

A better book fair: Cape Town 2014

By Corné Jansé van Rensburg and Alison M Downie

Photographs by Izak de Vries

The South African Book Fair (SABF) took place from 13 to 15 June 2014 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. The event was very well organised by Thebe Reed Exhibitions and the cold, wintry weather did little to deter the bibliophile public. The Professional Editors' Group, sharing a corner stand opposite the children's corner with SATI and MLA, was well represented and actively promoted at the fair. Volunteers manned the stand in slots during the three days and answered questions, provided information and handed out goody bags with members' information and promotional material to interested members of the public.

The fair offered a wide variety of interesting events at two literary forums on the exhibition floor and in two breakaway rooms. (These events are the heartbeat of the fair and the association should consider spending more time and planning on this important means of communication.) The Cape Town Branch of PEG organised the following four events, which were extremely well attended by the public:

- **'Career opportunities in the bookmaking process'** presented by Inga Norenus: Do you love books and dream of working with them in some capacity? Perhaps words are your forte and you'd love to edit or write. Perhaps you enjoy the look and feel of books and wonder about the design and layout. Or perhaps your passion lies in promoting books – getting the world to read them. Find out what's involved in the making of a book to see how your skills might fit you for a career in the world of book publishing;
- **'Mentorship in the world of editing'** presented by Inga Norenus, Callan Wienberg and John Linnegar: You've done an editing course and perhaps edited a friend's thesis or a community newsletter. You want to launch your editing career, but you're not sure of yourself ... Come and find out how a PEG mentorship can help you improve your skills and develop your confidence under the constructive guidance of a mentor with many years' experience;
- **'The editor's role in self-publishing'** panel discussion with Maya Fowler-Sutherland, Peter Merrington and Ken McGillivray, led by Corné Janse van Rensburg: The editor is beginning to play an increasingly important role when an author wants to publish a manuscript themselves. Very often the editor's role encompasses much more than one would expect. Are you interested in editing for self-publishing? Come and listen to our panel of experienced editors and learn how to approach, manage and exploit this exciting new field;
- **'Editing fiction for authors and freelance editors'** presented by Izak de Vries: A hands-on session about effective fiction-writing editing, including character, voice, point of view, idiom, setting, and pace and dialogue.

PEG would like to thank most warmly the presenters and the 14 volunteers who were the face of the association at the fair. Without your generosity and enthusiasm this year's fair would not have been the most successful one to date. We look forward to the next SABF to be held in Sandton in June 2015. ➤



LAPA Publishers



The children's area, before the kids arrived en masse



Thando Mgqolozana, author of *Hear Me Alone*



Franci Vosloo, a language researcher; Ilse Carla Groenwald, translator of *Afrikamasutra*; and Phumzile Simelane Kalumba, author of *Jabulani Means Rejoice: A Dictionary of Names and Meanings*, in discussion

PEGgers had the following to say about this year's event:

Ken McGillivray: Amid Cape Town's worst winter in perhaps 25 years, it was heartwarming to see the revival of the South African Book Fair this year. A smaller venue, less attention-diverting bling from the major publishing houses and a better 'quality' of visitor all added up to a successful event – the last of the biennials.

Previously, overflowing literary forums and bums-on-the-floor presentations were not a feature of our book fair, but this year bucked the trend. Fortunately, the mistakes of 2012, such as the disastrous 'literary café', were not repeated. And this year's children's reading area was – judging by the noise – a major attraction. Even a final afternoon discussion on the role of the editor in self-publishing on the last day packed them in. It must be said, however, that the success of the PEG-led events and exhibition stand was largely thanks to the labours of Cape Town Chair Corné Janse van Rensburg.

No matter the size of the stand, in my opinion it is vital for organisations such as PEG and SATI to establish a regular 'presence' at these fairs alongside the motley of publishers. This should be even more evident at next year's book fair, where Gauteng will no doubt produce a show-stopper when their long-awaited chance at hosting the event hits Egoli.

Laetitia Sullivan: Owing to my two pet peeves in life – sitting in traffic and finding parking – I decided to take the train to get to the book fair on Friday, 13 June 2014. Fortunately I had little faith in that big parastatal running the train service and left home early as said parastatal caused an hour's delay. Nevertheless, I made it in one piece and rushed through the CTICC's doors an hour before my turn to do duty at the PEG/SATI stand. As I announced my arrival at the ticket booth, the cashier came at me with a stamp and gestured for me to push up my sleeve. Me: "Seriously?" Cashier: "Yes, it's like a club, you know." So, duly stamped, I entered the club, aka book lover's paradise, aka the 2014 South African Book Fair.

I have been to every book fair since its inception in 2006 (except for the cancellation in 2011, of course), and here are a few truths I have picked up along the way:

- There is still confusion about what the book fair is trying to be. Is it an industry trade expo? Is it an event to encourage the youth to read? Is it trying to be all things to all people?;
- With a population of 52+ million, a best-seller is any book that sells a meagre 5 000 copies. Very few South African books even reach this number;
- Non-fiction (eg cookbooks, arts and crafts, sports biographies, self-help, business and finance, true crime, memoir, travel writing, current affairs) still outsells fiction in huge numbers;
- Fiction titles that do sell tend to fall into the following categories: crime, romance, chick lit and erotic novels (think of our own local *A Girl Walks into a Bar à la Fifty Shades* with an adventurous twist);
- Even though there were many interesting talks on fascinating topics, South African readers and publishers' peeps didn't seem to fill these halls to capacity;
- E-books are still not commanding a significant market share, although many educational publishers are throwing a lot of money at the cause;
- Self-publishing is still like swimming through shark-infested waters, as Brent Meersman from *Missing Ink* confirmed in his talk on the topic;
- The smaller publishers have to try much harder than the traditional larger publishers;
- It is interesting to note that publishing is 15% production and 85% marketing/selling;
- If you manage to speak to the right people, the book fair can be a great opportunity for making future work contacts;
- Many people are interested in the work we do as editors and translators, although making a living is not always easy. I do believe we should focus on a unique selling point, and that there are opportunities for making a living as a language practitioner;



Babalela was popular with both young and old



Davey du Plessis, author of *Choosing to Live*, reads from his book about his adventures in the Amazon

- The final good news: Even though you might moan and groan about rates, you as the editor are most likely still making more than the author.

Tanya Barben: I attended the book fair on all three days, but did not attend any events, other than a farewell party in honour of John Tsebe, recently retired national librarian. On Friday and Saturday I was on duty at the >

The annual reports were then presented by Norman Blight, Jenny de Wet and Irene Stotko, after which the new committee was elected. Joan Fairhurst takes over the role of chair and will be supported by Eleanor Mary-Cadell (vice-chair), Ramolobi Matlala (secretary), Mary Geddes (member at large), Lulu van Molendorff (treasurer), Reinoud Boers (mentoring scheme coordinator) and Alison Downie (member at large). Diana Coetzee heads up the events subcommittee, assisted by Ruth Pressler, Greg McCutcheon, Ruth Nicola, Karin Pampallis, Michelle Nel and Norman Blight.

National

The national AGM, held in Cape Town this year, took place at the Centre for the Book on Saturday, 28 June 2014.

Chair Isabelle Delvare presented a comprehensive chair's report, which included the name change to Professional Editors' Guild and conversion to an NPO, an analysis of PEG's current membership, updates on the SALPC Act and the administration manager position, liaison with other bodies, various communications portfolios, mentorship and accreditation programmes, and PEG publications. Following this, Graham Townsend presented a brief summary of the financials.

Four new office-bearers were elected: Lia Marus was elected to the marketing portfolio, while Kim Rasmussen offered to take on the position of secretary. Reinoud Boers is our new national mentoring scheme coordinator and Corné Janse van Rensburg was unanimously voted in as our new vice-chair. The balance of the portfolios remains the same.

PEG's 21st anniversary conference will be held on 18 October 2014 in Gauteng and shortly thereafter in Cape Town. The theme of the conference will be 'Editing in the context of electronic publishing'.

There was a discussion regarding the establishment of PEG branches in Grahamstown and Durban. The organisation will gauge the interest in these centres. Various other issues were raised, which led to constructive discussion around the table.

The PEG 2014 Derrick Hurlin Mentoring Award was awarded to Reinoud Boers (Gauteng) and Inga Norenus (Cape Town), while the PEG 2014 Chair's Volunteer of the Year Award went to Irene Stotko, who was thanked for nearly five years of selfless service in the mentoring portfolio. 🐦

Life membership recipients



On a sunny morning in June, life membership certificates were handed over to worthy recipients Marion Boers, Mary Hazelton and Eleanor-Mary Cadell. Several members gathered at the home of Marion Boers to celebrate the occasion with a scrumptious morning tea. 🐦

#verbusage

Using VERBS with VIGOUR

By Lin Aecer

The use of verbs must be one of the greatest bugbears of writers in English, whether it is their first or a foreign language. In this next series of articles for *PEGboard* on problem areas of English grammar, I deal with a number of troublesome aspects of verb usage.

In this issue, I shall elaborate on three of these aspects that give writers and editors headaches:

- knowing when to use the infinitive or finite form, and to avoid non-finite verb forms;
- using verb tenses (past, present and future; perfect (completed) and continuous) and auxiliaries correctly;

- positioning adverbs correctly within verb phrases.

The infinitive and finite form, and avoiding non-finite verb forms

Infinitive verb forms look like these: *to edit*, *to teach*, *to be*. The infinitive form is like a seed that has yet to germinate (at which stage it forms a finite verb). In this form, it cannot play the role of a fully fledged verb:

- She *to dig* in the garden.

Instead, the infinitive form functions as a subject or an object in a sentence, which makes it (perhaps surprisingly) more like a noun:

- *To edit* takes great concentration.
- Sonya likes *to write*. ➤

We could also write:

- *Editing* takes great concentration.
- Sonya likes *writing*.

In each case, we have formed another kind of verb (a verb-noun), called a **gerund**.

A **finite** verb form has to satisfy two conditions:

1. It must agree with its subject:

- We edit; Tom edits; You edited.
- They teach; She teaches; You taught.
- I am; Peter is; We were.

2. It must, with the help of auxiliary verbs (eg *am, can, have, might, would*), form the correctly intended tenses:

- Before Simon *was born*, his mother *worked* in a factory. (past perfect; simple past)
- Now she *looks after* other mothers' children. (simple present phrasal verb)

If a verb does not agree in person (*I, you, he/she/it, we, they*) and number (singular, plural) with its subject or does not indicate the author's intended timeframe for an action, then it is known as **non-finite**:

- We edits; Tom editing.
- They is teaching; She taughted.
- Peter are; Suzi and Jeni was.
- I to go home.
- She was been walking.
- They will have travel.

'The use of verbs must be one of the greatest bugbears of writers in English.'

Using verb tenses and auxiliaries correctly

English has only twelve tenses, which, compared to some other languages, makes it a walk in the park! What slightly complicates the issue, however, is the existence of two types of verb in English: **weak** (or regular) and **strong** (or irregular), plus the verb **to be** (which adopts many guises). These are illustrated in this table, using the verbs *to walk*, *to think* and *to be*:

	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
Simple	walked thought was/were	walk think am/are/is	shall/will walk shall/will think shall/will be
Continuous	was walking was thinking was being	am walking is thinking are being	shall/will be walking shall/will be thinking shall/will be being
Perfect (completed)	had walked had thought had been	have walked have thought have been	shall/will have walked shall/will have thought shall/will have been
Perfect (completed) continuous	had been walking had been thinking (had been being)	have been walking have been thinking (had been being)	shall/will have been walking shall/will have been thinking (shall/will have been being)

Here are some examples of these **twelve tenses** in action:

- For ten years they *went* to the theatre together; they *have never seen* each other since. (simple past; present perfect)
- Since 2001 they *have been going* to the theatre every month. (present perfect continuous)
- They *have been* friends for many years. (present perfect)
- I *am* currently at university; I *spent* last year overseas. (simple present; simple past)
- I *shall be going* to university next year. (future continuous)
- I *was thinking* of studying, but I *changed* my mind. (past continuous; simple past)
- I *am studying* Statistics this year. (present continuous)

Notice that, with the exception of the simple past, simple present and simple future tenses, all of these tenses have been formed with the help of **auxiliary verbs**: *am, is, was, shall/will, have, had*.

In three of these examples, there are two tenses, which indicates to the reader that one action took place further in the past than another. The auxiliary verb *have* indicates an action that is (or was) completed in the recent or immediate present:

- I *have noted* that.

The auxiliary verb *had* (the simple past form of *have*) indicates that an action occurred further back in the past than the simple past ('told' here):

- She *told* me that she *had noted* it previously.

In the following sentence, what would you do about the verb usage to improve it?

'As evident in the sentiments by Hartley above, there is a thread of this notion of market flexibility throughout the economic policy dispensation of our land since the demise of apartheid.'

Let's look at some suggestions:

- 'is' should be inserted before 'evident' (or 'evident' could be changed to 'evidenced');
- 'expressed' should be inserted before 'by';
- because 'since' has been used as a connector, 'there is' should be >

converted to 'there has been' (a decided improvement on this would in any event be 'a thread of this notion ... has run through the economic policy dispensation ...').

Positioning adverbs correctly within verb phrases

Where, I hear you ask, does one insert an adverb when one wants to use it in conjunction with a verb? Two golden rules apply:

- When there is only one auxiliary, insert the adverb between the auxiliary and the verb: She had *already* noted it. (had noted)
- When there is more than one auxiliary, insert the adverb between the two auxiliaries: She had *already* been jogging for ninety minutes when I joined her. (had been jogging)

In the next issue, the aspects of verb usage I'll be looking at will include active versus passive voice, active verbs versus nounisms (or verbal nouns), and the subjunctive (versus the indicative) mood. Mastering each of these will help you improve your clients' writing to make it more concise, clearer and more accessible.

Until then, happy editing! 🐾

#whateditorsneed

English nitty-gritty workshop

By Anna Herrington

Alex Potter presented Cape Town's fourth nitty-gritty practical editing workshop on Saturday, 21 June 2014. The event was held from 10:00 to 13:30 in the reading room at the Centre for the Book.

The room where the workshop was held is at least three storeys high and has a large chandelier hanging from a beautiful glass skylight in the centre of the ceiling. Glass cabinets in which a multitude of books are displayed line one side of the room. Although it is a beautiful location, the acoustics are not the best.

These nitty-gritty workshops are usually held on the last Saturday of the month and are arranged so that an English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa workshop is held in a three-month cycle. This means that there are three workshops for the year for each language. The workshop presented by Alex was therefore the second English nitty-gritty workshop in 2014.

Members of PEG, LAMP and other interested parties are invited to attend. The fee for these events is, in my opinion, very reasonable (R120 for PEG members, with a R20 discount if you register early). This includes tea, coffee and biscuits.

Alex has 15 years' experience working as a freelance editor for local and international organisations, and he generously shared his wealth of information with all who attended the event. The workshop was based on notes he put together at a time when he was considering running his own editing courses. Alex tailored the workshop to suit the needs of the participants, requesting questions and concerns from participants a few days before the event.

Alex began by discussing what editors need to know and ask a client, and then gave some basic and practical tips on organising the work before and after it arrives. This was followed by a refresher on the aims of editing before we got stuck into the nitty-gritty details of editing: spelling, grammar, punctuation,



I have found these workshops to be well organised and very informative.

quotations, style, abbreviations and acronyms, bulleted points, references, and figures and tables.

This is my second nitty-gritty workshop and I have found these workshops to be well organised and very informative. As soon as these workshops are announced, I waste no time in registering and I look forward to the final one for 2014. 🐾