Reading Reflections

Williams

This article adds more application to the long Vaude Koppel article on noun phrases and scientific discourse. Style and the way information is presented can cause confusion and unintentional (or unintentional) misrepresentation of facts and opinions. It provides more specific examples from many different contexts and detailed analysis of specific sentence structures and editing choices in those examples. The analysis of the Declaration of Independence was particularly helpful. I plan to use this article as a reference for tricky sentences when dealing with point of view in the creative writing editor’s project and voice issues in the academic writing editor’s project.
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Kimball & Hawkins

The Iverson article mentioned that editors need to be "skilled in the arts of editing, negotiation, and diplomacy" (p.159). This article adds the responsibility of knowing enough about the physical printing and publishing process to make informed suggestions about visual design and practicality to deliver a product that meets all the author's, publisher's, and reader's needs while staying within a budget and time frame. I never thought I would need to know about the different types of rollers during the printing process or the advantages of intaglio over embossing, but I guess I was wrong.

Two more very useful things in this article were the print shop delivery and proofing checklists. The print shop delivery checklist is a good resource for new editors that aren't as familiar with the printing process, but I do most of the things on the proofing checklist already, but the strategy of breaking a manuscript up into vertical, linear, and layered proofreading is a good way to catch mistakes even if only one editor is working on a manuscript.
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Iverson

Coming into this class, I thought a career in professional editing would consist mainly of checking for spelling and grammar errors, and maybe a few suggestions for how to improve the overall effect of a piece of writing. I now know why people generally apply the word "career" to editing instead of "job". There is a lot of responsibility involved and that responsibility can have some weighty consequences.

Failing to do the everyday things like send a receipt for a manuscript, draft a rejection letter, or check copyright information can completely invalidate all the hard work you have done in actually editing a manuscript. There are many different skill sets involved besides just working with language even if that "wordsmith" part provides the majority of the satisfaction.

Articles like this also opened my eyes to what a boon a great editor can be to an author. Editors are to getting published as lawyers are to winning a lawsuit. Without some outside help from a qualified professional, it is very difficult to get published. Not only that, but being free from the time and energy consuming tasks of dealing with publishers and making sure submission and copyright guidelines are met leaves the author much more time to focus on revision and content.
Hunt

I think this is my favorite reading that we've done so far. I actually re-read it before I started the markup for this project and after I had written comments. It is a much more open-ended article that doesn't deal in small details or examples and draws on many different sources in many different fields to prove its point. Instead of a cut-and-dry article like Mackiewicz and Piley that says "do this—here's exactly how to do it," it is a pastiche of different quotes to think about and questions to answer. If all the conditions (headings) in the article are met in a piece of editing, the editing will likely be successful and a sense of accomplishment achieved.

The article also opens itself up for application in other areas besides just technical editing. It uses quotes from Bill Gates, William Zinsser, and Terry Orlick to illustrate its point on success. This line of thinking will make your work successful regardless of what that work is.

It does use some rather lofty language at times, but even that fits in with the author's purpose—what to do after a level of competency has been achieved. Since it asks "what next?" if the language has been specifically tailored to people with above average language skills, the diction comes across as expressive rather than pretentious.

Is it possible to use this same level of language when the purpose is more foundational than above a certain competency?
Vail Article

This was a very interesting article from a creative writing standpoint. Even though there isn't much directly about editing, it still gives plenty of information about editing longer creative works. It's really just a summary of some creative fiction class, because it gives strategies for how to push a story forward and keep readers engaged (and plenty of them).

If you ever come across a story that just doesn't work or something that needs to be interesting but falls flat, these are good things to suggest. It gives the editor a store of suggestions for how to make things more interesting. Instead of leaving a comment like "this ending doesn't work, try it again," they can say "What would happen if you cut to another scene before this argument between these two characters gets resolved? It would keep the story moving along at a faster and more exciting pace to keep your readers engaged." Authors are more likely to follow constructive comments than editorial criticism. If you can make the author's job easier by offering a plausible alternative, so much the better.
Reading Reflections

Editorial Eye article

This article points out how ridiculously subjective editing is. There are four different editors working on the same paragraph and producing four very different results. Correctness is only a small portion of the job compared to the rest of an editor's responsibilities.

I like editor Z's final product because she tries to preserve as much of the author's original writing as possible while still making the writing easier to understand. The result was much easier to comprehend, but still a little bit messy. I would have edited more heavily.

I didn't like editor Y's final product, but she does bring up the interesting point that when you can't get an author directly and have no information about context, an editor's responsibility for accuracy can sometimes lead to distilling facts that can't be checked into general concepts. In this situation, some of the credibility and impact that comes from solid, printed facts is lost, but the main idea of the paragraph is still present in an easier to understand form.

And this is a nice revelation as to what you value as an editor, too!

[Handwritten note: This can be a dubious decision in some cases!]

Interesting and thoughtful reflections - thank you!