

Sparing and deliberate

André Snyders

Many style guides advise writers to avoid hyperbole. This is probably sensible advice but it would be a pity if they created the impression that hyperbole was always a lapse, or that using it was somehow shameful. It can be a very useful rhetorical device when used properly and editors should be aware of how to use it and when to excise it. The general rule seems to be that hyperbole should be used sparingly and deliberately.

Buzz Lightyear, a fictional movie character, is one of the best-known users and abusers of hyperbole. His trademark catch-phrase, 'to infinity and beyond', is a perfect parody of the sort of naive exaggeration that editors and authors need to guard against. Buzz initially has no idea of the limitation of his powers and feels devastated when he realises that his false exaggeration has made him look foolish. We can avoid Buzz's predicament by knowing what to look for. Hyperbole is often accomplished via comparisons, similes, and metaphors, so removing it often requires untangling sentences and thinking carefully about which facts require emphasis.

Fowler reminds us that hyperbole is especially acceptable when the exaggeration is used not to deceive but to emphasise. This sort of hyperbole adds zest to speech and writing and adds to the richness of many of our conversations. Trade union leaders will often complain that 'the workers' children are starving' and opposition leaders will regularly argue that the government is about to 'destroy our homes and schools' but these overstatements are deliberate and we are not meant to take them too literally. Great orators and writers have used hyperbole to create strong impressions and evoke strong feelings but we would do well to stick to the facts most of the time.

Scientists were once renowned for simple language and strict adherence to the facts. James D. Watson and Francis Crick discovered the structure of DNA and published their astonishing results in an article. The opening paragraph in their article is a model of clarity and simplicity: 'We wish to suggest a structure for the salt of deoxyribose nucleic acid (DNA). This structure

has novel features which are of considerable biological interest.'

Unfortunately, not all of us are as restrained as Crick and Watson. Hyperbole is often misused or overused. *The Wall Street Journal* reports that 'Apple CEO Steve Jobs famously uses keynotes to introduce new products and features. He also uses them to unleash a flood of hyperbole that would make anyone else look like a cheerleader or a conman.' Mr Jobs sells some impressive products but he uses so many superlatives (great, greatest, incredible, awesome, amazing, gorgeous and revolutionary) that his message loses much of its power. We have come to expect this in advertising and in entertainment but the use of hyperbole in science and in politics can have far more serious consequences.

Leo Hickman (*Guardian*, November 2007) wrote that 'we live in an age where we seem to revel in the scare story. Some would argue that climate change is just such a story. Day after day we read scientific reports pointing to an ever worsening outlook for our species. But the law of diminishing returns says that no matter how pressing or compelling the message, the more we hear it, the less impact it has on us over time. Rather predictably, talk of "eco fatigue" is beginning to surface.' Hickman quotes Professor Mike Hulme, director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, who warned scientists and the media (*cont.*)

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(from page 1) 'against the use of hyperbolic language when speaking about climate change scenarios. In particular, he warned against using the words "disaster", "apocalypse" and "catastrophe". His own research showed that such terms generated apathy among the intended audience.'

Editors cannot afford to be apathetic about hyperbole. Authors and publishers will always try to emphasise the importance of their work because success often demands a certain level of self-promotion and daring. Only by ensuring that hyperbole is used sparingly and deliberately can we justify adding a few superlatives to our PEG profiles.

Some examples

These books weigh a ton; I could eat a horse; This kitchen gadget will revolutionise your life.

Some literary examples

People moved slowly then. There was no hurry, for there was nowhere to go, nothing to buy and no money to buy it with, nothing to see outside the boundaries of Maycomb County. *Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird.*

Here once the embattled farmers stood/ And fired the shot heard round the world. *Ralph Waldo Emerson, The Concord Hymn.*

The Editor's Inkspot



I recently bought a new atlas to help me through some history books. Historians who write well (like Anthony Beevor and Barbara Tuchman) make reading history a pleasure. My weakness is that I find it hard to imagine the geography they describe without consulting an atlas. When Jeff Peires describes the Xhosa moving their cattle across the Kei River or into the Cederberg mountains, I like to see the wrinkly brown contours and imagine their trek. Unfortunately, my atlas (*The Times*) generally shows the names of towns only in the local language. Major cities like Moskva (Moscow) have the familiar English name added below but the Gulf of Corinth, for example, is listed as *Korinthiakos Kolpos*. I'm pleased to have learned a bit of Greek but this convention makes it tough to follow the battles on Kriti (Crete) or in the Kavkaz (Caucasus). Perhaps I should be pleased they did not use Cyrillic.

Diversity is very fashionable at the moment. The general idea seems to be that variety is good because it makes things more robust and fosters creativity. The conventional view is that diversity in our field means 'more than one language' but that view can be short-sighted. The real test is often the amount of diversity within a language. Some languages seem to me to be more internally diverse than others and some of the most widespread languages also seem to be the most diverse. Read any novel published in English a hundred years ago and you'll see what I mean. Our history has preserved an astonishing amount of diversity in writing if we only take the time to find it. The obvious parallel is human genes; too little variety in the gene pool leads to inbreeding and an increased chance of extinction. Perhaps that's why my thesaurus bulges with thousands of words and phrases collected over many years. We collect them because we might need them.

PEGboard

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Meetings in Gauteng are generally held on the last Saturday of January, April, July and October, unless they coincide with a public holiday. Meetings in Cape Town are held on ad hoc dates.

Cape Town Book Fair 2008

The PEG stand was one of many at the CTIBF held in June this year but we defended our modest patch with aplomb. Visitors to our stand, in fact anyone who strayed close enough, left with a clear idea of what we do, the role we play in the great publishing circus that was on display at the Fair, and a vague impression of our enthusiasm. We shared the same venue with many others but each stall had its own aims: publishing managers tended their small herds of assistants while authors, buyers and printers trotted from aisle to aisle browsing and listening. The range of books and other book-related services on display was impressive and well worth the cost of a ticket.

Here are some impressions from PEGgers who attended the Fair:

I loved the Book Fair, as I always do, for its sheer variety. While I did not meet many people on Sunday coming to enquire at the PEG stand, I did think the profile achieved by our presence there was well worth it. It certainly gives the organisation a great deal more standing in the literary community. The Book Fair is always a great place to network and meet like-minded people, where being surrounded by books is their idea of heaven (and mine). *Paula Marais, Logogog.*

My thanks to Ken and Kristina for organising our part in the event so well. I must say that when we first discussed having a presence at the fair a couple of years ago, I had my doubts that it would be worth the expense and effort. I now eat my words. I was there on an apparently 'relatively' quiet morning and there was definitely no time to become bored or even to sit down quietly for a minute. There's no doubt that we'll be able to welcome a number of new members as a result of our stand, especially in the Cape. Thanks again, it was a great experience. *Sharon Montgomery.*

I enjoyed the Book Fair – it was my first encounter and rather overwhelming. Thank you for the chance to participate in such a huge event. *Erica du Preez.*

Doing an afternoon shift on the stand at the CTBF was a worthwhile experience. Meeting and interacting with colleagues from SATI and PEG on the stand was enjoyable and informative. Many people visited the stand, some were interested in doing proofreading and editing work, others wanted to know how to find an editor or proofreader. One was a bookseller and another a printer wanting to point self-published authors in the right direction. At least four were researching or writing books and needed help with structuring and editing. Goody bags containing business cards were handed out and further down the line work may filter through. There were many thought-provoking talks to attend and hear what writers had to say about issues of concern in South African publishing. *Denise Harris.*

Although it was the first time I assisted at the PEG stand at the Book Fair, and I was only able to be there for 2 hours on the Sunday morning, I have a few strong first impressions. Briefly: the wide and varied interest in the stall (although small in size), and the enthusiastic and helpful assistance given by those who staffed the stall. I look forward to joining PEG in the near future. *Dr Margie J Hurndall (freelancer specialising in scientific and technical texts; member of SATI).*

The stand was excellent. The signage and banners were visual and to-the-point, stating exactly what we are about. Since the exhibition space was fairly small, it would have been easy to overcrowd the display. However, you balanced it very well with enough colour and just enough words. Cost permitting, it would be great to have a bigger stand next year and perhaps offer visitors the opportunity to sit on a couch and spend some time chatting. This can create a very welcoming atmosphere – and an opportunity to rest one's legs. While working at the stand, I managed to establish contact with quite a number of potential clients and I'm eager to see if any concrete work transpires. My impression of the Book Fair is, in one word: overwhelming. *Demyan Rossouw.*

It was a very special opportunity to be at the stand. I met people from all walks of life. From their questions I learned a lot about the variety and the possibilities in the language professions. As I browsed SATI's website to be prepared for the questions that might come up I also learned more about the organisation of which I'm actually a member. My impressions of the exhibition itself: people lost in browsing and reading and lively discussions. *Marley Daghari.*



A view of the PEG stand (P12) and our position on one of the aisles in the Book Fair hall.

A guide to using corpora

We all have a vague sense of real writing trends because of our own reading and the interaction we have with clients and publishers. But sometimes a 'vague sense' is not enough. Having access to an electronic corpus can be a great help to an editor. A corpus is simply a body or collection of written or spoken material in a machine-readable form. One example is the British National Corpus, a 100 million-word collection of a range of spoken and written texts, created in the 1990s by a consortium of publishers, universities and the British Library.

Many of them require an expensive subscription but there are at least three free ones, set up by Prof. Mark Davies, a public-spirited academic in the US. Once you are familiar with how they work, there are many things you can do with them to check whether your intuitions about usage are correct. Prof. Davies offers a few tips on how to make the best use of the various corpora. His guide is hard to beat, so the text that follows is based on his original guide.

Here are the links:

<http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>

<http://corpus.byu.edu/time/>

<http://www.americancorpus.org/>

British National Corpus

You can search by words (*mysterious*), phrases (*fairly certain*), lemmas (all forms of words), wildcards (*un*ly or r?n**), and other more complex searches.

You can search for collocates (words nearby a given word), which often provides insight into the meaning of a given word. For example, you can search for the most common nouns near *thick*, adjectives near *smile* (sorted by relevance), nouns after *look into*, or words starting with *clos** near *eyes*.

You can also include register information directly as part of the query. This allows you to see how words and phrases vary across speech and many different types of written texts.

Semantically oriented searches

For example, you can compare the most frequent nouns that appear with *small* and *little*, the most frequent adjectives with *men* and *women*, or the most frequent nouns with *utter* and *sheer*. You can also find the frequency and distribution of synonyms of a given word, such as *beautiful* or the verb *clean*. Finally, you can create customized lists for any category that interests you, and then re-use these in subsequent queries (such as *colours + clothes*, or *words related to beautiful + forms of woman*).

TIME Magazine Corpus

This website allows users to search quickly and easily more than 100 million words of text of American English from 1923 to the present, as found in *TIME* magazine. You can see how words and phrases have increased and decreased in usage and see how words have changed meaning over time.

The overall frequency over time of words and phrases that were related to changes in society and culture, or historical events, such as *flapper** (*flapper*, *flappers*, *flapperdom*, etc), *cinemaddict**, *fascist**, *rocket**, *reds*, *hippy/hippies*, *impeach**, *new age*, *political* correct**, *e(-)mail*, and *global warming*.

Changes in the language itself, such as the rise and fall of words and phrases like *far-out*, *famed*, *wangle*, *funky*, *beauteous*, *nifty*, or *freak out* can be discerned. You can also search for changes in grammatical constructions like *end up V-ing* or *going to V*, phrasal verbs with *up* (e.g. *make up*, *show up*), the use of *whom*, and the use of preposition stranding (e.g. *someone to talk with*).

Trends in the use of parts of words (showing how word roots, prefixes, and suffixes are being used over time in other words), such as *-heart-* (compare *earlier* and *later*), *-home-*, *counter-*, *-dom* (compare *earlier* and *later*), *-aholic* (e.g. *chocoholic*), and *-gate* in the 1990s (e.g. *Monicagate*) can also be monitored.

You can also have the corpus generate a list of words that were used more in one period than in another, even when you don't know what the specified words might be. The corpus can show how the meanings of words have changed over time, by looking at changes in collocates (co-occurring words). For example, the collocates of *chip*, *engine*, or *web* have changed recently, owing to changes in technology. Notice also how this can signal cultural changes over time, such as adjectives used with *wife* in the 1920s–1930s (which might now be politically incorrect).

The Corpus of American English

The Corpus of American English (not to be confused with the American National Corpus) is the first large, balanced corpus of contemporary American English. It is freely available online, and it is related to other large corpora. This corpus contains more than 360 million words of text, including 20 million words each year from 1990 to 2007, and it is equally divided among the spoken word, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts. The corpus is updated at least twice each year, and serves as a record of linguistic changes in American English. *André Snyders*

Rates for copy editing and proofreading

John Linnegar

Western Cape meeting, Saturday 2 August.

Almost 40 PEG members and guests filled the basement reading area of the Book Lounge (despite glorious sunshine) to contribute their experiences of either charging or being offered different rates for proofreading and copy editing. Inevitably, no standard rates could be arrived at, a reflection of the myriad publications and relationships that exist in the publishing industry.

The meeting concluded with members raising a number of questions relating to English grammar. Voted 'best question' was Linda Louw's about the style for spelling and punctuating degrees — bachelor's, honours, master's and doctoral being the correct forms.

At Saturday's meeting the question on everyone's lips was probably 'Am I charging (or being paid) enough for all the hard work I do on manuscripts and page proofs?' In an attempt to educate ourselves regarding rates, several of those present shared their experiences. Soon one thing became clear: there's little uniformity when it comes to offering or calculating rates: per printed page, per manuscript page, per thousand words, and even per hour, are clearly all measures used to calculate the rate per job.

Some agreement seemed to be reached, though, that, whatever method was used, the overall payment was more or less the same: a rate equivalent to about R120 to R150 an hour. It was suggested that members use this as a yardstick when they are asked to provide a quotation for editing and proofreading work.

After some input from those present, it would seem that word rates for copy editing range from 16,5c to 20c; per page rates within the R25 to R70 band (the latter figure for FET books). The per page rate for a 'heavy edit' could be as much as R80 to R100. A quasi-government institution pays 20c per word. Editing technical subjects for GET/FET carries a higher rate: about R50 to R80 per typeset page.

'It would seem that word rates for copy editing range from 16,5c to 20c'

Going word rates for writing, well below the recommended SAFREA rate of R2,50 to R3,50, seem to be around R1,50 (B2B) and R2,20 (trade).

For proofreading, experiences vary too. Freelancers are being paid from as little as R9 per page for first page proofs to as much as R26 (quasi-government), depending upon the grade, level of complexity, client

and urgency. One member proofread an FET textbook at R16 per page. Other members reported hourly rates ranging from R100 to R160.

'Advertising agencies have been known to pay as much as R300 to R350 per hour for proofreading with a very fast turnaround'

Advertising agencies have been known to pay as much as R300 to R350 per hour for proofreading with a very fast turnaround. In the realm of magazines, a member reported being paid R60 per page for proofreading either first or second proofs; another reported charging R34–36 per proofread page.

It was generally agreed that work for corporates and quasi-government institutions (for example, 20c/word) pays somewhat better than that commissioned by publishers (thanks to more generous budgets and a greater preoccupation with corporate image), and that work from overseas clients also offered better returns on effort.

'Expressly excluded from the purview of thesis editing is reference checking and the compilation of any preliminary or end matter'

Regarding the copy editing of theses in particular some strong feelings were expressed. One word rate for theses was given as 22c. An important issue is the extent to which editors can perform their task: in other words, how far does one go before the work is no longer the student's own? Certainly 'copy editing' should stretch no further than dotting I's and crossing T's and imposing consistency throughout, and any questions regarding content errors or omissions should be raised as author queries for the writer to resolve. Expressly excluded from the purview of editing is reference checking and the compilation of any preliminary or end matter. While those tasks should be the responsibility of the student, if they specifically ask for help with compiling them, they should be informed in advance of the additional costs involved (between R300 and R600 per task).

For comparison, some rates for translation were given. For example, in and out of our indigenous languages: between R60 and R80 per 100 words; English–Afrikaans R50 to R70 per 100 words; French–English–French between R60 and R115 per 100 words.

Diary column: Editors are critical

Hannah Theron

The title of this diary column is ambiguous, I know, but I've just declared a truce; I'm leaving ambiguity alone for a bit. After seven weeks of ruthlessly searching for it and carefully rewriting each phrase, I am prepared to let it slide for a bit.

I don't usually work on medical texts but my son got me into this latest job. He had trouble swallowing so we visited a throat doctor who also happens to be a leading writer on oesophageal complaints. While we waited for my son's test results he found out that I was a proofreader and, bingo, he hired me to work on his latest revision of the *Encyclopaedia of the Throat: Beyond the Epiglottis*. Although, when I say he found out that I'm a proofreader, what I really mean is that I saw the invoice and asked how the hell I was supposed to come up with that sort of cash when I'm just a single-mom proofreader and my biggest client has just gone bust. He offered me the job right away.

My main job now is to edit and insert little comments about new work done by various doctors. After that, I have to revise the index and check the redrawn diagrams. I have reached the pharynx. Wish me luck for the rest. The encyclopaedia work is quite nice really, especially since my cousin, Francine, moved into our flat. Francine is now divorced and needs a place to stay.

She's also very glum and needs something to keep her busy. While I work on the computer I have loaned from the neighbour, I set her to work checking the disease section (on paper). There's nothing like reading about retropharyngeal abscesses to take your mind off an ugly divorce. She's now practically an expert on oesophageal complaints and I might even let her have a go at the otolaryngology definitions section. I seem to have my own little sweatshop going in Germiston. Francine scribbles and sniffs away while I look out over Jo'burg from my perch in Primrose. I see heavy rain clouds over Orange Grove and wonder whether the lightning might strike the good doctor's offices and erase all electronic records of my debt to him. In the meantime, I'm keeping my throat healthy with generous doses of medicinal brandy.

I still miss my big clients. I yearn for paychecks that come in like a big wave: the cash fills up the tidal pool and you can splash around in it for a few weeks until it all seeps away and you are left hot and dry and thirsty. I worked for a Manhattan-based foundation until a big deadline was missed. They had given me their 10-year Review to edit but my laptop battery died just after the internet café closed and my invoice was the only email that made it through. Sadly, my Review contract was reviewed and now there are no more deadlines to miss.

TeX and ReferenceChecker

TeX is a typesetting language that is often of specific interest to editors and proofreaders who work on scientific texts. Instead of visually formatting your text, you enter your manuscript text intertwined with TeX commands in a plain text file. You then run TeX to produce formatted output, such as a PDF file. Thus, in contrast to standard word processors, your document is a separate file that does not pretend to be a representation of the final typeset output, and so it can be easily edited and manipulated.

TeX is popular in academia, especially in the maths and physics communities

According to Wikipedia, TeX is considered by many to be the best way to typeset complex mathematical formulae. TeX is popular in academia, especially in the mathematics and physics communities. It has largely displaced Unix troff, the other favoured formatter, in many Unix installations, which use both for different purposes. It is now also being used for many other typesetting tasks, especially in the form of LaTeX and other template packages.

ReferenceChecker

According to its developers, ReferenceChecker is 'a macro that checks if references in a Microsoft Word document are cited correctly'. It finds all name-date or number citations in a document and checks them against the references. It displays a list of matches and mismatches. It does not add mark-up to your documents, make corrections or convert reference formats. It can be installed and run as a 'Word for Windows' macro. You can download the latest version free of charge (from www.goodcitations.com) and use it for up to 10 days from installation.

Advice for editors

The developers of the programme have this advice for copy editors: If you work on Word documents with name+date (APA/Harvard style) or number (Vancouver) references, ReferenceChecker will save you time in checking the reference items and citations. It will not perform any other copy editing checks for such things as spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. (though, of course, some mismatches identified by ReferenceChecker may be a result of spelling or punctuation errors).

English for Work symposium

John Linnegar

Wits Campus, 30 June to 1 July 2008. Two days of presentations on the subject of English proficiency in the workplace by experts from around the globe raised a number of pertinent issues for South Africans to take note of as we grapple with intercultural communication in a language 'foreign' to the majority of our citizens.

At first glance, the subject of this British Council-organised symposium might seem a platform for just another abstruse academic talk shop. But the two days of presentations and discussions were anything but: the 60 or so delegates were presented with case studies involving real situations in Europe, Africa and Asia in which communication in English presented enormous problems that simply had to be overcome if organisations were to survive – or at least remain functional and profitable. The symposium objective: to investigate a way to deliver a cohesive long-term English for the Workplace strategy for southern Africa that will contribute to the professional development and empowerment of the workforce.

Starting at the heartland of standard English, we learnt from John Smith, ESOL Division Manager of a leading UK college, about the British government's response to dealing with the influx of non-English-speakers in the workplace, if only to deal with the risks to human health and safety that an inability to comprehend basic English presents. The government offered training subsidies for every 'foreigner' put through functional English courses, training that was given by approved training institutions.

Across the globe, we learnt from the British Council's Liam Brown, the government of Singapore, through its national Critical Enabling Skills Training and Employability Skills Training programmes, took the initiative to bring commerce and industry into the knowledge economy by revamping workforce training and building relationships between government, employers and educators. That country's back-to-basics approach to teaching English for the workplace contributed significantly towards achieving the primary goal of retraining an ageing workforce to deal with the demands of the knowledge economy. The major spin-off was the positive impact the strategy had on the national economy.

Closer to home, among the local presenters two fascinating projects grabbed the delegates' attention: first, Myles Holloway and Maura Mbunyusa shared with us their experience of training Language Proficiency in English to members of the South African Police Service; second, Debbie le Roux, Director of The Concise Business Language Institute, awed us with her dedicated, highly energetic approach to teaching written language skills for

business in local companies and then providing ongoing on-the-job training and assessment to ensure that knowledge and skills were both retained and put into practice.

Holloway and Mbunyusa spoke of the widespread resistance to change in an institution much in need of it, of the woefully inadequate facilities available for training in the SAPS and of neglecting to fit personnel to training courses. A lack of language proficiency on the part of a member of the police force can have a profound effect in law: taking statements and writing affidavits in English being only two of many procedures requiring a sound knowledge of the language. Imagine having your otherwise watertight case thrown out of court because a police officer wrote the pronoun 'she' on an affidavit when the accused was male!

On a different tack, the International House/Language Lab's Colin Michell spoke of his organisation's experiences in training corporate staff in business English to meet management's expressed needs: answering the telephone, greeting and entertaining people, and generally communicating with an organisation's external audience. Heavily accented English and inappropriate turns of phrase in particular ('Hello, how are you?' when answering an incoming call) have to be worked on, using locally produced materials.

Nhlanhla Thwala, Director of the Wits Language School, spoke entertainingly of the problems surrounding the use of Fanakalo on the mines. While it is a convenient lingua franca in that unique working environment, Fanakalo is also socially isolating, because outside the workplace only local languages are spoken (Sepedi, Sesotho, and so on). As a result, outsiders from other areas feel isolated and excluded. For this and other reasons, the bigger mining houses have been introducing English as lingua franca, contributing at the same time to a linguistic Tower of Babel: at different levels, Fanakalo, Sepedi, Afrikaans and English are used in the same environment!

For local attendees, no less for PEG members Mary Hazelton, Hester van der Walt, Fiona Wallace and John Linnegar, perhaps most interesting of all was Christine Winberg's presentation on research done at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology aimed at aligning communication practices in workplaces and higher education.

As head of department responsible for academic staff development, Christine has been involved in a number of projects – to do with the training of engineers, architects and radiotherapists – in which the academic courseware has been compared with the

actual processes and procedures that professionals in the workplace experience day to day. An interesting finding of her department's research was that the curriculum has become out of step with the actual needs and practices of the workplace. How people interact and how they gather and share information in the modern business – for example, in formal and informal meetings, via email, through contracts, drawings and diagrams, and in interviews – are somewhat different from what students are taught. She made the strong point that both tertiary textbooks and lecturers need to change to bridge the gap between theory and experience, even to the point of granting lecturers sabbaticals to spend time shadowing practitioners – including the 'language' used in day-to-day interactions.

The symposium was opened by the British Council in Southern Africa's Paul Woods and facilitated by Mark Krzanowski of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, University of London – a native Pole who himself was a learner of English as a foreign language and who now consults on language training methodologies in the field. The gathering was successfully convened by Frans du Toit, founder member of the South African Association of Teachers of English as an International Language (SATEIL). He expressed the hope in his closing words that this meeting would be the first of many in pursuit of solutions to the challenges facing English in the workplace – that is, as a means of promoting workforce development and empowerment in South Africa.

PEG profile: Paula Marais and Logogog

Paula Marais was one of the Jo'burg PEGgers who helped out at the Book Fair in Cape Town. In between her meetings with clients, prospective clients and authors, Paula spent some time at the PEG stand getting to know members of PEG and SATI. I'm pleased to have met her because Paula's business, Logogog, offers the rest of us freelancers a good example of a new way of doing things. Paula has assembled a team (the brochure says 'crew') of freelancers who are skilled in writing, publicity, research, editing, and project management. Paula's phrase for this mix of work is 'words at work' or 'prose with a purpose', and I think those phrases sum it up quite neatly.

Can freelancers work as a team? Many freelance editors cherish their independence and the freedom that gives them. Being part of a team complicates things a bit but it also has its benefits. As Paula explained to me over lunch at Mugg and Bean, the crew at Logogog have to be multi-talented; they cover for each other where possible, which makes it easier for the individual members to handle sudden family crises or unexpected hurdles. It also makes a compelling business proposition: clients benefit because they know they're not putting all their eggs in one basket. When I'm editing a manuscript and I fall seriously ill, the whole job stops; that's an implicit risk that most clients seldom consider. I'm surprised more freelancers have not tried this model; perhaps there are a few other crews out there that I have not yet heard of, but banding together is rare, even though it seems a logical step for a freelancer to take.

But logical steps seldom seem so logical when you're the one taking them. Paula's own education and wide experience go some way toward explaining her decision to set up Logogog. Paula is a linguist and a writer. She has a degree in languages from the University of Cape Town, an honours degree in Publishing Studies from the University of the Witwatersrand and a diploma in Journalism from the Morris College of Journalism in London. After seeing her slick website and handy brochure I was not

surprised to hear that she has 12 years of experience in marketing. With all those skills to draw on, it's no wonder Paula chose to work as a director, doing her own writing and editing but also leading a team of writers, editors and publicists.

The members of Paula's team work for Logogog but are still able to pursue other ideas and projects. I imagine occasional overlapping deadlines make this hard to manage but the rewards are presumably worth the trouble. The crew includes Bronwyn Burns (writer and publicist), Teri Glass (writer and assistant publicist), Leonie Smith, (editorial assistant), Clea Neofytou (communications executive), Mandy van Staden (writer), and Liz van Wijk (editor).

Liz van Wijk, the editor in the Logogog team, is also a member PEG and has extensive experience. Her short web bio gives a good idea of her background: 'After 30 years of high school English teaching in the Eastern and Western Cape, Liz spent five years in Pakistan and China teaching teachers English and how to teach it. When she was younger she studied languages and education at Rhodes University and later, when her children were at primary school, librarianship with UNISA. Recently she has been involved in ABET teaching in Graaff-Reinet.'

The Logogog team has done work for many clients in South Africa and abroad. Their website highlights praise and recommendations from Pan Macmillan South Africa, Absolute Magazine, BDO Spencer Steward Service, St Andrews School, and many more. Reading through the list reminded me of Tiffany Markman's comments in a previous PEG profile: editors need to cross-sell and offer clients enough to keep them interested.

A word on the name: Logogog takes its name from the word 'logogogue', which refers to a person who leads others in the use of words or by their use of words. It's not in the concise OED but just think of 'pedagogue' and you're on the right path.
André Snyders