Storytelling With Scrivener

Lesson: Improve Your Editing With Linguistic Focus

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Welcome back to the Mastering Scrivener section of our course, writers. In today's lesson, I'm going to show you how to make use of one of Scrivener's built-in writing tools called Linguistic Focus. As you'll see in a moment, this tool allows you to zero in on certain parts of speech in your project, which can be a great option to have at hand, especially you're editing.

One thing to note is that this specific tool is called Linguistic Focus only in Scrivener 3 for Mac users. In the Windows version of this program, this tool is called Dialogue Focus and is less extensive in highlighting parts of speech. That's because Mac's underlying text system allows for a more detailed tool that Windows can provide. With that established, let's dive in.

Today, we're actually taking a look inside one of my personal projects in Scrivener. This is *Lady Legacy*, the medieval fantasy novel that I'm currently revising for publishing.

To access Linguistic Focus, you'll first want to highlight the document in your Binder that you'd like to address. If you'd like to use this tool in tandem with multiple documents , you'll need to highlight those documents or the folder they're contained within, then enter Scrivenings Mode. To do so, you can select this icon in your Scrivener Toolbar or head up to View > Scrivenings. If you see "Document" as an option here rather than "Scrivenings," that means you haven't yet selected multiple documents or a folder containing multiple documents in your Binder.

All right, with your document or documents selected, let's access Linguistic Focus, also called Dialogue Focus for Windows users. To do so, head up to Edit, scroll to Writing Tools, and select Linguistic Focus. A small window will now appear.

As you can see, using Scrivener 3 for Mac, this Linguistic Focus window consists of several check options, each representing a specific part of speech, as well as a slider here at the bottom. Let's break down what each option does.

With "None" selected, no parts of speech will be highlighted in your text. If, however, you select "Direct Speech," any dialogue contained in your text will now appear as dark text, whereas every other part of speech will fade to grey. Now, I don't have any dialogue in the opening epigraph of my novel here, so let's select "Nouns" instead. And ta-da! You can now see how all of the nouns in my epigraph have remained as dark text while all the other parts of speech have faded. If you would like the non-noun text to appear darker or lighter, simply use the Fade slider here at the bottom of the Linguistic Focus tool to adjust its appearance.

The very same process will occur as you switch between the remaining parts of speech here in Linguistic Focus. I find this tool to be especially powerful when editing. If you fear you've been using too many

adverbs in your work or if you'd like to strengthen the quality of your adjectives, verbs, etc, simply pull up Linguistic Focus, select the part of speech in question, and easily take note of any changes you may or may not need to make. Simple as that!