possessive pronoun and the adjective 'loud'; I would analyse 'snoring loudly' as a verb

participle + adverb postmodifying the noun phrase 'my husband' in the second sentence.

As for the difference between

> *My husband's snoring loudly wakes me up*
> (husband in genitive case.)

and

> *My husband snoring loudly wakes me up*
> (husband in common case.)

I would agree with Crystal (2002) and Kamm (2015) that the first is found in a formal style of writing, while the second sounds natural in informal styles and in speech.

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Cathy Robertson

A participle, gerund and an infinitive are all forms of the verb as they all express actions, but they each have a different function in a sentence.

The present participle and gerund resemble each other in form as in 'running', but they have different functions in a sentence. The difference between the two is that a participle has the function of an adjective and the gerund has the function of a noun in a sentence.

Examples:

1. The **running** boy passed his competitors.

   This is a participle which describes or qualifies 'the boy' in the sentence. It is thus an adjective and has the function of an adjective in a sentence.

2. The boy is not in the **running** for the first prize.

   The gerund is the indirect object of the sentence, following the preposition 'in'. A gerund, like all other nouns, can be the subject, object or complement in a sentence.

The infinitive looks different. 'To run' is an infinitive, introduced by the participle 'to'. It, like the gerund, has the function of a noun in a sentence.

Example:

> The boy likes **to run**.

Since both the infinitive and the gerund can be the object of a sentence, you may get confused about which one to use.

For example:

> He is fond **to collect** (infinitive) x stamps instead of he is fond **of collecting** (gerund) ✓ stamps. ❯

Whether to use the infinitive or the gerund depends on the main verb in the sentence. Linnegar and McGillivray (2019:19–20) provide the following help:

> For instance, the infinitive usually follows the verbs 'have, hope, intend, like, need, plan, seem and want'; the gerund usually follows the verbs 'appreciate, consider, deny, discuss, justify, mention and plan on, recall/remember and suggest'.

The following examples of a participle and a gerund are straight forward:

1. **Running** along the track, the boy passed his competitors.

   The participle in the phrase needs to qualify the subject of the sentence, which is *boy*. If it does not, then it is called a hanging, dangling or unrelated participle.

2. The boy's **running** will not qualify him for first prize.

   Since the gerund is used as the subject, it needs to be preceded by the possessive case as it qualifies the noun.

The following examples are not as straightforward and may confuse you:

1. Running around the track, the hurdle caused the boy to stumble.

   The participle in this sentence is qualifying the subject of the sentence, which is 'the hurdle'. The hurdle is incorrect as it is the boy who is running who was made to stumble by the hurdle.

   It should rather be: Running around the track, the boy stumbled over the hurdle.

2. I cannot bear the boy running.

   In this sentence, **running** is incorrectly used as a participle instead of a gerund. You need to clarify the following:

   - Is it the running boy you cannot bear? (participle) OR
   - Is it his running you cannot bear? (gerund)

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The model answer to this question by Corné:

Let's tackle Wilna's fiendishly hard question by first looking at the morphology and simple syntax of a participle, a gerund and an infinitive before considering the possible confusion that might arise. In this explanation I will use the verbs 'edit' and 'write' as examples because 'edit' is a regular verb and 'write' is an irregular verb.

1. Participle

The participle is a verb form that is used in forming verb phrases and for other purposes. In English there are two participles: the present participle and the past participle.

1.1 Morphology
Regular and irregular verbs form the present participle by adding *-ing* to the verb stem. Regular verbs form the past participle by adding *-ed* (or just *-e* if the verb ends with the letter 'e') to the verb stem (the same form as the past tense) while irregular verbs form the past participle in different ways (and the form may be different from the past tense). Look at the table below:

Verb stem	Present participle	Past participle
edit	editing	edited
write	writing	written

1.2 Syntax and uses
1.2 1 Present participle

- The present participle is used to form the continuous tenses:

Present participle	Present continuous	Past continuous
editing	they are editing	they were editing
written	they are writing	they were written

- The present participle is also used in non-finite clauses where there is no finite auxiliary verb. In these sentences, the present participles in non-finite clauses are used adjectivally, for example:

  The volunteers editing for *PEGboard* work under pressure.
  The journalists writing for the newspaper objected to the editorial policy.

1.2.2 Past participle

- The past participle is used to form a number of tenses:

Past participle	Present perfect	Past perfect	Future perfect
edited	I have edited	I had edited	I shall have edited
written	I have written	I had written	I shall have written

- The past participle is also used to form past tenses with modal auxiliaries, for example:

Past participle	might	should	Future perfect
edited	I might have edited	I should have edited	I shall have edited
written	I might have written	I should have written	I shall have written

2. Gerund

A gerund is a form of the verb used as a noun. It is also called a verbal noun. It is easy to identify a gerund in a sentence by inserting 'the action of' before the gerund. If the sentence makes sense, you have a gerund.

2.1 Morphology
A gerund is formed by adding *-ing* to the verb stem:

Verb stem	Gerund or verbal noun
edit	editing
write	writing

The gerund has exactly the same form as a present participle.

2.2 Syntax and uses
The gerund is a verbal noun and therefore has all the properties of a noun. The gerund can be used as:

- The subject of a verb, for example:
  Editing is a scarce skill.
  Writing well requires practice.

- The object of a verb, for example:
  I hate editing a draft document.
  The editor loves writing comments. ❯

- The object of a preposition, for example:
  The Guild offers an examination for editing.
  An online course on writing starts tomorrow.

- The complement of a stative verb, for example:
  She enjoys editing complex material.
  He really likes writing on fancy paper.

It is very easy to confuse a gerund with an adjective, a present participle or a compound verb because their ending on *-ing* can be the same. To identify the gerund, insert the words 'the action of' in front of it. If the sentence makes sense, it is a gerund.

Examples:

- *They attended an editing (or writing) workshop.*
  They attended an 'the action of' editing workshop. This does not make sense. In this sentence, 'editing' is a present participle that functions as an attributive adjective (participial adjective).

- *They were editing (or writing) when the alarm sounded.*
  They were 'the action of' editing when the alarm sounded. This does not make sense. In this sentence, 'editing' is a present participle that forms part of the compound verb 'were editing'.

- *Editing (or writing) is his favourite activity in summer.*
  'The action of' editing is his favourite activity in summer. This makes sense. In this sentence, 'editing' is a gerund.

Much has been written about possessives before gerunds. Because the gerund is a noun, it is therefore necessary to use a possessive adjective when showing ownership, not a personal pronoun or a possessive pronoun.

It is important to remember that there is a difference between a possessive adjective and a possessive pronoun. Here is a list of personal pronouns with their corresponding possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns, ie their possessive forms.

Always use the possessive adjective (highlighted in purple) before a gerund.

Personal pronoun	Possessive form	
	Possessive adjective	Possessive pronoun
I	my	mine
you	your	yours
he	his	his
she	her	hers
it	its	[not used]
we	our	ours
they	their	theirs
who	whose	whose

Examples:

- *I dislike him editing at a furious pace.* ✗
- *I dislike his editing at a furious pace.* ✓
- *She does not like us editing the final draft.* ✗
- *She does not like our editing the final draft.* ✓
- *The editor is concerned about them writing for* PEGboard. ✗
- *The editor is concerned about their writing for* PEGboard. ✓

It is, however, also possible to argue that the sentences marked with a ✗ above are in fact correct. Understanding the grammar shows a subtle difference.

If you regard 'him' in the first sentence as the direct object of the verb 'dislike' and 'editing' as an adjectival present participle, the meaning changes from a dislike of his editing (second sentence) to a dislike of him, incidentally when he edits. If you regard 'us' in the third sentence as the object of the verb 'does not like', the participle 'editing' becomes again incidentally descriptive, while in the fourth sentence, the object of the verb is clearly the editing done by us ('our editing'). If you regard 'them' in the fifth sentence as the object of the preposition 'about', the editor is concerned about certain people who incidentally write for the newsletter.

In the last sentence, the editor's concern is particularly about those people's writing.

This possible interpretation is only possible with objects. With subjects the possibility of reading a present participle and a gerund falls away. Compare:

> **He editing caused quite a commotion.*
> *His editing caused quite a commotion.*

In the first sentence it is not possible to read the participle adjectivally ('he editing'). In this construction a gerund with a possessive adjective ('his editing') must be used.

Remember, in formal writing it is probably best to stick with the gerund and its possessive adjective.

3. Infinitive

The infinitive is also a verb form but it is an incomplete form such as the participle. Infinitives and participles are forms of verbs that are rarely used on their own but are important when making other constructions.

3.1 Morphology
In English, the infinitive has two forms in the verb phrase: the verb stem with and without 'to': to edit or edit and to write or write.

3.2 Syntax and uses
To illustrate the two forms of the infinitive – the 'full' or 'to' infinitive and the verb stem on its own – look at the following:

- to + verb stem, often used with verbs such as 'want' or 'like'
  I want to edit the newsletter.
  I like to write grammar articles.

- the verb stem on its own after modal auxiliary verbs such as 'must' and 'should'
  You must edit the newsletter.
  I should write more grammar articles.

The infinitive with 'to' in a clause can also be used in different ways, including as a noun or an adverb:

- *To edit or not to edit is always a conundrum.*
  Infinite clause used as a noun, the subject of the verb 'is'.

- *All I want is to write the perfect grammar article.*
  Infinite clause used as a noun, copulative of the verb 'is'.

- *There was just one chapter to edit after the document had been revised.*
  Infinite clause used as a relative ('that had to be edited').

- *The only thing to write in these circumstances is an apology.*
  Infinite clause used as a relative ('that had to be written').

- *She made sure she had enough time so as to edit the document comprehensively.*
  Infinite clause used adverbially.

- *In order to answer clearly, he made sure he understood the question.*
  Infinite clause used adverbially.

4. Some general remarks

4.1 In the table below, the morphology of the participle, the gerund and the infinitive is compared to show the similarities and differences in the forms. ❯

	edit	write
verb stem	edit	write
present tense	edit/edits	write/writes
past tense	edited	wrote
present participle	editing	writing
past participle	edited	written
infinitive	to edit/edit	to write/write
gerund	editing	writing

4.2 The gerund and the present participle look the same morphologically but function differently. Your clue to identifying the gerund is the phrase 'the action of'. If you have identified the present participle, decide if it is a participial adjective or part of a compound verb. The gerund and the infinitive do not look the same morphologically, but both can function as nouns. The infinitive and the participle also look very different from one another morphologically, but their common characteristic is that they are the building blocks in other constructions.

4.3 The gerund and the infinitive are found in similar constructions, but you have to be very careful when using these two forms. Compare the following:

- Some verbs in English are always followed by an infinitive, such as: advise; afford; agree; aim; allow; appear; arrange; ask; beg; cause; choose; claim; compel; dare; decide; demand; deserve; enable; expect; encourage; fail; forbid; guarantee; help; hope; instruct; intend; invite; learn; manage; offer; order; persuade; plan; prepare; pretend; promise; refuse; remind; seem, teach; tell; tend; threaten; wait; want; warn; and wish.

- Some verbs in English are always followed by a gerund, such as: admit; allow; appreciate; avoid; complete; consider; delay; deny; deserve; discuss; dislike; dread; enjoy; entail; fancy; feel like; finish; imagine; involve; justify; keep; mind; miss; necessitate; practice; prevent; recollect; recommend; resent; risk; see someone; spend time; spend money; suggest; understand; and warrant.

- Some verbs in English can be followed by an infinite or a gerund with no change in meaning, for example:

  - I like to edit in the garden.
  - I like editing in the garden.

  Other verbs like this include: begin; can't bear; can't stand; cease; continue; hate; intend; like; love; need; neglect; prefer; propose; start; and try.

- Other verbs, when followed by an infinitive or a gerund, change the meaning of the sentence, for example:

  - He *stopped* to edit her article. (stop + infinitive: he stopped doing something to start editing)
  - He *stopped* editing her article. (stop + gerund: he stopped editing in order to do something else)

  Compare the following sentences where an infinitive or a gerund is used after the same verb. Can you see the distinction in meaning?

  - She *forgot* to edit the article ✗
    She *forgot* editing the article ✓
  - I *regret* to tell you the unhappy news ✗
    I *regret* telling you the unhappy news ✓
  - Did you *remember* to write the note ✗
    Did you *remember* writing the note ✓
  - He *went* on to write the report ✗
    He *went* on writing the report ✓

Thank you for a challenging question, Wilna. We look forward to the next challenge! 🌿

Competition corner
January edition

We convey heartfelt appreciation to Arlene Stone of Pharos for kindly donating a copy of Bittie Viljoen-Smook's latest book, *Plain language: The practical guide to easy-to-understand language*, published in 2020, to PEG.

It is an honour to have a Competition corner question from the author of this remarkable book, Bittie Viljoen-Smook:

What is the main reason for using plain language?

The answer may be as long or short as you wish. The usual three-part, referenced answer is not required.

To win a copy of this highly commendable book on plain language, send your answer to Wilna at wilnaswart7@gmail.com by Friday 26 February 2021. The decision of the editorial team is final. 🌿

PHAROS

PLAIN LANGUAGE

The practical guide to easy-to-understand language

EE VILJOEN-SMOOK

AUTHORITATIVE · TRUSTED · DEFINITIVE
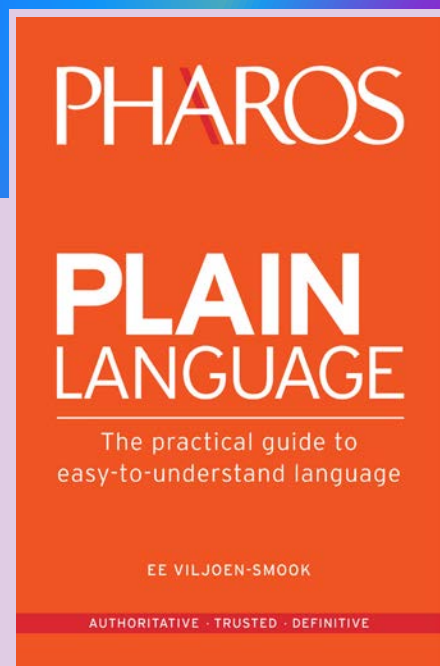
Proust and Preferences

Although the Proust questionnaire was thought-provoking, some readers found it to be somewhat long and we now present you with a more playful version.

The Proust questionnaire will therefore be alternated with Preferences. Corné takes the first turn to give us a glimpse of his preferences, with the words in bold print indicating his choices.

You are invited to participate in this get-to-know-me game of preferences and we look forward to being surprised and delighted by your preferences.

Copy and paste the list into a Word document, unbold the existing bold text and indicate your own preferences.

Email this to wilnaswart7@gmail.com. It would be wonderful to get to know you better and your list of preferences might just appear in the next issue of *PEGboard*.

Corné's preferences

Tea or coffee
Honey and lemon or **milk and sugar**
Jam or marmalade
Musicals or plays
Lemonade or iced tea
Strawberries or **raspberries**
Winter or summer
Beaches or **forests**
Restaurants or cafés
Unicorns or dragons
Gemstones or crystals
Hummingbirds or **owls**
Fireworks or sparklers
Brunch or happy hour
Sweet or **sour**
Rome or **Athens**
Classic or modern art
Sushi or **ramen**
Sun or **moon**
Venus or **Mars**
Polka dots or **stripes**
Macarons or **croissants**
Glitter or **matte**
Da Vinci or Degas
Socrates or Schopenhauer
Bach or Bartok
Aquariums or **planetariums**
Road trip or camping trip
Colouring books or **water colour**
Fairy lights or candles
Online or **printed**

New year's gifts to be won
Just tell us your story.

It is our pleasure to announce that PEG has new year's book gifts to give away in lieu of the traditional year-end breakfast that could not be held at the end of 2020, when PEG Western Cape (WC) usually gives small gifts.

Bernard Ruthven, of Cibus Catering in Cape Town, who supplies the PEG WC workshops with scrumptious eats and annually hosts the end-of-year function at his home, generously sponsored three copies of the fabulous picture recipe book *Brunch across 11 countries: Recipes of a private chef*, by Alix Verrips, to give away. We thank Bernard warmly.

If you would like to enjoy a 'printed' brunch to start 2021, all you need to do is to write to Wilna at wilnaswart7@gmail.com by Friday 26 February 2021 and tell her in about 300 words what the Guild meant to you in 2020. The decision of the editorial team is final.

Wishing you all a happy and fulfilling new year!

BRUNCH
ACROSS 11 COUNTRIES
Recipes of a private chef
ALIX VERRIPS