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News & Tips
from

English support

NB: 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!*

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Dear friends

Well, I don't mind admitting that the last month has been a bit tough. The new office is great, but we still haven't got everything in place because we've been fighting a series of computer problems unrelated to the move (and to each other), but which have been making life very difficult. So this month's issue is just a two-pager, but I hope you will enjoy it anyway. Happily, we can now see the light at the end of the tunnel and should be back to normal very soon. ☺

Store Erhvervsdag – a qualified success

With all the problems we have been experiencing recently, it was not surprising that our rather limited marketing preparation for *Store Erhvervsdag* in Roskilde proved insufficient to attract a lot of people to our workshop on 8th April. But those who came were really interested, and our stand, which was manned all day, was also reasonably well-visited. A lot of good contacts were made.

Thanks to Eileen for the pictures:



Kim Valbum opens the event



A friend drops by for a chat



Lawrence and Claire towards the end

English support goes to Copenhagen University

After last year's successful half-day presentations on *How to write scientific paper* at introductory courses for PhD students, the Cluster of Research Schools in Natural Resources at the Faculty of LIFE Sciences has invited us to hold our full "theory and practice" course spread over a six-month period for researchers currently working on papers. The course includes careful instruction in the IMRAD structure and tips on grammar and style as well as individual proofreading checks on the papers as they are written.

We have been running such courses at the Technical University of Denmark for some while, but this is the first time the full course has been offered at the University of Copenhagen. Next month we will also be going to Odense to give a half-day presentation on scientific writing as part of an introductory week for Copenhagen University PhD students there.

Meanwhile, *English support's* teaching at the Technical University is also expanding, with courses organised by DTU's Human Resources and by individual departments on their own account. Here we are running courses not only for researchers, but also for technical and administrative staff.

Please turn over!

Questions & Answers

(Edited)

If you did not receive this newsletter by e-mail, you will need to subscribe if you want it again. It's FREE. Get on the mailing list via the website!

Snout or muzzle?

I have a question to you as a native speaker of English. Is it correct to use the word "snout" when talking about a horse?

I was translating a text about horse infections recently, and someone told me that "snout" is not the right word when talking about horses; she said the right word is "muzzle". But then I visited a website where it says that both words can be used.

I feel a little confused after hearing such different opinions. Who should I believe?

Strictly speaking, the two words do mean the same part of the head, but the word *muzzle* is usually used to refer to the top of a horse's nose (where you might stroke it for example) while the word *snout* refers more clearly to the business end of the nose and mouth of a horse.

So in your text I would use *snout*, because there we are thinking of the saliva and other liquids contained in the mouth and nose rather than just the overall shape and outside (the *muzzle*).

Note that with reference to guns, *muzzle* is the correct word, while *snout* is more slang-sounding.

A tricky word to translate

I would like to invite your opinion on a matter that has preoccupied other translators without a satisfactory solution – what would be the correct term for the Danish word "udsagnskraft"?

In Danish we might say: "På grund af disse svagheder i metode har rapporten megen lille udsagnskraft vedrørende projektets succes". Or just: "Rapportens udsagnskraft vedr. kønsintegration er meget ringe".

I would be curious to know what you suggest.

Well, it was a new one on me! I suggested moving away from the customary Danish abstraction and saying the report is not very *persuasive, convincing, cogent, plausible*, etc., etc. depending on its particular weaknesses, but my correspondent did not feel these options really grasped "the core and flavour of *udsagnskraft*".

So I tried to think about the core and flavour of *udsagnskraft* (!) and came up with, "The report had really very little say on the subject of...". Happily, this met with full approval:

Much better – and so simple! Thanks – hoping you too enlarged your Danish vocabulary!

Yes indeed! But it was also a really good example of how important it is to focus on the *meaning* when you translate, and not on the *word(s)*.

And now for something completely different ...

CONGRATULATIONS

Claire was elected Chairman of the Danish branch of the *English-Speaking Union* last month!

More next month – which is already almost upon us.

Best wishes

Lawrence White

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