

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!*

No. 10 – August 2005

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Dear friends

The response so far to the seminar on **8th September** has been fantastic. In the course of July no fewer than **29** people registered for *Do you speak “danglish”?* – over half the maximum number we can accept. This suggests widespread professional interest in improving the quality of English spoken and written in Denmark. In the same period *News & Tips* received **23** new subscriptions.

English support invites you to a seminar...

Do you speak “danglish”?

Globalisation means that more and more business is conducted in English. Not only business letters, but marketing materials, including web pages, are produced in English. But when we write in a foreign language, it is all too easy to be influenced by our mother tongue. Come and hear Lawrence White on where Danes (and others) often go wrong in English, how to do better, and where to go for help – *no prizes for guessing that one!* Lots of good tips to take home.

TIME: 3 – 5 pm, Thursday, 8th September 2005. PLACE: Business House, Roskilde

Please note: This seminar is **FREE** for all business associates of Business House, members of Roskilde Business Associations – and all you lucky people who are on the *English support* mailing list. Everybody else gets to pay DKK 350.00 + VAT – so you see, it really *does* pay to be on the mailing list! *But space is limited, so if you want to come, please let us know.*

You must register for the seminar on www.BusinessHouse.dk.

The summer terror – a personal view

I think George Bush probably calculated that Saddam Hussein did *not* have any ‘weapons of mass destruction’. I doubt he would have put a quarter of a million US servicemen and women within easy range of them otherwise. Such weapons normally *deter* such actions. But no government policy, even war, can possibly justify the rabid psychopaths who recruited and trained the gullible young people used as living bombs in London last month.

Their tactic of trying to lobby the powerful by murdering ordinary people at random provokes almost unanimous horror and contempt. It should also provoke calm reflection on the need to combat the incredibly simplistic ideology that makes these people believe what they do is ‘right’.

But is it just *their* ideology? Søren Kierkegaard’s many admirers might, for instance, ponder his preaching on Abraham and Isaac with its explicit endorsement of blind faith and the rightness of obeying immoral orders – if they come from the god you believe in. To ‘fight terror’ in the long term, we need not just more ‘security’, but also a lot more real *enlightenment* in our society.

Please turn over!

From the workshop...

The summer season of AutoReplies

When you get back from your summer holiday, it might pay you to check out the English in your automatic e-mail replies. They are worth paying some attention to. Some strange English ended up in my mailbox at any rate, and probably in yours, too. Here are some examples:

I am on holiday untill 17 July.

Quite a lot of people spelt *until* with two l's. The word *till* has two; *until* has one.

I am on my summer holidays.

In modern (British) English, *holiday*, meaning (US) *vacation*, is usually used in the singular: *on my summer holiday*. See also below.

I am out of office from 10 until 31 July 2005.

Out of office is what George Bush will be after the next election! *Out of the office* was intended, and *from 10 – 31 July* would be clearer.

I'll attend to your business when I am back.

The rather grandiose style of the first part of this sentence conflicts with the simple *I am back*. Perhaps *I return* would fit better... ☺

I will contact you as soon as I back in the Office.

Here the verb *to be* has simply gone missing. The author wanted to say *as soon as I am back*.

In urgent matters please call...

Perhaps *In the case of urgent matters* or simply *If the matter is urgent* would be better.

XYZ-company is closed for summer in July 2005.

The summer is apparently going to very short this year! Better would be: *closed for our summer holiday in July 2005*.

Have a nice Summer!

We sometimes write the words for the seasons with capital letters, but only when the focus is on the *names* of the seasons.

Vacation, holiday and holidays

As noted above, the word *holiday* (Br. English) is often used just like the word *vacation* (US English). It will only be used in the plural if we are talking about more than one *holiday/vacation*.

But the word comes from *holy day*, and therefore originally referred to individual special days in the Church calendar: saint's days and the like. In modern English we still speak of *the school holidays* and of individual (*Bank*) *Holidays*: New Year's Day, Easter Monday, May Day, etc.

Enquiries and inquiries

In US English, the spelling *inquiry* is used also for individual questions, but in British English it usually refers to a large scale investigation of some kind, e.g. *a parliamentary inquiry*. If we are speaking of individual questions, the spelling *enquiry* is more common.

Important reminder (also for those who registered for 26th May)

Don't forget to *register* for the seminar (Thursday, 8th September) on www.BusinessHouse.dk!

Look forward to seeing you then!

Best wishes

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