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Writing Wrongs:  
Losing it in the translation

Part 8 –  
Editing and  
Proofreading

Short title:  
Losing It: Editing

by  
David Grossman

Printed Fall 2007

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## Editing and proofreading

This book is

A resource for tips, ideas, methods,  
and knowledge about editing and  
proofreading documents.

These  
selected  
topics

reflect a personal and Jewish  
approach.

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<i>Editing and proofreading</i> .....	3
<i>Editing</i> .....	7
<b>Introduction</b> .....	7
<b>How to edit</b> .....	7
<b>Charging for editing</b> .....	10
<b>The client</b> .....	11
<b>Complainers</b> .....	12
<b>Correct</b> .....	15
<b>Count</b> .....	16
<b>Jewish Fish Story: Humor</b> .....	19
<b>How to edit</b> .....	22
Flexibility.....	23
<b>Poetry</b> .....	24
<b>Priority</b> .....	25
<b>Repeat</b> .....	27
<b>Teach</b> .....	29
<b>Doing your own editing</b> .....	30
<b>Tips</b> .....	31
<b>Editing web pages</b> .....	33
<i>Proofreading</i> .....	35
<b>Audible</b> .....	35
<b>Computerized documents</b> .....	36
<b>Introduction</b> .....	38

<b>Litush.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Plans .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Proofreading printed material.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Additional Tips .....	42
<b>Web pages .....</b>	<b>43</b>
Writing Wrongs: Losing it in the translation.....	47
<i>Other books in this series .....</i>	<i>47</i>
<b>Part 1: General issues .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Part 2: Life as a translator .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Part 3: Making money as a translator.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Part 4: Teaching translation .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Part 5: Lesson plans.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Part 6: Distinctions.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Part 7: Languages, lexicography, and glossaries.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Part 8: Editing and proofreading .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Part 9: Writing .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Part 10: Transcribing .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<i>Other books by the same author.....</i>	<i>53</i>
Jews speak with forked tongues: Bilingualism .....	53
Yiddishe Kop: Jewish psychological issues .....	53
Your Jewish Personality.....	53
It's the Teacher's Fault.....	53
Jewish Dating: So this is the best time in my life?..	53
Jewish Parents Should Be Licensed .....	53
Are you good enough for Israel?.....	53
Yiddishkeit Lite .....	53
Collecting Dust: Libraries and librarianship .....	53

Doing Our Own Thing: The Grossman Family. Five parts .....	53
Computerization .....	53
Computer Gemach.....	53
Jewish Special Needs articles and links .....	53
Achdut. Jewish Forums: A life of moderation .....	53
Achdut. Jewish Forums: Guidelines.....	53
Achdut. Jewish Forums: Business issues .....	53
Achdut. Jewish Forums: Directory.....	53
Jewish Achdut and Jewish Language. Translated summary information .....	54
Achdut forums: Israeli.....	54
Achdut forums: Chassidim .....	54
Study with Grossman: Courses .....	54
Tzafun – Eureka .....	54
Title index.....	54
Topical index.....	54

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## Editing

### *Introduction*

"...in this  
ever changing world  
in which  
we live in..."  
- Paul McCartney,  
"Live and Let Die"

"Why did you  
bring that book  
I didn't want  
to be read to out of  
about Down Under  
up for?"  
- Child  
to his parent

That is pedantic nonsense,  
up with which  
I will not put  
- Winston Churchill,  
when called to task  
for ending a sentence  
with a preposition

Editing and proofreading may sometimes be considered subsets of translating and writing, and possibly of transcribing.

This section deals with the way to correct "writing wrongs" – and it offers valuable hints and tips about dealing with some professions that are connected to the basic writing trades.

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Keywords: [Editing](#), [Method](#)

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### *How to edit*

Be what you would seem to be  
– or, if you'd like it put more simply  
– never imagine yourself  
not to be otherwise  
than what it might appear to others  
that what you were  
or might have been  
was not otherwise  
than what you had been  
would have appeared to them  
to be otherwise.

Editing is not the same as correcting a composition. Your high-school teacher used red marks to point out things that bothered her, but that won't help much with editing. Editing means making serious corrections. Here's how to go about the job:

1. Can you get the message across with fewer words? If you can remove the wordiness or repetitions in the original document, then your paper will be better. However, don't take away too much, or the text may be less understandable. Find a happy medium.

2. If possible, take a break before editing the material that you translated. You know your time frame, and the longer the break (within reason) the better. At the very least, you should take a walk or work on a different, yet intensive translating job, before starting the editing process. It would be even better to wait until the next day.

It is important to separate yourself from the intensive work of translation before the equally intensive work of editing. In that way, you will be able to notice an illogical point, or language that may not be understandable to all readers. However, this recommendation for a delay should not be misconstrued as a justification for procrastination.

3. It's always useful to put it aside for yet another day or two before your final reading. You'll be amazed how many new mistakes you'll find. You don't notice some of these problems while doing intensive work.

4. Read the points in the Grossman method for translating. The first guidelines relate to the

5. When you read your text out loud, take note of occasions when you stumble on a word. That may be evidence that the writing needs to be revised, or that it is difficult to pronounce the words.
6. Sometimes you may find that you stop in the middle of a sentence. Make a note of it – that may be evidence that you have to clarify the surrounding paragraph.
7. Remember some of the basic tricks for editing with a word processor. For example, in Word, use Alt-left shift and then press the up and down arrows in order to move paragraphs. Alt-Control-Page Up and Page Down move the insertion point within your working screen. These tricks, and others, can shorten your editing time.
8. Word's red and green wiggly lines also help editors. Only make corrections if you agree. However, remember that Word also makes mistakes. Don't just assume that you have to accept everything that Word suggests.
9. Make sure that the tone of your writing is as strong or as weak as that of the original.
10. Remember your audience. Technical, special, or religious terms may have to be defined the first time that they are presented, especially if you are writing for a lay audience.
11. Transitions should help readers move from one concept to the next, but don't overdo them. You don't want people to roll their eyes while reading your document.
12. Technical writing or websites often use bullets in order to stress important points or sequences.

Literature often uses dialogue. Have you used the form of writing that is appropriate to your genre?

13. Here's a good test: If it doesn't look better and better each round, then there are two possibilities:
- a. You need to go back, since you've done something wrong.
  - b. You have completed your editing job.

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### ***Charging for editing***

How much can you charge a client for translating if you also have to give it to somebody else to edit? Does the subsequent editing raise your rates for the translation job?

No, it doesn't - unless you made a special arrangement in advance. Translators have to keep the editing (and possibly typing) in mind, since it's included in their rate.

How much does an editor charge for his work?

Check the editing rates<sup>1</sup> section. Those rates are a bit outdated, but they will give you a guideline. They were stated in local currency as well as in dollars. At the time, the dollar was relatively stable.

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<sup>1</sup> Losing It | Rates

In addition, Agudat Hasofrim in Tel Aviv prepares an official rate sheet with standardized rates. Editors are not required to follow those rates, but they give an indication of what their colleagues are charging. It may be difficult to get in touch with Agudat Hasofrim.

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***The client*** David Grossman

Determine what the client wants before beginning your work. This will resolve the inevitable conflict that plagues many editing jobs.

The client is likely to say that the work just needs a little bit of light touching up, as well as some improvements in spelling or sentence structure. The editor, on the other hand, is likely to study the document with shock. He sees the need for an extensive rewrite. The subsequent negotiations between writer and editor determine the level of editing for the job.

Sometimes the client will stipulate a ceiling of a certain amount of money that he is willing to spend. He will tell you limit your editing to that ceiling. That is a reasonable compromise.

Editing by the hour eliminates the need to negotiate the amount that needs to be edited, or for haggling about whether you are working on a light or a heavy editing job.

Your negotiations should present some examples of where issues is not presented clearly. They should demonstrate how extensive the rewriting will have to be.

However, please do keep in mind that your editing work will require a great deal more than simply complaining<sup>2</sup> about the original.

When the editor and the client are fully aware of each other's needs, requirements, demands, and limitations, then the editing job will make everybody happy.

Take the necessary steps to make the client happy. Ask all of the necessary questions. Be sure everything is explained in the beginning, before you begin your work. Be sure you can keep the correct audience in mind.

In that way you will be able to give the client what he wants.

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## ***Complainers***

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<sup>2</sup> Losing It | Edit | Complain

Wouldn't the sentence,  
"I want to put a hyphen between the words  
Fish and And  
and And and Chips  
in my Fish-And-Chips sign"  
have been clearer  
if quotation marks had been placed  
before Fish,  
and between Fish *and* and,  
*and and and* And,  
*and And and and*,  
*and and and And*,  
*and And and and*,  
*and and and* Chips,  
as well as after Chips?

We are surrounded by complainers. Indeed, our casual conversation is usually filled with complaints about the government, the economy, politics, aches and pains, children, and just about anything else. We've gotten so used to complaining that sometimes we forget how to say a good word.

The field of editing is a refreshing little island of *positive* and practical improvement in a world of complaining. In some ways, editing may contrast with complaining. A person who complains excessively cannot be a good editor.

An author gives an editor a document that is important enough to edit. He is willing to pay for the improvement in his manuscript. It may have been written in another language and the editor or a translator has already translated it. It is now ready to undergo a process of positive improvement.

The author is willing to pay you well, but he has various expectations:

- He expects you to invest the necessary and requisite thought and consideration in order to improve his document

- He wants the document to be worthy of reading by his colleagues
- He wants to look good
- He expects you to return a professional job
- He expects you to be an intelligent person with valid ideas about the way that documents should be written, organized, and presented

Thus, it is useless to present the author with vapid statements such as, "This is not good," "This needs improvement," "This is too long / this is too short." The author needs clear, practical, professional, and very specific directives. He wants the document to be ready for submission after you have completed your work.

You may well be bursting with complaints after having edited this material. That's okay. Complain about the weather to your friends, to other conversation partners, and possibly on the phone when you have nothing better to do. Hide those complaints when you edit a document. You should be working towards making an improvement in the world. Your professionalism is demanded here, not your complaints. It may demand intense effort in order to turn that document into a worthy piece of information or literature, or a contribution to the scientific world – but that's your job.

Give the author what he wants and needs. Don't just cross some *is* or dot some *ts*. Don't make changes for their own sake. Think about how to make the material effective, readable, and welcoming, and then make the author feel proud of that document. Granted, he will be the one to affix his name on the document, but you are likely to invest more time and intense effort on it than he did.

*(Did you notice the mistake about crossing and dotting in the beginning of the preceding paragraph? Good! That is a sign that you are developing a keen editorial eye).*

Now that you understand the difference between editing and complaining, you are ready to attack your first editorial job. Go make the world a better place.

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Keywords: [Complaining](#), [Editing](#)

David Grossman

***Correct***

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It is a simple task to make things complex, but a complex task to make them simple.  
- Meyer's Law

English teachers correct student compositions. Is that procedure the same as editing a document?

Not really.

English teachers accept written documents as they are, and then they deal with the mechanics. Changes are made to the content only if it makes no sense, or if it doesn't follow the guidelines for that particular composition.

Serious editors relate to a deeper and more thorough understanding of the material. They correct conceptual errors as well as basic issues.

In other words, editing includes the basic issues involved in correcting a composition – and much more. It means more than recognizing the audience. Editors have to determine and further develop an understanding of the *needs* faced by the audience, and they have to make sure that those needs are met by the documents that are being written in that series. They must see the big picture<sup>3</sup>.

The documents in the series might include a general website<sup>4</sup>. Again, all of the parts, sections, and pages of the website must be presented as a unified whole, rather than as individually corrected manuscripts.

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## ***Count***

I apologize  
for the length  
of this letter,  
but I didn't have time  
to make it  
shorter.  
- Mark Twain

What is the difference  
between a cat  
and a comma?  
One has the paws  
before the claws  
and the other  
has the clause  
before the comma.

<sup>3</sup> Teacher's Fault | The Big Picture

<sup>4</sup> Losing It | Edit | Web page

A good editor does not use and repeat the same word too many times. However, you may require some help in order to determine how frequently a word appears in a document.

Let's say that you suspect that you have used the word "however" too many times. You aren't really sure, since it is difficult to be objective with your own writing.

True, if you don't overdo it, you can replace "however" occasionally with "but," "although," "albeit," or another synonym. That is not a very good solution, since you can easily overdo the synonyms.

You may judge whether to use a problematic word by counting the number of times it appears in your document. Your word processor will help. We'll use Microsoft Word as our example, but any other word processor (or even Windows Notepad) will do the same thing.

Unfortunately, Word doesn't include a function for counting the number of times a word appears in a document. Word does have a feature for counting the total number of words and letters. That feature is not always accurate.

You can try the following trick. Don't look for it in the Help file or in any publication.

First, save your document.

Next, click Control-Home to place the I-beam (the flashing cursor) at the beginning of your document. Click Edit, Replace. Enter the word "however" in *both* the "Find" and the

"Replace" boxes. That's right – the same word should appear in both boxes.

You won't change your document, because you've replaced every occurrence with the same word.

Word will tell you how many "replacements" were made. Now you can decide whether you used the word "however" too often.

Now, take an extra precaution. Before continuing your work, click File (or the Word button), Exit Without Saving, and then click on File, number 1 on the bottom of the drop-down menu. That will assure you that no changes were made, and you can then reload your file.

You took that last step because Word may replace a capitalized word (possibly in the beginning of a sentence) with a lower-case word. You would not have noticed this change until (and if) you have proofread your document very carefully.

Continue your work. Did you re-write your document so that it does not need "however" or any of its synonyms?

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:



## *Jewish Fish Story: Humor*

Editor:  
One who sorts  
the wheat from the chaff  
and prints  
the chaff.  
- Adlai Stevenson

You can edit your paper to death.

The following "Jewish Fish Story" is a good example. It was posted to the Jewish Humor<sup>5</sup> forum on July 9, 2005:

Moishe and Abie were best friends, and always supported each other's endeavors. Because they were both very smart and self-assured, they felt that they could offer each other helpful criticism.

One day, Moishe asked Abie to meet him at the corner of First and Sycamore Street - an exclusive neighborhood. Abie asked what was happening, but Moishe sounded very excited. He would only say that he had started a new business and wanted Abie's advice. Abie said he'd rush over right away.

The two friends met at the appointed place, and Moishe proudly pointed to an empty storefront, where a sign painter was climbing down from a ladder, having just painted the new sign for the store. Moishe declared, "I'm so happy! This is my new business! Isn't it in a great location?" And then he added, "Well, what do you think of the sign for my new store?"

Abie looked very carefully at the sign, which proclaimed in huge bold letters:

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<sup>5</sup> Achdut | Jewish Humor

"STRICTLY FRESH FISH FOR SALE HERE"

"Well," queried Moishe again, "What do you think of it?"

Abie frowned.

"What's the matter? Is something wrong with the sign?" asked Moishe.

"Look, I don't like to make a fuss, since the painter has already finished his work, but the sign could be better," said Abie.

Moishe speaks up, "Come, out with it! You know we can be honest with each other. If it will help my business, please let me know what's wrong."

Abie says, "Well, it's much too long and unnecessarily complicated. To start with, you don't need 'Strictly.' Strictly fresh doesn't mean any fresher than just plain fresh, you know."

"You're absolutely right, Abie. Thank you!" responds Moishe, and immediately instructs the painter to delete the word. Moishe points to the sign, which now reads: FRESH FISH FOR SALE HERE. "There -- do you like it now?"

"Not really," replies Abie. "What's wrong now?" says Moishe.

Abie says, "Well, it's still too verbose. For one thing, why do you need the word 'here?' - where will customers think the fish is being sold if not here?"

"You're right again," replies Abie, and he asks the painter to go up the ladder again, to delete the word. Moishe points to the sign, which now reads: FRESH FISH FOR SALE. "There - do you like it now?"

"Not really," replies Abie. "What's wrong now?" says Moishe.

Abie says, "Well, it's still too long. Why do you need 'for sale' - will your customers really think you'd be giving the fish away?"

"Right again," replies Abie, and again the painter goes up the ladder. Moishe points to the sign, which now reads: FRESH FISH. "There - do you like it now?"

"Not really," replies Abie. "What's wrong now?" says Moishe.

Abie says, "Well, it's still too long. Why do you need 'Fresh?' You'll insult your customers by having them think that you'd be carrying anything but the freshest fish in this fancy neighborhood."

"OK, OK, as usual, you're right," replies Abie, and still again the painter goes up the ladder. Moishe points to the sign, which now reads: FISH. "There - do you like it now? That's as simple as one can get! Only one word. Truly elegant, and certainly befitting the neighborhood. You can't possibly find anything wrong with that, can you?" exults Moishe.

"Yes I can," replies Abie. You don't need the word FISH. After all, you can smell it all through the neighborhood!"

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:

Keywords: [Editing](#), [Humor](#)



*How to edit*

Always and never  
are two words

you should always remember  
never to use.

- Wendell Johnson

Some readers may wonder why this website makes a distinction between translating, editing, and proofreading skills. Aren't all of those skills related and overlapping? Can't we assume that a translator will also know how to edit and proofread?

Well, as with most other skills, the answer is a very clear-cut "yes and no."

After all, not all translators are also editors. Our profession would have an even finer reputation if that were the case.

You can check this by yourself. How many times have you been disappointed by the fact that a translated book was far less readable as the original? In some cases, the translation may have been ludicrous. In other cases, factual errors made the work difficult to understand.

Granted, you usually don't expect the translated material to be as good as the original<sup>6</sup>. However, you shouldn't roll your eyes with disgust while reading a translation that was prepared in an incompetent manner.

## **Flexibility**

There is more, of course.

Under certain circumstances, and within certain limitations, a translator may be allowed some flexibility. Yes, that sentence was worded carefully! He may change the content or sentence structure, in order to make the material more acceptable or appropriate in the target language.

Does the editor enjoy such flexibility?

Again, the answer is "yes and no." It depends upon the circumstances, topic, and nature of the book.

The issues become more complicated with less-prevalent languages. In certain cases, translators may be able to deal with the source-language material, but they may not be competent or fluent in the target language. This is not an ideal circumstance, but it does happen.

This is especially the case when it is difficult to locate a competent translator in a specific language.

Those translators should not edit their own work.

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<sup>6</sup> Losing It | About | Anglit B'Anglit

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Keywords: [Editing](#), [Method](#), [ProofreadingWriting/methods](#)



## ***Poetry***

It's difficult to tell an editor to avoid poetry. After all, poetry *is* edited, and poets do need somebody to make changes or corrections to their work. So, how can you edit poetry if poetry cannot be edited?

Editing poetry does follow rules and procedures that are different from editing prose. Whereas most editing involves set guidelines such as those that are put forth in this book, the editing of poetry involves an attempt to understand the poet's thoughts, and then trying to make those thoughts come through in a way that reflects the original feelings, concepts, thoughts, and manner of expression.

It's not impossible, but it is difficult.

If possible, plan to work together with the poet. Be sure to charge<sup>7</sup> him accordingly. Your client will be frustrated and disappointed when you do not capture his ideas or when you misunderstand his thoughts.

However, isn't that always the case with poetry? Don't most people read poetry in their own way? Isn't every individual's

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<sup>7</sup> Losing It | Rates

manner of reading poetry different from the way that others read and understand the same material?

That is another reason why editing poetry is such a challenge. You are not just an editor. You are also a reader. For this reason, you are quite likely to read the poem in a manner that is different from the way that it was intended.

Furthermore, the poet may have written his poetry on several levels, and he may have had several thoughts or ideas in mind. He will expect you to capture and maintain all of his meanings as you edit the material.

That's a tough order. That gives you only two options:

1. Take a deep breath before beginning the job. Be thankful – and consider yourself very lucky – for any work that the poet appreciates.
2. Unless you have a very good working relationship with your client, our best advice is...

Do not edit poetry.

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Keywords: [Can do](#), [Editing](#), [Writing](#)



***Priority***

How do I start when I edit a document? What is the first, second, and third thing to keep in mind?

There is no generic answer to this question. Different editors should work according to their own needs, and each editor has a different order of priorities for each repeated<sup>8</sup> round of editing.

Start by cleaning up your document according to the things that are the easiest for you to locate.

Is it easy for you to locate problems with sentence structure? punctuation? spelling? something else? Edit the things that are easiest for you to handle. Those issues will jump out of the page for you. After you've improved the document in that way, go on to the next level of corrections. You can determine your own style by doing some soul searching.

Make a list of all of the editing issues that you want to check for. Prioritize them in the order that is best for you. The top of the list should have editorial issues that are easiest for you. The bottom of the list should have issues that are the most difficult for you, those in which you need additional help, outside assistance, or that requires an texts or style manuals. Your prioritized list presents the best personal order in which *you* should edit.

After you have created your prioritized list, decide whether you can handle more than one item at a time. The number of items that you can handle each round is determined by your own working style. Some people like to work on only one item at a time. Some like to work on more.

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<sup>8</sup> Edit | Repeat

Of course, be sure to correct mistakes that you find in other categories, but *look for* specific things in the order that you have created in your own list. When you reach the bottom of your own list, you have edited the document. You might want to run through the document one more time just to be sure.

Over the course of time you may want to add items to the appropriate place in your prioritized list.

The document looks better each time you review it, and the next-level items stand out. The really difficult items at the end will stand out, because you have already handled all of the things that are more obvious to you.

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Keywords: [Editing](#), [List](#), [Sequence](#), [Writing/methods](#)



## ***Repeat***

This page is of interest to people who edit computer documents or web pages by computer. It was not written for those who edit handwritten material. (That was a great Audience statement).

Go through the work in stages. First, save a copy of the original document in another location. Then, select and correct any obvious mistakes, based on your priorities<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Writing Wrongs: Losing it | Part 10 – Editing | Priorities  
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If you remember only two rules when editing, they should be as follows:

- Keep the audience in mind at all times
- Review, review, review

Yes, read the page over and over and over. Each time it will be slightly different, because you always edit clean material on the computer. It just keeps getting better.

Some people cannot bear to look at a document after they have written or edited it once or twice. That approach prevents them from editing well. The number of times that you review the entire document has a direct impact on the quality of the document.

In most cases, this may be more significant and important than a thorough knowledge of correct grammar and syntax.

Of course, you do have to know basic mechanics in order to do the job correctly. However, a patient lay editor who reviews documents many times is likely to be superior to an impatient editor who is an expert in the English language.

Why is this the case?

Simple mistakes often hide major mistakes. You can't see the forest for the trees. However, each time you review a document, the new corrections that you notice are more intensive. They reflect a deeper analysis of the material. The result is a fine page, and you will be able to be proud of your editing prowess.

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Keywords: [Editing](#), [Writing/methods](#)



## ***Teach***

Translators edit, but editing skills are quite different from translating skills.

Translators are often given more freedom than editors. Translators of fiction, for example, speak to a different audience than the original author. Things that are acceptable or understandable in the source language may not be clear in the target language, without making allowances or changes in style or content. Editors often have less flexibility, unless there are problems in the translation itself.

Can a person be both a translator and an editor?

Of course. Many people have more than one skill or competency. However, translators cannot necessarily edit material – especially their own translation<sup>10</sup>. A potential translator should not feel frustrated if there is a need to edit his material.

Most serious publishers of written materials have editors on staff or on call. They modify the style of the material

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<sup>10</sup> Writing Wrongs - Losing it | Part 10 | Editing | Doing Your Own Editing

according to the needs and standards of that publication. In addition, they make the material more readable.

If writers require editors, why shouldn't translators?

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:

Keywords: [Editing](#), [Teaching](#), [Translation](#)

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## ***Doing your own editing***

Is it possible to edit your own work?

The answer is a qualified "Yes." To a certain degree, every good translator edits his own work. It is a necessary first step.

However, no matter how many times<sup>11</sup> you review your own document, a second pair of eyes will see things that you missed. A good, professional editor will be able to make significant improvements to your work.

Why can you edit all of your own work? Let's analyze the situation.

Have you ever spoken to somebody with words that you thought were perfectly clear – yet you were misunderstood? Remember how you couldn't understand why your

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<sup>11</sup> Losing It | Edit | Repeat

conversation partner did not understand you, or didn't understand things the way that you had intended?

Your writing is similar to your speech. *You* think that you have made yourself perfectly clear. *You* think that anybody would be able to understand you. However, another reader can often point out things that are less clear than desirable.

A good editor can then recommend changes<sup>12</sup>. He may brainstorm your work together with you, in order to find a way of writing a difficult piece so that it is more clear.

Thus, you can edit yourself. It is possible.

But it is far better to have somebody else edit your material.

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## *Tips*

Cut out  
all those pages  
about the moonlight.  
Give us  
what you feel-  
the reflection of the moon  
in a piece  
of broken bottle  
- Anton Chekhov

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<sup>12</sup> Losing It | Edit | Complain

It would be useful to keep the following issues in mind when editing a serious document:

- Check the basic concepts
  - Is there enough supporting information?
  - Does the author stick to his main thesis?
  - Has the author proved his point?
  - Is the text interesting and pleasant to read?
  - Does the material flow smoothly?
  - Does the material follow a logical sequence?
- Has the author included all of the answers to his implied "WH" words (who? what? where? when? which? how? why?)

Work with a photocopy of the document or a printout of a website<sup>13</sup>. Use highlighter pens to mark words that trouble you when you read them the first time.

Come back to those problems when your mind is fresh. You may find an alternative way to write the concept. If you can't figure out how to handle the problem, then consult with other professionals<sup>14</sup>.

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Keywords: [Editing](#), [Tips](#), [Writing/methods](#)



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<sup>13</sup> Losing It | Edit | Webpage

<sup>14</sup> Jewish Unity Forums | Jewish Editing

## ***Editing web pages***

Any fool can write  
but it takes wisdom  
to know  
how to erase  
- Rabbi Israel Salanter

Many websites consider the text to be a low priority. They expend a great deal of effort on style and visual impact, and much less on form, style, and accuracy.

However a good website should be edited for the following guidelines:

- Typographical errors
  - The usual issues that are involved in editing or revising any document
  - Take out your virtual red pencil and "circle" typos on the screen
- Does the text make sense?
  - Does it follow a logical sequence?
  - Is important or sequential information written in an outline form, with bullets?
    - This is often preferred when writing Internet material
  - It may help to read the text out loud
  - Are the paragraphs short enough?
- Check each link
  - Report all problem links
  - Indicate the correct or alternative target if you can determine where it should go
- Give recommendations for additional concepts or examples
- Check the basic grammar.
- Check for sentence fragments, run-ons, and subject-verb agreement

- Look at the larger picture
  - Is the page needed at all?
  - Does the page have information that is available on a different page?
  - Which page states the information in a better way?
  - Which page includes information that is not in the other page?
    - Do *not* say that you saw similar information "somewhere else."
    - If necessary, specify which parts of *specific* and *specified* pages should be merged into a single page
      - Recommend the best ways to merge those parts
      - Integrate the information from both pages in your proposed merger
  - What material should be omitted because it has little value?
  - What material is irrelevant to the current topic, even though it may have value?
    - Specify the web page to which it should be transferred
  - Is the *apparent* audience of any part of the current web page inappropriate?
    - Which specific web page would be more appropriate
- Have you removed unnecessary or chatty material?
  - The book you are reading is a good example
  - It includes only basic data
- Use your head. What else needs to be improved on the page?

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## **Proofreading**

### ***Audible***

Would you like to have help proofreading, even though you can't afford to pay somebody to read along with you? No problem. You can ask your word processor to read the text audibly while you follow the original printout.

The Windows text-to-speech feature is really intended for the sight-impaired, but proofreaders can use it as well.

It works the other way as well: While you are translating, you can read your original document, while Word gives you an audible confirmation. If you've already translated your material, your word processor can "speak" the printout while you are checking the source language.

It's not difficult to set up this feature:

- Click Tools, Speech, Show Text To Speech toolbar, or click View, Toolbars, Text To Speech
  - The Text to Speech toolbar appears on your screen
- Select the area that you want your word processor "to speak"

- Click the Speak Cells button
- Click the Stop Speaking button when you want to take a break
- If you want Word to "speak" each time you type, click Speak On Enter
- Click Speak on Enter again to cancel the feature

Of course, this will only work if your computer is configured with a sound card and speakers or headphones.

Speak On Enter remains enabled after you exit Word. You'll have to turn it off if you don't want it to "speak" next time you translate.

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:

Keywords: [Blind](#), [Computers](#), [Proofreading](#), [Transcription](#), [Translation](#)



## ***Computerized documents***

Computerized documents should not be proofread in same way as printed documents.

Web-based documents<sup>15</sup> should be proofed<sup>16</sup> on the screen. Make your corrections, and then reread the material on the screen. Each time you add corrections, the material is likely to look different, and you may find more corrections.

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<sup>15</sup> Losing It | Proofing | Web

<sup>16</sup> Losing It | Proofing

However, don't stop when you feel that the material is correct. Another step is required. Print out the material and check the hard (paper) copy. Add the corrections to the document on the screen, and proofread it again on screen.

You will find that the printed document looks and feels different from the one on the screen, and you will see mistakes that did not catch your eye previously.

If you have made a large number of changes after printing out the paper copy, then print it out again, review the printed document again, and add all of the new changes to the copy on the computer screen.

Yes, it may create a great deal of back-and-forth work, but the final document will be much better as a result.

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## ***Introduction***

The special techniques for proofreading documents differ from those used in editing<sup>17</sup>.

This section will help you proofread different genres and types of material.

- Print materials<sup>18</sup>
- Computer-based materials<sup>19</sup>
- Web-based materials (Internet)<sup>20</sup>
- General tips for proofreading<sup>21</sup>
- Audible<sup>22</sup>
- Litush<sup>23</sup>
- Additional plans for this section<sup>24</sup>

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:

Keywords: [Editing](#), [Proofreading](#), [Translation](#)



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<sup>17</sup> Losing It | Edit

<sup>18</sup> Losing It | Proof/Print

<sup>19</sup> Losing It | Proof/CPU

<sup>20</sup> Losing It | Proof/Web

<sup>21</sup> Losing It | Proof/Tips

<sup>22</sup> Losing It | Proof/Audible

<sup>23</sup> Losing It | Proof/Litush

<sup>24</sup> Losing It | Proof/Plans

## ***Litush***

Text editors often face a problem.

Israelis who follow the official Histadrut rates have long known that there are two possibilities - *arichat litush* and *arichah yesodit*. These two options offer a substantial difference in the amount that is charged, so it is important to determine the level of editing required.

*Arichat litush*, as the name implies, involves a light editing, so the pay scale is considerably lower. The editor is expected to finish the work relatively quickly.

*Aricha yesodit*, on the other hand, is much more intensive. It may be somewhere between *arichat litush* and a total rewriting of the material.

All that would work well in a society in which everybody agrees on the terms. However, many things in the Middle East are determined in a more difficult manner – by negotiations or haggling.

Israeli clients argue about the amount to pay for the two options listed here, as well as about the terminology itself.

The client may feel an obligation to argue, no matter what needs to be done:

- It is no big deal
- It's a simple job
- Not much needs to be done
- The editor just needs to run through it

The editor usually different arguments:

- It is a serious job
- A great deal of work is required in order to turn it into a good, readable document
- It needs changes in order to fit the desired audience

Both sides may haggle about the terminology and about the amount to be paid according to that terminology.

It may be possible to solve the problem by using a different system. For example, editors who charge by the hour do not have to discuss how much work needs to be done.

Alternatively, clients may stipulate a maximum amount to be paid. The job will then reach the level of quality editing that has been set, based upon the time.

Unfortunately, most clients are not willing to allow an unfamiliar editor free reign in determining the amount of time. Thus, a wise editor should be prepared to offer references from other clients who can vouch for his honesty in maintaining records of the time.

Not everybody can provide these references, especially in the beginning of their work career.

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Your exercise for this article is as follows:

Keyword: [Proofreading](#)



## ***Plans***

Author's personal notes:

When completed, this section will include the following concepts, in addition to the existing sections:

- Proofreader's Tools
- Proofreading your own writing
- Can you proofread?
- Proofreading methods
- Comparing the text with the original
- Proofreading with somebody else
- Common mistakes to look for
- Keeping previous text in mind while proofreading
- Following a style sheet
- Proofreader's marks

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## ***Proofreading printed material***

A good method has been attributed to *Time Magazine*.

Read the entire document backwards, one word at a time. Since you do not have the context for the entire document, you can focus on each word individually, and there is a greater likelihood that you will notice your mistakes.

Don't look for paragraphs. Just read each *line* backwards. That removes more of the context, since you may start in the middle of a sentence.

Reading it aloud is also helpful.

Reading it aloud *and* backwards is best of all.

No matter which method you use, be sure that others proofread your document as well.

Remember that proofreading is different from editing. Your goal is not to correct mistakes. Proofreaders are only supposed to verify that the page being checked is the same as the original document. Proofreaders should not improve upon the text.

On the other hand, a proofreader may indicate or note any improvements that are discovered. You may then point them out to the editor, or you can make the editorial corrections yourself.

### **Additional Tips**

- Don't put off your proofreading until you are tired. You will discover more mistakes when you are refreshed and perky
- Skim the entire essay quickly before proofreading. Notice that this step differs from the method<sup>25</sup> for translating

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<sup>25</sup> Writing Wrongs: Losing it | Part 4 – How to Translate | How I translate  
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- If possible, read the essay to somebody who knows the target language well
- Ask that person to read the essay to you. Watch their body language in order to note additional problems
  - Show how to double-click on MS Word Highlighter and then to click on any word to highlight it subsequently.
- Contact an expert or the author if you are not sure about an item
- Contact the person who will be paying you if you have to change any item
- Look for your own bugaboos
  - Commonly misspelled words are "our-out" or "nor-not-now"
  - These mistakes can change or reverse the meaning of a passage
- Look for misspellings of locations and names
  - The people who are affected *will* notice and criticize those errors
  - They will embarrass you
- Check for small words that are missing or omitted
  - Some likely candidates include the words *of, it, in, is, for, and be*

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## ***Web pages***

Proofreading web pages includes some additional steps and considerations.

- Some people like to adjust the size of the page with the scrollbar so that they can see only one line
  - This method prevents their eyes from straying
  - It may work for you
- Was the material updated recently?
  - If not, then ask the person who will be paying you to revise it *before* you begin your work
- Confirm that all of the links work
- Confirm that the links lead to the *correct* target page
- Confirm that every target page is still active
- Check the material using different browsers and different monitors
  - Is it always readable?
  - Are the colors always "correct?"
  - Is the background always appropriate?
- Use the spell checker – for what it's worth
  - A dictionary is far more reliable
  - A synonym checker helps you select the right word
- Use the computer thesaurus as a quick-and-dirty guide for selecting the right word
  - No serious proofreader (or translator) depends on this weak tool
- Print out the web page and proof the hard (paper) copy<sup>26</sup>.
  - The text will look different
  - You may find additional mistakes

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<sup>26</sup> Losing It | Proof/CPU



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- Time

#### ***Part 3: Making money as a translator***

- What are the differences among the Business, Surviving, Marketing, and Rates sections?
- Business
- Surviving

- Getting jobs
- Marketing yourself
- Rates
- Directory of translators, to or from Hebrew – canceled.

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- How to teach the writing trades
- Teaching Translation Skills
- How to translate
- Assignments for teaching Translation Skills
- The first day
- Back translations

#### ***Part 5: Lesson plans***

- Lessons

#### ***Part 6: Distinctions***

- Hebrew-English differences

#### ***Part 7: Languages, lexicography, and glossaries***

- Language
- Names
- Pluritis
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- Editing
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***Part 9: Writing***

- Writing

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