

Pacific Linguistics – Notes for Copyeditors

10 November, 2008

1 Usual steps in copyediting

(following submission and review process)

- 1: PL receives final (revised) manuscript from author.
- 2: MS is formatted to usual PL style by typesetter (Jeanette Coombes or Julie Manley).
- 3: MS is printed and given to copyeditor.
- 4: Copyeditor goes over the manuscript and marks up changes (corresponding with author as necessary) and returns marked up manuscript to PL typesetter.
- 5: Typesetter makes copyeditor's corrections on master document, further checks and improves formatting and layout (corresponding with copyeditor/author as necessary), and posts a hard copy of the corrected version to the author.
- 6: Author approves final draft and/or marks up any further (minor) changes and returns hard copy to PL.
- 7: Typesetter makes further changes to master document as marked up by author.
- 8: Subject to time and budget constraints the copyeditor does a final read-through of the manuscript, including checking page numbers and titles for the table of contents and list of tables (etc.).
- 9: Typesetter makes any final changes as noted by copyeditor.
- 10: Other details are finalised by PL (cover, ISBN, etc.) and the book is sent to the printers.

Steps 1-10 describe what usually needs to happen to a manuscript. However, sometimes certain stages get skipped, or happen in a different order, or overlap with each other. For example, in some cases it may not be possible for Jeanette to format the document before it is given to you. Occasionally the formatting and corrections are undertaken by an author rather than PL. Sometimes you may need to add additional steps (for example, if the book is co-authored, or if you are working on an article in an edited volume and need to check things with the editor as well as the author).

If possible, keep the PL publications manager (Julie Manley) and Jeanette Coombes informed as to what stage of the process you are at and/or what additional steps you have found necessary (for example, by cc-ing them on explanatory emails you are writing to the author/editor).

Some further notes on particular aspects of the copyediting process follow.

2. Picking up a hard copy of the manuscript

When you pick up the manuscript (or shortly after), you should also be given:

- **contact details for the author(s)/ editor(s).**
- **an electronic copy of the document** so that you can do automated searches. (Typically this will be in separate chapters rather than a single document, but these are still useful.) Trash this copy when you have finished with the manuscript.
- **a description of what you are getting in relation to the projected publication.** For example, have you received the entire manuscript or is there more to come (e.g., further appendices, updated maps)?
- **confirmation of where the manuscript stands in relation to the editing process.** For example, is the formatting completed? Have there been prior attempts to copyedit this work and if so did the copyeditor leave any comments? Are there any anticipated differences from the usual procedure outlined in 1-10?
- **any special instructions concerning the manuscript.** For example, is there any extra advice from PL staff concerning issues that they noted during formatting? Has the author provided additional information concerning global changes or other alterations since the manuscript was submitted? Are there particular time constraints or imperatives concerning this work?

3. Marking up changes

How to mark corrections

Changes should be marked in coloured (not black) pen on the manuscript. Standard copyediting marks can be quick and effective, but the most important thing is that the marked change is clear. In sentences that require a lot of changes it can be helpful to write out the whole sentence again at the bottom or top of the page.

One way to make it clear that words you have written on a manuscript comprise a direction to the typesetter (rather than text which is to be inserted in the document) is to enclose such directions in a circle.

If Jeanette finds something in the mark up unclear or has noticed an inconsistency in the changes you have recommended she will make a note and check this with you when possible.

What does PL expect?

In terms of copyediting PL is most concerned with correcting mistakes maintaining consistency of style (e.g., hyphenation use, -ise versus ize) and clarifying when ambiguities such as these, things which are the more important (see the table on the other page). Issues of layout and formatting are less important as Jeanette will give these a more thorough going over at the next stage of the process.

The PL style guide for authors can be helpful in answering particular questions you may have about what corrections should be made and what standard conventions (e.g., British versus American quotation style) to follow. However, this guide cannot cover every circumstance. If you are not sure whether or not you should be marking a particular feature for correction, check with another copyeditor, Jeanette, and/or Julie.

Make sure you are using the most recent version of the authors' style guide (currently the version dated October 2008).

Citations and cross-references

It is important to check all citations and all numbered cross-references (to language examples, sections, chapters, etc.). It is frequently the case that an author will revise the main text of a work but will not revise such references.

Note that numbering is not updated automatically. For example, if there is a mistake in a run of example numbers, this could potentially mean that every number following the error needs to be changed. In cases where numbering changes are extensive it is a good idea to ask the author to double check the cross-referencing in the relevant section.

Table of contents

It is also necessary to cross-check the page numbers and headings in the table of contents and list of figures (and so on) with the actual body of the manuscript. However, it is more sensible to leave this until the final read-through (i.e., number 8 in the list of usual steps outlined above) as page numbers may change as a result of corrections.

As PL is moving to style-based formatting, the usual procedure will be to generate the TOC when the manuscript is completed using the set styles. This is especially useful when the TOC is very long and complex.

Global changes

You will probably note several instances of changes that need to be made globally (or throughout a certain chapter or group of chapters, etc.). Keep a list of such changes to give to Jeanette when you hand over the manuscript (in which case you will not need to mark every instance on the hard copy). (However, be careful when recommending find-

and-replace search strings. For example, if the gloss 'pl' needs to be changed throughout to 'PL', this may require a more specific search such as 1pl --> 1PL (etc.) to make sure that ordinary words containing pl (e.g. 'platitude') don't also get changed.)

Marking changes in the final read-through

When doing the final read-through of the manuscript, there are often only very few corrections. Rather than having Jeanette wade through the whole document it can make sense just to keep a note of the page numbers where corrections are to be made and/or use a highlighter to mark the relevant pages so that she can go straight to them.

4 Corresponding with the author

Some issues concerning the manuscript can only be resolved by input from the author.

When you first contact the author, it is a good idea to outline the copyediting process and the stages that are yet to come so that they understand what to expect and what your role is.

You may wish to prepare a list of questions for the author to deal with all at once, or email/discuss questions as they arise. Whatever the situation, try to keep some record of every query you have raised with the author. If practicable print a hard copy of your correspondence to be kept with the manuscript.

It is not reasonable for an author to expect you to write new material to be included in the work. For example, if you have suggested that the author needs to provide further explanation or clarification concerning some feature of their analysis, they need to draft this material themselves for you to copyedit in the usual way. If you find that an author is responding to your queries in a way that is unhelpful, unreasonable, or disrespectful, discuss this with another copyeditor and/or PL staff member and see if they can help.

In corresponding with the author bear in mind that the copy of the document he or she has may not have the same page numbers as your hard copy (which will in most cases have been PL-formatted). You can either send the author an electronic copy with matching page numbers, or rely on section numbers and paragraph references (etc.) to explain the location of your query. If you send them an electronic copy of the document be VERY clear that this is for READING only. (If the author precipitately makes changes to the electronic version or prints it and marks up changes this will be a waste of his or her time and will probably cause confusion and delays. It is also unlikely that any changes made in this way will ever be incorporated into the final published version of the manuscript.)

5 Time and money

It is difficult to reliably estimate the hours it will take to complete work on a particular manuscript as there are so many variables involved. However, PL have a general expectation that in most cases copyediting will take about 10-15 minutes for every page. For example, if a book is 300 pages then the copyeditor will probably need to spend something like 60 hours working on it. There is additionally a general expectation/hope that the copyediting of a single work will not exceed a budget of \$2000 (approximately 60 hours of the usual casual pay-rate). If you judge that it will not be possible to copyedit a particular manuscript without significantly exceeding this budget (e.g., going over \$2500), explain the situation to a PL staff member at your earliest opportunity.

Similarly, although it is not possible to estimate a precise time frame, it is generally expected that you will give the marked up manuscript back to the typesetter (i.e., complete Step 6) about two or three months from when you receive the copy. If this turns out to be impossible (for example, if your circumstances have changed, or if the author is taking a long time to respond to queries), let a PL staff member know as soon as possible.

PL will need to know the number of hours that the copyeditor has spent on a manuscript (including time corresponding with the author, etc.) in order to calculate the retail price of the book. Thus, if you are working on more than one manuscript in the same pay period you still need to keep separate records of the hours spent on each item.