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News & Tips

from

English support

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N B: If you received this newsletter by e-mail, it is (hopefully) because you have expressed a wish to do so. If this is not the case, and/or you do not wish to receive it in future – *please let us know!*

Dear friends

So here at last is the first issue of *News & Tips!* Some of you have been waiting a long time for your first copy, and some of you have been hoping to receive a brochure or leaflet or *something* from *English support* even longer. I can only apologise. My only excuse is that business has expanded much more rapidly than I expected or had planned for. The newsletter has had to wait.

Started as little more than an idea in January, *English support* doubled its admittedly modest first quarter's sales in the second quarter. In the third quarter sales more than doubled those of the second quarter, and this final quarter of the year is threatening to more than triple the third quarter's sales. This is quite some welcome for a newcomer to the market!!

So naturally I am busy building a network of native speakers who can do some of the work! But not only that. I find that customers often want some translation done, too. So I am also looking for partners amongst translators.

Do you know any native speakers of Estonian and Latvian,
who can translate to and from English and/or Danish?
If so, please get in touch!

Need help with
Hungarian?
Just ask!

The core competence of *English support* is and will remain English proofreading, copy-editing and teaching. But customers will in the future be able to do 'one-stop shopping' at *English support*. If they want to market in other languages too, we will find native speakers to carry out the work – to the same high standard we aim at in English.

And in the meantime, Danish translators who hesitate to take translation work into English can come to *English support* and get their work polished up by native speakers before delivery to the customer. In the future, the same will apply to other languages too.

HOTLINE SERVICE?

Whether you work as a translator, a secretary, a technical writer, a teacher, or just write a lot of CV's in English, you might like a *hotline service* you can phone or e-mail to get help with the right word or phrase. Suggested charges:

Let me know what you think!



Registration: 200 kr. (to put off time-wasters)
Per-minute charge: 10 kr. (minimum 20 kr.)
Invoicing once a quarter (minimum 200 kr.)

Please turn over!

From the workshop...

Future will

In days of old, long, long ago (when I was at school), it used to be taught that future forms using “will” should be “shall” in the first person singular and plural. This sounds distinctly old-fashioned today. Use “will” for the future, and reserve “shall” for (somewhat pompous) legal instructions like “the tenant shall keep the flat clean and tidy” and expressions like “Shall I go on to something else now?” – neither of which is a future at all.

Being competent

Words like “competence” / “competences” and “competency” / “competencies” do exist, but are used rather less by native speakers than by others. “Competence” is the most common and often means little more than “the condition of being capable”. The Danish word “kompetencer”, for instance, is stronger and usually best rendered by “qualifications” or even “expertise”.

Don't just co-operate – collaborate!

Danes (and others) are often afraid to use the words “collaborate” and “collaboration”. These words have negative connotations from those who collaborated with the Nazis in World War II. But that is because *actively* working together is *collaboration*. “Co-operation” is much weaker and often means little more than refraining from active resistance...

Are you specialised or specialising?

Surprisingly many translators (and companies) describe themselves as “specialised” in English or medicine or computing, etc. This sounds a bit like some clever doctors have fitted them with a special brain implant that allows them to do what they do. “Specialised” is the *passive* form. “Specialising” is the *active* form more appropriate to an agent like you... Machines may be *specialised*, but people *specialise*.

A question of focus

Whether the verb should be plural or singular in English is often a matter of *meaning* rather than “grammar”. Consider the following two sentences:

A number of cases of typhus were reported.
The number of cases was 65.

In the first sentence, the focus is on the *cases*. There were several, more than one, at any rate. In the second sentence the focus is on the (word) *number*, which is clearly singular.

Tell, tell me, do...

The Danish equivalents of words like “tell” and “inform” are often used without the indirect object, but in English you must normally tell or inform *someone*. If you don't want to mention *who* was told or informed, you can use the word “say”.

And I hope you will tell (or inform) *me* about any areas of English you would like looked at in next month's *News & Tips*. Otherwise I will just have to see what mistakes we end up correcting this month... ;-)

Best wishes
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When it has to be perfect...

Proofreading • Copy editing • Teaching