

## TRANSCRIPT

### The Editing Podcast, Season 1, Episode 2 Publishing lingo explained

**Louise Harnby:** Hello! and welcome to Episode 2 of The Editing Podcast.

**Denise Cowle:** So this week we thought we'd demystify the language of publishing so you can talk with confidence about the various stages of your book's journey.

**LH:** Yes, because, let's face it, just like any other industry, publishing has a vocabulary all of its own, and if you don't understand it you can feel a bit left out or confused. And nobody ever thinks to explain to you what they mean – there are just a whole ton of assumptions made about people's understanding of the jargon and shorthand.

**DC:** I know that when I first moved into editing from a completely unrelated career there were a lot of terms I just had no idea about. And not working in-house meant that I had no one to ask – poor me! Mr Google was my friend on many occasions! But you worked in-house, Louise – did you just pick up these terms by osmosis, or was there training?

**LH:** Yep, I did come from an in-house background, though actually I was in the marketing department. But, I hung out with a lot of production editors in the pub, I mean the office, so a lot of the lingo just rubbed off on me over time. So it was very much about asking the experts around me. And that's the thing – like any jargon, it's not difficult once it's been demystified.

**DC:** Exactly. Okay, so let's make a start by looking at the parts of a book. Generally speaking, a book has three sections: the beginning, middle and end. I'm not talking about a storyline here. These are different sections with specific content, and they're called **the front matter, the main or body text and the end matter** (or back matter).

**LH:** That's right. Now, the front matter is also known as the **prelims** and includes the part title and title pages, and the foreword, preface and acknowledgements.

**DC:** I'll be honest here – before I was an editor I hardly gave any thought to the difference between these terms – I don't think I was even conscious that there was one! Care to explain a bit further?

**LH:** Well, the **foreword** is NOT written by the author. It's a recommendation of the work by someone else, and if you can get someone well-known in the field to write a few paragraphs about your book, I really recommend you do that because it will give credibility. So, for example, they could talk about how they know you and your work, and why they recommend your book.

**DC:** Now, the foreword is not the same thing as a **preface**. The preface **IS** written by the author, and this is where they lay out the purpose of the book as well as its scope and content. It's probably worth noting here that you wouldn't expect to see a preface in a fiction book, right?

**LH:** No, you wouldn't, but you *might* see **acknowledgements**. This is your chance as the author to thank anyone who inspired you or supported you during the writing of your book. I

see a lot of authors include personal thanks to those who put up with them when they were in full-blown monster-writer mode!

**DC:** Yes, I must admit, I love reading the acknowledgements – I like to see if there are names that I recognise, and I love a peek inside the writer’s world – long-suffering partners and neglected children are often mentioned!

**LH:** Yeah, and unwalked dogs!

**DC:** We should also mention a couple of terms that you might hear a publishers, editors and designers talking about, and those are **the half-title and title pages**. This is another thing I wasn’t aware of initially, and when I heard ‘half-title’ I was quite confused – which half of the title were they talking about?

**LH:** I know – was the same when I first heard it. So the half-title page is the first page of a book with any text on it, and in a printed book it will always be a right-hand page. The only text on it is the main title of your book. Now, you don’t have to have a half-title page. If you need to save space there’s nothing wrong with removing it. On the other hand, if the layout of your printed book means there’s a spare blank page going at the beginning, you can add in your title and – bingo – you’ve got yourself a half-title.

**DC:** So just let me check this – you said just the main book title. So you wouldn’t include the author’s name, or a publisher logo, anything like that?

**LH:** Nope. That comes on the next page, which is **the title page**. This has more detail – so here you’d include the full title and subtitle (if there is one), the author’s name and the publisher’s name, which is also known as the **imprint**. Oh, and you’d also include the volume number if it was part of a series, and if it was a second or revised edition you could include that here too.

**DC:** So much to know – and we haven’t even got past the first few pages yet!

**LH:** Okay, let’s move inside the book to the main text. Denise, can you tell us about what goes on there?

**DC:** Sure. So let’s start with page numbers. These *can* be known as **folios**, but I don’t see that used as often now, and people just tend to talk about **page numbers** – do you find that?

**LH:** Yeah, I’m seeing that term used less and less, and I don’t think I’ve ever come across it when I’m working with indie authors. I wonder if it’s because so little work is done on sheets of actual paper these days. I think it’s further confused by the fact that some people used the term just to refer to pages, rather than the page numbers.

**DC:** Honestly, it’s no wonder people have opted for more simpler language. So just to clarify, your **page number** appears at the outer top edge of your page, or in the centre at the bottom of the page.

**LH:** Though I’ve seen lots of alternatives to this, particularly in heavily designed books. I think the conventions have loosened a little. And the other thing to mention is that in academic and business work, you don’t always include page numbers on every page. Or to use the old-fashioned language – you don’t have folios on every folio! See, the more I think about this, the more I think we should ban the word folio!

**DC:** I'm totally with you there – let's start an anti-folio campaign. Right, so no – you won't see it on some of the prelims, or on pages that are blank, illustrated or have figures or tables on them. And sometimes the opening page of a chapter leaves it off, too.

**LH:** Yeah, that's really common in academic publishing, especially if the page numbers are set at the top of the page. And the other thing we should mention is the style of the numbering.

**DC:** Ah, yes, so it's conventional for any page numbers in the prelims or front matter to take roman numerals, whereas from the first page of the main body text, use Arabic numbers.

**LH:** So tell us about spreads, Denise. And I *don't* mean the hazelnut Nutella I know you're so fond of.

**DC:** Ha – hands off! Right, so when you open a printed book and lay it flat, or when you see a PDF of this layout, the two pages you see are known as a **double page spread** or DPS. This is referred to a lot in education textbooks, where the design of the book is often counted in DPS – one unit could be four or eight DPS, for example.

**LH:** And this is where you need to get your recto and verso the right way around, isn't it?

**DC:** Yes! **Recto** refers to the right-hand page of a double page spread – think R for right – and **verso** is the reverse of that page, so it's always the left-hand page of a double page spread.

Okay, Louise, let's dig into a bit more detail about what's actually *on* our book pages.

**LH:** Right. So at the top of the page you might see **running heads**. As the name suggests, running heads run across the top of the page, and they can be styled in various ways. You might have the title of the book on the verso – or left-hand page, and the chapter title on the recto or right-hand side. Or in a multi-author book you could have the author's name on the verso and the chapter title on the recto.

One thing I'd say is that not every book has to have running heads. They're great for books where it's handy for a reader to keep track of where they are – so education, business and academic books – but lots of books leave them out. So heavily designed illustrated books and most fiction.

**DC:** So, by deduction, we can assume that **running FOOTERS DO** the same thing, but they're found at the bottom of a page, right?

**LH:** Yes! Though actually and perhaps logically, they're called running feet! I think it's less usual to see running feet than running headers.

**DC:** But really, the content, styling and layout of the running head or footer will depend very much on your publisher's plans for your book or, if you're self-publishing, on the template you choose to produce your book.

**LH:** Yep, it about preference, not rules.

**DC:** So let's talk now about another odd term that we often see in more designed book pages but people often don't know the name for. It's the **drop cap** or **dropped capital**. Some authors like to use this to make the first page in a chapter more decorative. So this is when the

first letter of the first word on the first line is larger than the rest of the text and drops down two lines or more.

**LH:** And if you're DIYing your book, think really seriously about how much value this will add in digital content like ebooks and web content, because it can look lovely when it's done right, but can look like a right old eyesore when it's done badly. With web content in particular, it might end up looking different across different browsers or devices.

**DC:** Yes, exactly ... putting the reader first is essential, especially given that we know how fickle website visitors are, and how quick they are to leave when the reading experience is poor.

**LH:** Yep, so sticking with the theme of drops, the other term you might hear mentioned is the **chapter drop**. So this describes the space above and below your chapter title. It's purely a design decision.

So let's look at some of the lingo for elements of a book that you might find in the end or back matter. So here we're talking about things like the appendix, glossary, endnotes, bibliography and the index.

**DC:** I'll kick off with the **appendix**. This is what we call any additional material that you want to include in your book but that wouldn't fit comfortably in the main text. I've seen these in fiction only rarely – perhaps when an author wanted to include some maps of a fantasy world, though even then they're often included in the front of the book so they're top of mind for the reader.

**LH:** Next up is the **glossary**. This is an alphabetical list of any important terms that you've included in your text, and any explanations or definitions that you want to give to help make your reader make sense. I think again – just like with the appendix – it's about decluttering. Readers will find this information useful, but it's about putting it in a space that's not going to intrude.

**DC:** Yes, and to keep things clear, make sure each new entry is placed on a new line, and perhaps use bold for the main term you're defining.

So what else? Oh, yes, **endnotes**. Some academic and business books have footnotes – bits of additional information that would clutter up the main text but that would be useful, for example, links to related material. And these sit at the bottom of the printed page. An alternative is to put them at the end of the book and that's when they're called end notes. End notes are less intrusive than footnotes.

**LH:** God, you're so right. I remember years ago proofreading law books where the **footnotes** on each page took up more space than the main text. It was really off-putting.

**DC:** Yeah, I know. That's where endnotes come into their own. One thing I would say is that if you're publishing ebooks or web content, think about how you want to offer this information. Hyperlinks might work far better than swathes of endnote text.

**LH:** We're nearly at the end. I'm going to talk quickly about bibliographies and reference lists. A **bibliography** is a list of all the works you've cited in your book AND anything else that you think will be of interest to your reader. If you're only listing the works you've cited in your book, that's called the **References**.

**DC:** Right, finally, we're here at the end. And at the end comes the **index**. This is an alphabetical list of all the topics you've covered in your book and the page numbers where discussion of those topics takes place. If you need one of these, I strongly recommend you hire a pro. Honestly, indexing is an art form. A bad index is useless – it'll cost you money if you're printing.

Let's make sure we put some links to indexing societies in the show notes.

**LH:** Yes. So now it's time for Editing Bites where each week we give you a couple of handy resources that we both love.

So my bite for this week is the *Chicago Manual of Style*. *CMOS* is brilliant for explaining all the different parts of a book and about a billion other things. It's one of my desktop essentials, and you can get it online too. I use it for good old common-sense advice on lots of things to do with fiction editing, so don't be put off, thinking it's just good for business, education and academic writing. Anyone can find value in it.

**DC:** And mine is this. Jargon in any industry can often feel like it's being used to exclude people from a conversation, but it's much more likely that it's simply being used as a useful shorthand. By learning and understanding this terminology, whether you're an indie author or a fledgling editor, you'll gain confidence in the language of the production process and be less anxious when making any contributions to a discussion. And for a resource, *New Hart's Rules*, like *CMOS* is an excellent printed and online resource that will guide on publishing lingo and the elements of style.

**LH:** That's all for this week. Thank you so much for listening to The Editing Podcast. You can rate, review and subscribe via your podcatcher.

**DC:** And don't forget to share, share, share! Tell your writer friends, your editor friends, your business friends ... basically anyone who writes!

**LH:** Yes, and if you have any questions about publishing language, just let us know. Perhaps there's some weird term you've come across and you're not sure what it means and whether it's something you need to attend to.

**DC:** You can get in touch with us via The Editing Podcast Facebook page. If you ask us, we will answer. That's a promise!

**LH:** And don't forget – all the links we've mentioned are in the show notes.

Thanks for listening.