

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!*

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Dear friends

Numbers were small, but interest was great at the *Do you speak “danglish”?* seminar in Roskilde on 30 January. We had a lot of fun and the response was very positive. One translator who came told me later that while driving home she and her friend had laughed so much they almost cried – but happily they don’t seem to have been stopped by the police. But eight people is not a lot and we hope to attract many more next time – perhaps in Århus? Watch this space!

Teaching activity expands

Short course teaching activities have got off to a good start this year with in-house courses for staff in both companies and institutions of higher education. Sometimes what is needed is just a general brush-up in English, but we also deliver courses tailored to specific needs. In the case of universities and colleges, for instance, we offer special courses for **teaching staff**, **technical staff**, and **administrative staff**. There is also a course devoted to improving **pronunciation**.

And we are going to try something new this spring: a **Saturday morning course** in *Business English Skills*. The course is aimed at **business people** who recognise the need to brush up their English skills to gear up for the challenges of increasing globalisation.

Over four successive Saturday mornings we take you rapidly through all the essentials of doing business in English, from *first contact* and *socialising* through to *formal meetings* and *making presentations*. On the way we will look at *meeting people*, *receiving visitors* and *going on visits*, *small talk*, *telephone English*, *business letters*, *negotiation*, and coping with *cultural differences*.

Translators, secretaries, teachers ... **English support Hotline** *... helps you get it right!*

You ring or write and we drop everything to concentrate on your problem for the time it takes.
Register now (FREE) – per minute charge: 10 kr. – invoicing once a quarter (minimum 120 kr.)

Would you like to come closer?

The *English support* network is now well over 50 strong and includes a considerable range of language and communication expertise.

But now there is a special opportunity for partners who would like a base in Roskilde. *English support* has an option on almost 50 square metres of office space in Business House. The idea is that language and communication freelancers working under the same roof can help each other and attain synergic gains.

If you are interested in coming closer, please get in touch as soon as possible! This office space will become available in March, and how much we take on depends on how much interest there is now.

Please turn over!

Do you lack (a) serious behind?

A lot of mistakes in written English are caused by mistakes in spoken English. This is a classic example. In Danish there is no difference between a hard 'g' and a 'k' if they occur in the middle or at the end of a word. So many Danes have difficulty in making a clear difference between *back* and *bag*, *lack* and *lag*, *sack* and *sag*, *tack* and *tag*, and so on.

Another problem is remembering to put the '-ly' on the end of (most) adjectives when turning them into adverbs. That has also gone wrong here.

So while the author intended to make a comment on people *lagging seriously behind*, the actual words used sound rather as though the point was that people's bottoms are simply not big enough nowadays – not a problem widely discussed in the press! ☺

To have and to hold

These two words often get mixed up. When a company writes: "*We hold considerable knowledge and experience about Danish society*", the wrong word has been chosen. The word *hold* normally means to have something in your hands or arms (literally), e.g. a baby or a book.

It can sometimes be used in the sense of *to have* or *possess*, but only with words like *licence*, *passport* and *permit*, i.e. documents that give the holder authority to do something, and with words like *notion*, *opinion* and *view*, when these are used to express someone's position on some question under discussion. In both cases, *hold* focuses on the long-term nature of the situation.

Course: **Business English Skills**

TIME: **9:00 am – 12:30 pm, four Saturday mornings: 11th March – 1st April inclusive**

PLACE: **Business House, Jernbanegade 23 B, Roskilde**

COST: **2000 kr. (incl. VAT) per person**

Can you help the professor?

As noted in *News & Tips* No.9, English uses capital letters for titles, including *Mr*, *Mrs*, etc. But this apparently uncontroversial statement has not gone unchallenged. Students of a certain professor, who will remain nameless, pointed out to me that his book states that *Mr* and *Mrs* can also be written with small letters.

I wrote to the professor and asked him for his sources for this surprising claim. He referred me to "The Economist", "The Independent", the "New Statesman" and "other noble publications" and "quite a lot of today's grammar books". But, like the fairies at the bottom of my garden, none of this evidence seemed to be there when I looked. So I challenged him to find even *one single solitary grammar book, dictionary or style guide* published in the English-speaking world that says *mr* or *mrs* is even possible – and promised him a bottle of wine if he could. He has not responded to my challenge.

Of course, even if such a book or style guide could be found, it would not justify teaching students in Denmark that this is normal practice. It isn't. What we have here is another piece of the *made-in-Denmark* English that I call "danglish". Nevertheless, a nice bottle of wine might compensate the professor at least a little bit for having to admit a mistake...

Can anyone help the professor win his bottle of wine?

Best wishes

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Your natural language partner