

Annual general meeting

Notice is hereby given that the AGM of the Professional Editors' Group (PEG) will be held at the Roosevelt Park Recreation Centre, 869 Anton van Wouw Street (off Beyers Naudé Drive), Roosevelt Park, Johannesburg, at 09h00 on Saturday, 25 June 2011.

Tea and coffee will be served from 08h30.

At the AGM, amongst other business, elections will have to be held for members of the national Executive Committee and the Portfolio Committees as a result of vacancies or the expiry of two-year terms of office. These will include the election of national chairperson, marketing portfolio holder and publications portfolio holder. Please send your nominations to the PEG administrator by Thursday, 23 June.

Acceptances or apologies, and requests for proxy votes, should also be sent to the PEG administrator.

Branch AGMs

The Gauteng AGM and elections will immediately follow the national AGM. The Cape Town AGM will take place in the Mother City during July 2011. 🐣

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Chair's chatter

In which I air a few of my favourite peeves

The recent rumbustious reactions on the chat group over the proposal to convert PEG into a Section 21 company (now a Non-profit Company, or NPC) has caused me to reflect on that peculiar strain of creature – the copy-editor – and what it means to be a pedigreed one at that.

For me, some of the non-negotiables of pedigreed editorship are these (not necessarily in any particular order):

- a firm command of whatever languages one edits;
- an openness to new ideas and technologies;
- faithfulness to the author's meaning or intention;
- an avaricious craving after knowledge to plug the gaps in one's knowledge and stay on top of one's game (which means leaving no resource unturned in search of answers);
- attention to detail in verbal communications;
- resourcefulness, initiative and lateral thinking aplenty.

In more than a handful of the emails apropos the Section 21 conversion, these attributes were seriously absent. I shall ruminate on each of them in turn, reflecting on what I witnessed during the Great Rumpus on the chat group.

The language experts?

The first thing that struck me was the number of the emails that displayed what amounts to a standard use of language, verging at times on gibberish. 'Is this how the authors of such emails communicate with their clients?' is the first question that arises. What an unprofessional image that must create among recipients!

But far more disturbing is the limited use of language that editors display when they are supposed to be the 'language experts', the 'custodians' of correct and clear expression in texts – and who are paid (sometimes) good money to cut through the claptrap and convolutions of so many writers!

If it ever was one, the PEG of the here and now is no longer a tea-and-scones club where, *à tête reposée*, one chats about the lack of progress and problems one is experiencing with a particular manuscript or client over a dainty cuppa. Nay, it is a home for those serious about being professional themselves and about producing professional deliverables. In short, it's home to those earnest about the business of editing.

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In contrast, a number of the responses revealed an amateurishness that I find it hard to believe would be tolerated by a client, let alone by an association of professionals. Professional editors? Think again!

The embraceable you

Are you one who embraces new ideas and technologies? Such as MS Word and MS Excel, for instance? Not just tinkering with them, but taking command as a power user. I've recently been in a project management role involving some 30-odd (and, boy, were some odd!) editors and was astonished to discover that almost none of them regard formatting (controlling font size and style, justification, line spacing, indentation, etc) as an integral part of their professional offering. In this day and age, when almost every document we work on has been word processed (or, heaven forbid, PDF'd), how, one asks oneself, is it possible for people to allow themselves to be so hamstrung regarding the basic tools of their trade and still carry on a 'business'?

And, of course, once one is initiated into the world of keyboards and computer screens, remaining abreast of upgrades is imperative – such is the power of the software houses over us. Yet the reluctance of editors to keep at the forefront of developments – and, in some instances, even to master the basics through training – remains an enigma to this copy-editor.

Faithfulness to one's author

It's also not for us as editors to read meaning into words that doesn't exist, or at least that was never intended! (Well, I suppose if potholes can be politicised, words can be turned into political slingshot.) Indeed, over-editing, or simply an inclination to replace the author's chosen word with one's own, should probably be declared an editorial crime. As the Chief Executive of Penguin Books SA, Alison Lowry, emphasised at the recent Gauteng Winter Warmer, the professional editor should certainly think twice before simply changing an author's words, for whatever good or bad reason. The text remains the author's and it's not for us to rewrite it! Such insensitive and self-satisfying red-penning would rightly be construed as interfering grossly with the author's meaning or intention, and would equally – and rightly so – earn their wrath and castigation. Less 'enthusiasm', more reason, publishers would caution.

Pleading ignorance no defence

Let's face it, none of us should be expected to be knowledgeable about every subject imaginable. But, equally, no professional editor worth their salt would, or should, confess nowadays to the levels of ignorance displayed recently about such ubiquitous concepts as, for instance, a Section 21 company, a memorandum and articles of association or a not-for-profit organisation. These are all so much part and parcel of everyday life that the thinking, reading editor should either be aware of them (however vaguely) or at least be of a mind to find out about them – and, what's more, to know *where to look*.

The Companies Act, being one of the most far-reaching and influential pieces of legislation on our Statute Book, has been around for decades and widely written about in books and journals, in newspapers and on

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countless websites: all one needs is to use a bit of savvy to source such information. And, surprise, surprise, most of what you need to know is there in the well-organised Act itself – certainly not out of reach of an editor with eyes to read and fingers to type! The *cri de cœur* ‘I don't know ... therefore I can't vote’ is the very antithesis of Descartes's ‘I think, therefore I am’. How one can go through life being a non-thinking, non-enquiring editor in this manner beats me. ‘How do such “editors” take on work?’ one has to ask ...

And, surprise, surprise, most of what you need to know is there in the well-organised Act itself – certainly not out of reach of an editor with eyes to read and fingers to type!

The devil's in the detail

Superficiality should not be in the earnest editor's vocabulary. Period. Because if we are unable to read written communications thoroughly and with understanding; if we do not habitually scratch below the surface, or read between the words, of every document that passes our eyes, who will save all those substandard, unintelligible documents from a life of disservice and misinforming?

Think about it: most of us are earning a livelihood because we offer that unique combination of a command of words and a keen eye. To lose one of these is to be editorially handicapped.

The attitude of editors

Some of the emails that contributed to the Great Rumpus displayed a gobsmacking lack of initiative or resourcefulness (or sheer *vooma*) on the part their creators. Such an attitude must be so disempowering that one wonders how such practitioners are able to acquit themselves professionally, or even perform at all, as operators in business. How, indeed, do they deliver work of quality with an attitude like this, or meet the many challenges clients throw their way?

Perhaps it is this same inertia that led to an earnest, well-considered proposal – lengthily deliberated between PEG's elected representatives and experts before being put to the members – being met with such a mixture of ignorance and uncertainty and opposition? How else can we account for the distrust (implied or otherwise) displayed towards the members of Exco? (I'm pleased to

reveal that the overwhelming majority of those who voted on the matter have given Exco the go-ahead to proceed with PEG's formal registration.)

PEG's accreditation test

Taking all these non-negotiables into account, I'm more convinced than ever that accreditation is the key to professionalising our craft. To put it bluntly, I believe accreditation will serve to separate the churners-out of work of quality from the dabblers who haven't yet bought into the non-negotiables. Until we're able to accredit our members as proficient language practitioners, editors and proofreaders, I believe the dabblers will continue to taint our profession as mediocre, to be the reason why amateurs are deemed kings in the land of the blind. And heaven knows how many of those are at large, doing quixotic damage at every turn!

Sure, accreditation in itself won't resolve all of the problems raised above; but with ‘Accredited Professional ...’ after practitioners' names will come attitude changes and mind shifts that will go a long way towards doing so.

PEG is doing what it can to put the situation to rights: registration as a formally recognised entity is a positive development. The next step in the direction of greater professionalism is soon to be launched: PEG's accreditation test in proofreading. The test will require not only proficiency in the use of proof correction marks (using the standard BSI set of marks) but also an ability to spot inconsistencies in texts, to detect uneven or ill-executed formatting, and to wrinkle out faulty grammar, punctuation and spelling. Because if we don't nurture our own skills, and aren't precious towards others' texts, where does that leave standards?

The next step in the direction of greater professionalism is soon to be launched: PEG's accreditation test in proofreading.

In tatters, actually. (Or, worse still, in the hands of the bureaucrats!) And if nobody else is prepared to be custodians of language and communication, it is most certainly we who must, displaying professionalism towards our authors and clients as much as our fellow-practitioners. And ultimately towards ourselves and our work as pedigreed professionals. 🍷

Yours in editing
John

Ed's inkspot



Racking my brains for the key to this current Inkspot, I've come to the conclusion that old editors don't die. Their red ink just dries up after a lifetime of grappling with others' logorrhoea. The definition of logorrhoea: excessive flow of words, especially when incoherent.

Logorrhoea has also been called diarrhoea of the mouth. When I was young, my parents told us that having diarrhoea of the mouth is bad enough but when one has brain constipation, everyone suffers.

So I try Googling to find the exact definition for my affliction, which I am convinced is terminal. 'Word fatigue' is a non-starter. It leads to lots of discussions about the word 'fatigue' and other red herrings. There's a conspiracy of silence about this malady.

My next try is 'language fatigue'. There are about 64 200 000 hits, according to the Great Goog. My fatigue is now worse, exacerbated by ed's eye, which causes the word you're looking for to appear stranger and stranger. By now, I'm reading 'fa-tee-goo' and feeling quite normal. One description reads: 'Language fatigue occurs when, trying to use a second language constantly, you become physically and psychologically drained by speaking, listening, and finding meaning in, until now, a little used 'new' language.' Nope, that's not it.

Ah – pseudodictionary.com suggests languaphobia: The fear of using the English language properly. No fear! I love using English and Afrikaans ... properly AND improperly.

I'm just a tad fatigued by red-inking everything I read and hear. It's compulsive. *Carte Blanche* this evening had an item about tattooing, specifically the pain incurred, becoming addictive. So maybe an editor is an editing addict. Happy editing!

– Hester

Derrick Hurlin – mender of words and Bibles

Hester van der Walt

And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.
He nevere yet no vileynye ne sayde,
In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.
He was a verry, parfit, gentil knyght.

Geoffrey Chaucer – *The Knight's Portrait, Canterbury Tales*

In May this year, PEG lost honorary life member Derrick Hurlin. PEG members remember Derrick fondly as a witty, gentle and most erudite source of information on matters editorial on the PEG chat list. For quite a few, he was also friend and mentor, teaching us sane and pragmatic approaches to editing and to plain language as a specific writing and editing discipline.

I first met Derrick when he partnered me at the PEG stand at the Bookjol at the University of Pretoria in March 2008. The last project on which we collaborated was writing comprehension text shorts for the Gauteng Department of Education's First Additional Language Gr 7–9 lesson plans in January 2011, just when he became ill.

Derrick Hurlin started his career as a factory engineer, and later focused on public education in the nuclear field. His 'short' CV reveals a formidable intellect, applied in various and sometimes quite unexpected ways. CVs, being earthly stuff, do not always reveal the inner person clearly. In 1971 Derrick gave his life to the Lord. He served as a Sunday school teacher for 25 years and organised the annual South African National Sunday School Association drama festival. He contributed for seven years to the Scripture Union adult Bible reading notes, 'Closer to God', and mended over 200 Bibles from his church in his spare time.

Derrick attained a BSc (Chem. Eng.) at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1950, followed by a number of other qualifications and certificates. In 1969 he was registered as Professional Engineer, followed by a DEng in 1986 at the University of Pretoria. During retirement, Derrick remained active in his profession, in private practice as consultant in the management of projects that involve new technology.

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Derrick was also living proof that rigorous scientific (to some of us dry as dust) training cannot constrain or dampen a vigorous creative spirit. From 1971 to 1979 he was a freelance drama and film critic for the *Pretoria News*, with 145 reviews published. He published two books: *Let's Go. You Drive – and Other Short Stories* and *Seven Fun Plays for Young People*, as well as two self-published books: *Graffiti Wise and Witty* and *God the Artist, God the Engineer*.

He was founder member of Life Line Northern Transvaal and played an active role as counsellor and executive member up to July 1992.

Amateur theatre had been one of Derrick's chief joys. He acted in or was stage manager or house manager for many productions. Theatre for children was a particular passion, and he was chairman of Pretoria Theatre for Children for eight years. He was a founder member of the Pretoria Writers' Circle, who recently awarded him

honorary life membership. He was a member of the South African Writers' Circle, who in 1998 awarded him the Gaby Ginsberg Award for Drama. For the English Academy of Southern Africa, he convened the panel adjudicating the Olive Schreiner Prize for Drama, and also served as a language adviser. His short stories won several national and international awards.

Another Hurlin snippet: Derrick was a member of Mensa South Africa. Membership in Mensa is open to persons who have attained a score within the upper two per cent of the general population on an approved intelligence test that has been properly administered and supervised. He was chairman of Mensa's Pretoria Region and served on the National Executive until 1995, and as editor between August 1996 and December 2001.

Derrick is sorely missed by those who knew and loved him, not least by his wife Jenn, his daughter and two sons, seven grandchildren and two great-granddaughters. 🍷

The bio-engineer who became an editor

Hester van der Walt

Linda Pretorius, PEG's Treasurer, was awarded a PhD in Bio-engineering at the University of Pretoria in April this year. The title of her thesis: Systematic investigation of factors contributing to music perception by cochlear implant users.

Linda spent several painstaking years investigating cochlear implant (CI) users' music-perception ability. To date, most CI users find music listening to be unrewarding and unsatisfactory, most likely because the implant device cannot convert the full richness of the acoustical signal into electrical pulses. Linda approached the problem from a neurocognitive perspective; in other words, she wanted to see how the brain handles impoverished neural signals, and how (and whether) the new insights can be used to improve signal processing algorithms.

To date, research regarding CI-mediated music perception has (repeatedly) confirmed that music perception is unsatisfactory, but without teasing apart the signal-processing constraints or the associated effects of such acoustic-electrical conversion at the neuro-cognitive processing level. Linda says her study gives new insight into the processing system that underlies CI-mediated hearing and has helped to show that CI-mediated hearing is the function of not just the (electronic) ear, but also of the brain.

An unexpected offshoot of Linda's research was that contact with CI users can lead to a full-blown case of



Linda with her husband Johan at her graduation

editing 'eddiction'. Linda explains: 'Hester van der Walt was one of the participants in my listening experiments. One day we started chatting and she introduced me to the world of PEG, and I've not looked back since. I truly believe that I have found my place in editing, because it allows me to combine two strengths: science and language. To me, that is the more important thought: not so much that I've earned a PhD, but that it has brought me into the wonderful and fulfilling world of editing. I feel so fortunate and happy every day; what more can one ask for in a job?!' 🍷

Welcome, newbies!

In this issue we welcome 56 new members into the PEG fold. We hope that, just as you enjoy the benefits PEG has to offer, you may take pleasure in contributing to the betterment of the organisation and to its members. As the erstwhile chair of our National Executive sometimes exclaims, may you keep the flag of good English flying!

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A new website for PEG

Sukaina Walji

Sukaina Walji reports on the progress of PEG's new and improved website, soon to be launched.

Moving from a brochure-like static site to a more interactive website represents PEG's commitment to using the opportunities provided by new media technologies to meet the needs of its members.

Earlier this year, I was asked to lead a project to commission and develop a new website for PEG. The impetus for this was to update the old website which was starting to look dated and to develop the website so that it would better serve the needs of the members.

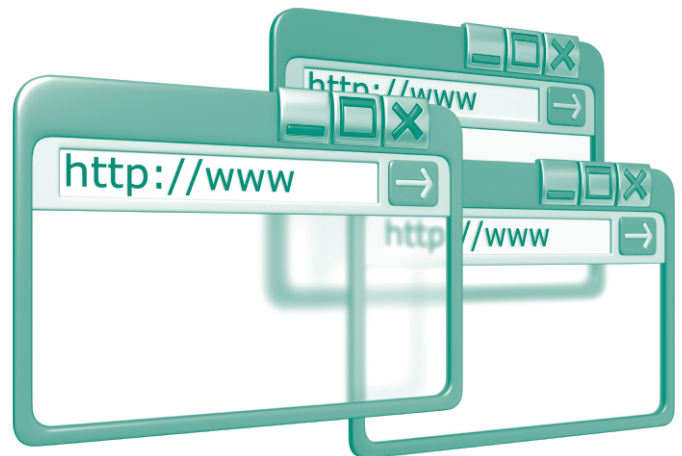
Having developed and commissioned many public sector transactional websites, I was aware that it wasn't simply a case of refreshing a design with a contemporary feel or rewriting content to be more web friendly. Nowadays, websites need to reflect the business of the organisation and provide useful services to stakeholders using the opportunities afforded by Web 2.0 technologies.

The world in your hands

In our case, we decided that the focus of the site should be on providing a more interactive members' directory service, which would replace the static PDF version available on the current website. Moving to a searchable directory will have two major benefits for the organisation. First, it will enable those requiring editors and editorial services to search meaningfully across categories, specialisms and geographical areas to find editors that meet their requirements. Second, all members who subscribe and take a directory listing will have a personal page on the PEG website which they can update and use to market themselves. Other features will include a more interactive events section, the ability for members to update their own details, resources for editors and a 'Submit Jobs' feature.

Finding the right developer

Moving from a brochure-like static site to a more interactive website represents PEG's commitment to using the opportunities provided by new media technologies to meet the needs of its members. This initiative required finding the right developer who had the necessary skills to engineer this type of website while being sensitive to the budgetary constraints of a voluntary organisation. Happily, we have developed a good working relationship



with our Cape Town-based developers, who have taken to heart the needs of our site and of the organisation.

The final countdown

Currently, we are about to launch into the user acceptance testing phase, which means we are nearing launch. It will also be the most stressful and busy phase, as content, features and functionality all come together and we test and iron out any kinks, and tackle issues that will inevitably emerge.

As we are a voluntary organisation, the pace of development has tended to ebb and peak with the availability of the PEG members who work on the website development project while managing their own busy schedules. Recently we have been greatly assisted by new PEG member Deborah Cooper, who performed the valiant task of manually updating, checking and uploading all the PEG members' details into a format suitable for import into the website's database. Working on the nitty-gritty aspects of the website is not a glamorous task by any means!

Thank you to all PEG members who have assisted in any way so far. Your input is greatly appreciated and we hope to showcase the efforts in the very near future. 🍀

Editing works of fiction: a PEG workshop, Franschhoek, 11 and 12 May 2011

John Linnegar

John Linnegar was one of many drawn to the Cape Winelands to attend another of PEG's constructive and edifying workshops, which the organisation goes to great lengths to arrange for its members. The event proved to be just as exceptional as the brandies and wines that were savoured during the two-day workshop.

As the grey skies were transformed into brilliant warm sunshine over the Franschhoek Valley, the second annual PEG Editing Fiction workshop kicked off with a full house of attendees drawn from around the country. PEG, SATI and SAFREA – all signatories to the newly formed Alliance of Language and Media Practitioners (LAMP) – were well represented among the attendees, as were academia and local publishing houses.

The idea behind the workshop was to expose the attendees to the key facets of fiction writing and editing – in English and Afrikaans – so expert editors willing and able to present on aspects such as point of view, plot, perspective, characterisation, and beginnings and endings were handpicked to share their experience, expertise and wisdom. Others talked about editing updated versions of older works, the need for an editor to create and maintain style sheets, and the correspondence and conversations that have to take place between editor and author in pursuit of a perfect end product with the minimum of ruffling of feathers and maximum give-and-take.

Programme for Day 1

Suzette Kotze-Myburgh on micro-editing

The first two parallel morning sessions were soon underway: seasoned linguist and fiction editor Suzette Kotze-Myburgh taking the group of Afrikaans-language editors in a presentation entitled 'Voor en na: mikro-redigerig van twee fiksietekste'. The editors were all given the original texts to read through beforehand and she talked them through all the corrections she made to the manuscript to give them guidance on the process. She emphasised, in doing so, the intimacy of the process and of the relationship one develops with both manuscript and author, even though editor and author may never meet. She also raised the nettly question of the use of ungrammatical constructions in dialogue (does one keep them or edit them out?) and the problem (for editors) of younger writers writing in a mixture of languages – especially if word choice can lead to misleading messages.

Maire Fisher: voice and point of view

To illustrate the subject of her session, 'Maintaining voice and point of view', presenter Maire Fisher took an unusual approach: she turned her audience into writers! She literally walked the 20 attendees through the steps an author should take to create their characters physically and emotionally, as well as according to their likes and dislikes and their opinions. In this way the delegates built up a multifaceted persona about whom they then penned a brief description or short piece of narrative. In this creative manner, Maire certainly drove home the otherwise difficult-to-grasp aspect of many works of fiction: whose point of view is the narrative being related through, and how do we tell whether it has a genuine ring to it or not?

Afternoon session 1

After a hearty lunch put on by the catering team at Klein Waterval Riverside Lodge, and a good deal of networking, the afternoon's sessions began.

The 'Etienne and Kobus' show

Afrikaans-language attendees were treated to lively, well-informed presentations by Etienne Bonthuys ('Karakterisering') and Kobus Geldenhuys ('Afstof vir heruitgawe').

First off was Etienne Bonthuys, of the nb publishers/Queillerie stable, which publishes a wide range of genres. Supported by substantial handouts containing both the current wisdom and many examples to illustrate the subject-matter, he spoke at length about characterisation and how editors need to recognise authors' ways of contributing to it: word usage, sentence structure, dialogue and point of view. And, of course, how important it is for the editor to detect lapses in characterisation and draw the author's attention to them.

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The interesting observation made during the discussions was that publishing is no longer a gentleman's pursuit: it is now market-driven and the potential readership for any genre or particular title has to be clearly defined up front to avoid bad business decisions.

The day ended with a lively and highly entertaining presentation by Kobus Geldenhuys on the fascinating subject ('Afstof') of updating many of the Afrikaans youth classics of the 1970s and 80s. Issues included making the texts accessible to young readers of the 21st century and what language, idiom and images one changes to give such books a contemporary appeal. For example, kids then earned or spent five cents – what would the current equivalent be? And can one still refer to the sending of a telegram – in fact, does this still happen today, at least in the world of a child? Does one refer to movies/movies or fliks? Has the cellphone completely replaced the telephone? And wireless?

And whereas the kids of yesteryear showed deference to adults by using only Ma and Pa, Oom and Tannie, should the current, more common usage of 'jy' and 'jou' be reflected in such literature aimed at contemporary youngsters? Also, in the age of innocence, certain customs and behaviours were viewed as just that; but in an age of greater promiscuity and deviant behaviour (or at least their being dealt with more openly) can such customs and behaviours, with the new emotive layers added to them, be left in texts?

These and many more questions led Kobus to advocate an almost word-by-word re-evaluation of classics about characters such as Trompie and Saartjie. Interesting challenges for editors of such texts – which, it is said, many parents raised on them want their offspring to enjoy without their being so obviously dated.

... the editor has to be on top of all the detail in order to be able to check it for accuracy, authenticity or plausibility

Afternoon session 2

The English-language sessions were led by doyenne of editors Helen Moffett (editing different genres, from chick lit to crime thrillers: the skills and approaches required) and Gauteng freelance editor and writer Louis Greenberg (style sheets suited to fiction).

The English language workshop delegates were exposed to a wide variety of genres – presenter Helen Moffett's attempt at familiarising them with the characteristics of,

... if this workshop did nothing else, it served to fortify the fiction editors present at the workshop in more ways than one ...

for example, chic lit, modern romance, fantasy, memoir, sci-fi and vampire fiction, aided and abetted by concrete examples from a range of texts she'd edited.

Many passages later, the touchstones of each genre became more than familiar to those present, as were the different approaches on the part of the vigilant editor that each requires. Just one of the challenges involves keeping abreast of any technical details on which a particular piece of creative writing is based: whether it be skydiving or drug abuse (and its effects and side-effects), the editor has to be on top of all the detail in order to be able to check it for accuracy, authenticity or plausibility. No easy task, which usually involves a great deal of research – unless, that is, your author has done it all already and consulted experts in the field too. And to what extent are brands correctly cited – and therefore not likely to land either author or publisher in hot water!

Louis Greenberg rounded off the afternoon's proceedings by taking an enthusiastic group through the nitty-gritty of drawing up style sheets (those indispensable consistency tools) specifically for works of fiction. So many issues and preferences come into play – not to speak of a publisher's own house style – that at times it can be a bit of a minefield. For example, what should the style be for numbers, dates and time: words or figures in, say, a crime/detective thriller versus a historical romance? And what are the preferred spellings for imaginary/sci-fi/fantasy characters and objects, and are these spellings used consistently?

Programme for Day 2

Thursday's programme looked, inter alia, at perspective, at the correspondence between author and editor during the editing process, and at making judicious textual cuts – once again presented by some of the country's leading editors of fiction.

'Fortify an editor and they'll be capable of anything.' Well, if this workshop did nothing else, it served to fortify the fiction editors present at the workshop in more ways than one ...

At the end of Day 1, a KWV winemaker talked and tasted us through a selection of their Laborie range of wines – including their signature brandy that was declared the Best in the World, 2010! What a treat that was! Then, on the evening of Day 2, we were treated to two delicious

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Porcupine Ridge wines from the Boekenhoutskloof Estate in Franschhoek – their Sauvignon blanc and their Merlot – both of which helped to oil the networking and snacking that followed the last session of the day.

But that followed hard on the heels of another hard day's fortifying of another kind, of course: a morning of parallel Afrikaans- and English-language sessions and two joint sittings after lunch.

Hitchens on plot

Joanne Hitchens kicked off the morning sessions by talking and writing her audience through plot (versus story), at the outset stating, unequivocally: in fiction, the beginning and the ending must work well – the reader wants to be drawn into the text immediately (or perhaps they won't read it at all) and they want a completely compelling and satisfying ending – so ensure your author gets at least those things right. Through a number of exercises, this from-the-horse's-mouth presentation left the attendees in no doubt about the difference between plot and story (and whether the story has got a credible plot right) and about the nature of their intervention in this respect!

Steyn on perspektief

In the room alongside, meanwhile, doyenne of editing in a wide range of genres, Louise Steyn, talked and showed the group of avid Afrikaans-language editors through the subject of *Perspektief*. Their numbers were supplemented by Dr Amanda Lourens of the University of Stellenbosch (a student again, for a day) and *gesoute* editor and presenter Elsa Silke. (Interestingly, a number of Amanda's former students were in this group – well done, Amanda!) Louise's audience hung on every carefully chosen word this accomplished editor had to share with them on the subject.

Elsa Silke and editing translations: 'n Jas wat netjies pas?'

During the second morning session, Elsa Silke changed hats (from audience member to presenter) to share her knowledge and expertise in the area of editing translations – a sometimes neglected but nevertheless critically important facet of fiction editing. The title of her presentation said it all, 'n Jas wat netjies pas? 'n Vertaler se gedagtes oor die redigering van haar werk.' Some fascinating insights into this difficult area were aired ...

Prime cuts – Lynda Gilfillan on how to give text the chop

Meanwhile, back in the English-language session, one of the country's leading English editors, Lynda Gilfillan,

spoke on the subject of prime cuts – how and where to make cuts in an author's manuscript. But those present imbibed not just by listening: learning about the fiction editor's craft took place through working on a text supplied – and then seeing where and what Lynda had edited out. While there was not always unanimity on whether the suggested cuts were justified, this session gave those present greater insight into this crucial – often essential – step in the editing process.

Getting the correspondence right: Louis Greenberg

Louis Greenberg once again faced his enlarged audience as he took them through their paces on the subject of corresponding with your author about matters editorial. Delegates were asked to compose a letter to the author introducing themselves and then raising some initially perceived issues with the manuscript as a whole. When this reporter entered the venue, you could have heard the proverbial pin drop – so adeptly had he silenced the editorial lambs! Delegates were then invited to read out their draft letters, which proved, by and large, to be right on the button in the tact and diplomacy ratings.

The day ended gently (a soft landing) with a panel discussion chaired by workshop convenor Isabelle Delvare, and included seasoned editor Maire Fisher and two publishers – Nèlleke de Jager of Kwela Books and Penguin Southern Africa's Alison Lowry, just down from Johannesburg (thanks to you both for breaking into your heavy schedules and Franschhoek Literary Festival commitments to be with us).

The topics raised varied quite widely, but in essence looked at the production process (what an author and an editor should know about the life's journey of a book) and what publishers look for in an author, a manuscript – and, of course, an editor. The role of the publisher's book reader – in making that critical decision whether a commitment should be made to publish or not – was also raised.

And, we learned, sometimes the editor's role is that of polisher of an author's text prior to presentation to a publisher – an art that Maire in particular specialises in. The publishers sometimes (depending on the manuscript) see a need for three interventions – a desk edit (grammar, punctuation, spelling, factual inaccuracies (the 14-month pregnancy!)), and an edit particularly of the fiction-related aspects and then a proofread to tidy up and catch whatever both author and editor may have missed. In South Africa, where the market is SO small, these are sometimes regarded as unaffordable ... but what did emerge is the view that South African publishers are much more thorough in converting raw text to books than their overseas counterparts.

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Joanne Hichens at the brandy and wine tasting the workshop delegates were treated to



John Linnegar contemplates the future of fiction editing



Maire Fischer enjoying the fruits of the harvest



Pre-dinner snacks at Klein Waterval Riverside Lodge

During the closure, the delegates were asked to jot down on a piece of paper and hand in their response to this question: Which work of fiction would you strongly recommend to your fellow delegates as a must-read? Some interesting responses were received, including:

- Jasper Forde, *The Eyre Affair*
- Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things*
- Barbara Trapido, *The Lacuna*
- Michiel Heyns, *Lost Ground*
- Steve Toltz, *A Fraction of the Whole*
- K Sello Duiker, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*
- Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*
- Any Grace Paley novel
- Anita Diamond, *The Red Tent*
- Susan Howatch, *Glittering Images*
- Marlene van Niekerk, *Die Sneeusloper*
- Faulks on Fiction* (a BBC two-part programme)
- Stephen Chbosky, *The Perks of being a Wallflower*
- Abraham Verghese, *Cutting for Stone*

Book buyers – and publishers – take note: editors are an erudite, discriminating, well-read lot (oops, there I’ve used a string of adjectives – fiction editors to the rescue!).

Ed’s note: For the benefit of those not fortunate enough to attend the workshop in May, PEG is staging two events in Gauteng: on 4 June Alison Lowry entertained members at the annual Winter Warmer function on the subject of the fiction editor’s intervention in a text. In September, it’s likely that a number of seasoned editors will be taking northerners through their paces as fiction editors during National Book Week. 🍷

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Teksredaksie: wat om te kontroleer

Prof WAM Carstens

Dit het 'n hele boek geneem om uiteen te sit wat teksredakteurs doen: Onder andere die eise wat aan hulle gestel word, opleiding wat benodig word en die soort persoonlikheid wat hulle behoort te hê. Die boek is deurspek met lyste en tabelle om die inhoud meer toeganklik te maak. Daar is egter so baie te sê dat dit nie eens in een dik boek gedek kon word nie.

Teksredaksie as bedryf verg baie tyd en aandag, afgesien van die moeisame opleiding en die bemoeienis met taal en die bronne oor taal. Dit verg ook voortdurende opskerpings om jou vaardighede skerp te hou, ure se werk in 'n afgesonderde ruimte, dikwels deurnagwerkery, en so kan 'n mens aangaan om sake een na die ander op te noem. Dit is dus nie die maklikste manier om jou brood en botter te verdien nie – daarvan sal menige teksredakteur kan getuig. As dit goed werk, is dit wel 'n uiters bevredigende gevoel as die teks waaraan jy so hard geswoeg het uiteindelik in druk verskyn.

Wat doen teksredakteurs?

Dit het my en Kris van de Poel 'n hele boek (*Teksredaksie*, 2010, SUN Media, Stellenbosch) geneem om te probeer uiteen sit wat teksredakteurs doen, watter eise (opleiding, persoonlikheid, instelling teenoor werk, ens.) aan hulle gestel word, hoe hulle opgelei behoort te word, wat hulle alles moet weet (en dit is skrikwekkend baie!), watter soort persoonlikheid hulle behoort te hê (om die aard en omvang van die werk te kan hanteer), watter soorte (en vlakke van) teksredaksie daar is, hoe teksredakteurs te werk gaan as hulle gaan sit en die werk doen, waar teksredakteurs antwoorde op vrae gaan soek (en daar is

baie plekke), wat nie van teksredakteurs verwag kan word nie, hoe hulle moeilike kliënte moet/kan hanteer, e.s.m. Daar is so baie te sê oor die beroep dat ons dit nie eens in die een dik boek (543 bl.) kon regkry nie. Daar is nog heelwat meer te sê, maar dit laat ons eers vir 'n ander keer.

Toeganklikheid

Die boek self is deurspek met **lyste** en **tabelle** om die inhoud meer toeganklik te maak. Een so 'n lys is die onderstaande **uitlegkontrolelys** (bl. 395–397) wat gebruik kan word om seker te maak dat ten minste die aangeduide aspekte in die teks behoorlik gekontroleer is. Hierby sal nog moet kom ooreenstemmende lyste om die korrektheid van die **grammatika** te kontroleer, om **spelfoute** te identifiseer, om **styl-** en **registerfoute** uit te skakel, om **inhoudelike foute** te probeer uitskakel. Dit sal 'n aardige lang lys wees om alles bymekaar te sit en dit sal baie spasie in beslag neem. As vertrekpunt is die volgende lys wel sinvol. Vir die ander lyste kan die boek self geraadpleeg word – kyk in die besonder na skema 21 (bl. 288–289), skema 23 (bl. 334), skema 27 (bl. 380), skema 34 (bl. 470–471).

Uitlegkontrolelys

Taak	Ja	Nee
Het elke bladsy 'n nommer?		
Volg bladsye in die regte volgorde op mekaar?		
Is die bladsynommers deurgaans op dieselfde wyse (links, regs, middel, bo, onder) aangedui?		
Begin hoofstukke op nuwe bladsye?		
Volg die hoofstuknummers op mekaar?		
Is die hoofstukopskrifte op dieselfde wyse aangedui?		
Is die lettertipe en -grootte van die hoofstukopskrifte dieselfde?		
Begin die eerste reël van elke hoofstuk op dieselfde plek en op dieselfde wyse?		
Is die spasiering tussen die hoofstukopskrif en die eerste reël konsekwent?		
Is opskrifte se lettertipe en -grootte deurgaans dieselfde?		
Word opskrifte en subopskrifte van mekaar onderskei?		
Is inligting, paragrawe of lyste korrek gealfabetiseer?		
Is opskrifte in oorleg met korreksies in die teks reggestel?		

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Taak	Ja	Nee
Is tabelle op die regte plek op die bladsy geplaas?		
Is illustrasies op die regte plek op die bladsy geplaas?		
Is sketse en foto's op die regte plek op die bladsy geplaas?		
Is die tabelle, illustrasies, sketse en foto's in die korrekte volgorde geplaas?		
Het tabelle, illustrasies, sketse en foto's gepaste byskrifte?		
Word hierdie byskrifte konsekwent aangedui?		
Het tabelle, ens., duidelike en onderskeidende nommers?		
Word lyste gebruik om sake te orden? Indien wel word hierdie lyste deurgaans op dieselfde wyse aangedui?		
Word kolle en simbole deurgaans op dieselfde wyse gebruik?		
Is die titelbladsy korrek?		
Is die inhoudsopgawe korrek?		
Kom die name van hoofstukke en opskrifte in die inhoudsopgawe ooreen met dié in die teks self?		
Kom die bladsynommers in die inhoudsopgawe en dié in die teks self ooreen?		
Is die indeks korrek?		
Word eind- of voetnote konsekwent aangedui?		
Het alle note duidelike nommers?		
Kan elke nommer herlei word na 'n spesifieke deel in die teks?		
Het elke noot 'n nommer?		
Is daar note wat dieselfde nommer het?		
Is die loopopskrifte (kopskrifte ('headers') en voetskrifte ('footers')) by bladsye konsekwent in dieselfde formaat?		
Word voorbeelde in die teks deurgaans op dieselfde wyse aangedui?		
Indien voorbeelde met die hulp van nommers aangedui word, volg die nommers logies op mekaar?		
Word die dubbele aanhalingsstekens konsekwent gebruik vir direkte aanhalings?		
Word direkte aanhalings van indirekte aanhalings onderskei?		
Word aanhalings deurgaans op dieselfde wyse aangedui?		
Word enkelaanhalings konsekwent reg gebruik?		
Word dele in die teks op dieselfde wyse uitgelig deur kleur en skadu?		
Word verwysings konsekwent volgens die gekose verwysingsmetode gekies?		
Word die bibliografie korrek opgestel?		
Word alle bronne op dieselfde wyse aangedui?		
Is die spasiëring in die bibliografie konsekwent?		
Is die spasiëring in die teks konsekwent?		
Is kursivering konsekwent? Is daar nie te veel gekursiveer nie?		
Is vetdruk konsekwent? Is daar nie te veel vetdruk nie?		
Is onderstreping konsekwent? Is daar nie te veel onderstreping nie?		
Word nadruksmiddele dalk te veel gebruik? Is daar dalk woorde of sinne wat onderstreep, gekursiveer en in vetdruk is?		
Is die bladspieël duidelik?		
Is die leestekens korrek gebruik?		
Is woorde korrek afgebreek?		
Word syfers deurgaans dieselfde aangedui?		
Word telefoonnommers deurgaans op dieselfde wyse aangedui?		
Word geldbedrae deurgaans dieselfde aangedui?		
Is alle weesreëls uitgeskakel?		
Is alle weduweereëls uitgeskakel?		

Launch presentation of the *Oxford South African Concise Dictionary*

Jill Wolvaardt

In the last issue of PEGboard, we promised to bring you Jill Wolvaardt's address, which she gave at the launch of the Oxford South African Concise Dictionary in November 2010. As Executive Director of the Dictionary Unit for South African English, Rhodes University, Jill was involved in all aspects of production of this superb dictionary, a very useful addition to the arsenal of South African editors and writers.

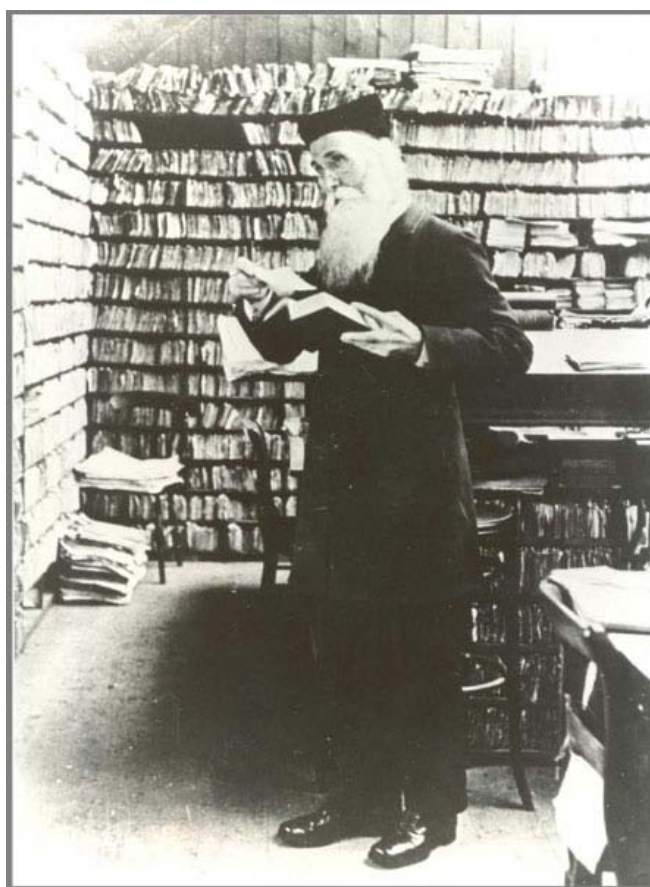
So here we have it ... the *Oxford South African Concise Dictionary* ... but what's the *point* of it, as one sceptic asked me one day? Why a South African English dictionary? It's a question I ponder a lot, and I realised it was time to clear up some misconceptions when another learned colleague was quoted as saying: 'Why would I prescribe a South African English dictionary – I want my students to write proper English!'

First of all, of course, it's not *just* a South African dictionary. Thanks to Oxford's expert research teams and their multi-million-word electronic database of English, the famous Oxford English Corpus, you can expect to find the most up-to-date record of current English whether British or American – or even Australian! In this new edition you'll also find invaluable language assistance: a guide to good English, usage notes to help with confusing spelling and grammar points, and fascinating background pieces on the language itself, as well as the development of the different varieties around the world. So you get a lot of bang for your bucks!

OK, so that's the *English* part of the dictionary dealt with, and if you'd like to know more about that, you'll find it in the middle pages of this edition; another new feature that we're proud of.

What's so 'uniquely South African' about it?

Perhaps it's worth remembering that the English we speak in South Africa is distinguished not just by those hardy perennials that appear on popular 'Seffrikan' websites. Sure, you'll find 'dagga' and 'robot' as well as 'braai' and 'boerewors', but there's a whole range of other vocabulary that derives from the many specific areas in South African culture that differ from those in other English-speaking countries. So, for example, our farmers dig *dams* for holding water, and keep their animals in *camps*; our lawyers – *attorneys* and *advocates*, rather than solicitors and barristers – advise us to sign an *ANC* before we marry, unless we want to be wed in



Sir James Murray in his 'scriptorium' in Oxford – surrounded by pigeonholes filled with millions of slips of paper, sent in by about 800 volunteer readers

community of property. Our social realities are reflected in our *informal settlements* and *townships*, where *previously disadvantaged* people may live in *zinc-roofed RDP houses* – or backyard shacks if they haven't benefited from *triple BEE*.

Or picture this scene: a *black diamond* drives out of his home in a *gated community*, turns on a *tickey* to avoid the *bergie* loitering outside, and then *puts foot* to meet his wife – a *kugel* from *Jozi* – at their *pondokkie* on the coast,

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which she's *zhooshing up* to make into their holiday home: a story incomprehensible to a non-South African, but composed of fairly ordinary South African English words that pepper our everyday lives.

And of course, English being a notoriously rapacious language, the South African version also has more than its fair share of words borrowed from our indigenous languages including Afrikaans; we happily attend *bosberaads*, *indabas* and *lekgotlas* – but would you know what to do if the municipality suggested a *letsema* in your neighbourhood? And what would you do with a *goema*, *imphepho*, a *masonja* or a *lesiba*? Play it, eat it, smoke it, or give it a wide berth? *You* may not recognise these words as English, but we can assure you that they appear commonly enough in the written environment of English to have entered into at least our South African variety of the language.

Judging words

So, where do we find these words, and how do we judge whether a word is characteristically South African English? I think, at this point, I should confess that it's not an exact science – to some extent lexicography is as subjective today as it was back in Samuel Johnson's day. Even though the mechanical objectivity of computer programs now plays a significant role, and there is less dependence on the judgement of crusty old academics closeted in darkened rooms, much of what eventually appears in any dictionary is a result of decisions made by people like me: people who have an insatiable curiosity about language, and an irritating tendency to nit-pick until every nuance of a word has been explored. And we rely on the time-honoured methods pioneered by the forefathers of English lexicography – not least of these, of course, Sir James Murray. Many of you will have seen the famous picture of Murray in his 'scriptorium' in Oxford – surrounded by pigeonholes filled with slips of paper: millions of slips of paper, sent in by some 800 volunteer readers.

Well, we don't have a 'scriptorium', but we do have the legacy left to us by South Africa's own father of lexicography, the late Professor Bill Branford – some 300 000 slips, housed in 15 filing cabinets downstairs in the venerable St Peter's Building at Rhodes University. (So venerable is the building that the filing cabinets have to be kept downstairs from our offices, in case they fall through the floor!)

A new South Africanism

However, research for the historical dictionary only went as far as the very first years of our 'new South Africa', so the language impact of the social changes of the decade

... the languages of the 'rainbow nation' increasingly colour the English we speak in South Africa today

and a half since then still need to be recorded. As I'm sure you've noticed, the languages of the 'rainbow nation' increasingly colour the English we speak in South Africa today. But let's get back to how we track down these new developments. For various reasons, we no longer have a team of readers poring through publications in search of neologisms, trendy new words or even new uses for old words. We do, however, occasionally still receive the odd useful alert from members of the public – the word 'beneficiation' is a good example; two or three years ago I received a slightly indignant letter from a gentleman in the Department of Minerals and Energy asking me to inform the Minister that she was using the term 'beneficiate' incorrectly – the 'correct' meaning, he insisted, was a very technical one to do with refining ore, and had nothing to do with adding value to minerals by processing them into finished products. Having tactfully explained to the gentleman that as a lexicographer, it wasn't my place to prescribe to anyone how they used a word (much less a government minister) I then embarked on the sort of sleuthing that makes our work (sometimes) fun. And I discovered a new South Africanism!

For the moment I want to focus on how I went about the detective work, as I think this usefully illustrates one of the ways in which my colleagues and I approach our research. You won't be surprised to hear, I'm sure, that the magic of Google plays a large part! But, of course, it's not simply a matter of typing in the word and letting the search engine spit out thousands of results. The skill lies in filtering the results to track down documents which meaningfully record how a word – like *beneficiate* – is being used, and using lateral thinking to investigate all the permutations in which it might appear. For example, is the word used only informally, or perhaps only as technical jargon amongst specialists? Does it appear more often as a verb, or is the noun form more common? Is it used in any fixed combinations? These are the questions typically posed by lexicographers through the ages, and previously would have involved sitting surrounded by those famous 'slips', and sorting them into piles for further analysis.

Thank heavens for computers! For Oxford's lexicographers preparing dictionaries of general English, the computer can do much more, as they can depend on their 'corpus' that I mentioned earlier – millions of words of text scanned

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... there's more to this 'uniquely South African dictionary' than simply the inclusion of new and exciting South African words

electronically from a vast spectrum of the written, and even spoken, word. At the moment that's not entirely feasible for South African English: the proportion of uniquely South African words in a general English corpus would mean kissing a lot of frogs before we found the prince, as it were! We are beginning to investigate how we can use corpus research to help us, but in the meantime it's still down to the tried and trusted methodology of reading anything and everything that crosses our path – and seeking out other sources using the internet. Typically, when we spot something that strikes us as unusual in some way – say when glancing through an online newspaper – we'll check back across our existing dictionaries to see if we've already recorded it, then start off down the internet trail after more examples.

The colours of our 'rainbow nation'

Getting back to my example of 'beneficiate', how did we decide that it should go into the *South African Concise*? Our rule of thumb is that it should appear in at least five different English language sources over a period of at least five years. But what about a word like 'vuvuzela'? Does it really have enough history to merit its inclusion? I think with 'pop' words like this, our criteria are a bit more flexible. With a dictionary appearing in the year South Africa hosted the World Cup soccer, it would have been unthinkable to leave out the buzz word of the tournament, even if it had been coined only the year before. In the event, 'vuvuzela' does have a couple of years behind it, if not perhaps the five that we would normally consider prerequisite for an entry – and it looks like having a couple more to run, if the noisy controversy around it continues!

There are, however, other buzz words that we put into a sort of B team while we evaluate whether they'll find the energy to keep going. One of these, for example, is 'ayoba'. It's apparently been around in township English for a while, but only really started appearing in the mainstream when MTN began using it in their World Cup advertising campaign. It's the sort of word that may very well be taken up in the long term because it's easy to pronounce, it may provide a new alternative to the enduring 'cool', and it's already generated derivatives

like 'ayobanness' and 'not-ayoba'; but is it the sort of word that dates, and dates the user? Will it be soooo last year by next year? We're not sure, so we're keeping a watching brief on it.

Finally, I think it's worth pointing out that there's more to this 'uniquely South African dictionary' than simply the inclusion of new and exciting South African words. In adapting the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* to 'South Africanise' it, we feel we've added value by analysing each and every entry to judge its relevance to a South African reader.

For the first edition, we were given the unenviable task of cutting the whole dictionary by 17%, while still adding in South African vocabulary. I don't have time to describe the whole process here, but suffice it to say that there were a lot of animated discussions between the editorial team as to what should stay and what should go! Because, of course, it's not just a matter of deciding whether a word from British or American English crops up in everyday usage in South Africa, but also whether our readership would encounter it elsewhere. And then, as I pointed out earlier, there are the ordinary English words that have a different, or extended, meaning in South Africa, which are frequently not represented in the general English dictionaries. My personal litmus test of whether a dictionary is truly South African is how the word 'dam' is treated: if the definition in a so-called South African dictionary doesn't refer to a 'man-made pond' or similar, then the writers haven't been thinking like South Africans!

Is thinking like a South African important? We think so. In producing a dictionary that includes English as we speak it in South Africa, we reflect the world from our southern perspective, while still giving a view and understanding of the language as it is used elsewhere in the English-speaking world. Perhaps it helps our English to promote inclusivity instead of simply projecting the sometimes alien-seeming culture of Britain and North America.

These are some of the things I ponder when reflecting on 'what's the point?' of a South African English dictionary; now it's time for me to let you look for yourselves. I hope you'll all find something to educate or entertain you in the *Oxford South African Concise Dictionary*.

And please remember – there's no prize for finding the first mistake, but we won't throw you out of the party either! 🍷