

English support
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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

Nowadays, when I come with just a two-pager, I almost feel I have to have a good excuse. Well, that's certainly not a problem this month! The work just keeps pouring in and the days can't get any longer. So, you may hear some new voices on the phone when you ring in, because I'm also going to be out of the office teaching quite a bit in April and May. This all means there's a lot to be done and little time to do it. But next month's issue will definitely be four pages. ☺

Did you know?

English support can offer **native-speaker** help with not only *English*, but also *Chinese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Rumanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish* and *Ukrainian*.

Our network is still growing!

Although the workload is expanding fast, so is the *English support* network of native-speaker collaborating partners. This means that there has been no problem finding people with the skills to tackle the work, and we are hardly ever forced to say *No* to a customer.

But we do say *No* occasionally. People promoting religion, nationalism, racism, sexism or trying to sell dubious or non-existent products are always politely declined and advised to stop doing so. Otherwise the range is enormous, from business letters to PhD theses, from company brochures to company accounts, from websites to whole books, from job advertisements to CVs.

A lot of the work is academic, but again variety is the spice of life: we have tackled papers on ethics, films, logistics, medicine, architecture, solar energy, bioethanol production, steel corrosion in concrete, facilities management, the environmental impact of the Øresund Bridge, water management, airport maintenance in Greenland, laboratory safety, forest preservation, amino acid uptake in plants, the environmentally friendly maintenance of golf courses, and much more.

But as we continue to expand, we will need still more native speakers of English (and other languages). So if *you* know people who might be able to help, please ask them to get in touch!

English support offers a fully reciprocal freelance relationship.

Please note this date in your diary ...

KOMMUNIKATIONS- OG SPROGFORUM 2007
Wednesday, 26 September, in "Ovnhallen", CBS Copenhagen

Information and booking:

<http://www.kommunikationogsprog.dk/Forum/>

Tel. 33 91 98 00 or e-mail:

forum2007@kommunikationogsprog.dk

See you there!

Please turn over!

Diverge and divert

These two verbs have very little overlap in meaning, yet are often confused. This is probably due to the similarity in pronunciation apart from the last consonant. Speakers of languages in which the final consonants are often not fully pronounced seem particularly prone to the confusion.

To *divert* is to *turn something in another direction*. Sometimes the meaning is literal as in “*diverting the flow of traffic*”, which means changing its direction, but often the meaning is metaphorical, as in “*diverting attention*”, which means to distract someone. By extension there is also a now slightly old-fashioned usage meaning to *entertain* or *amuse* as in “*diverting someone*”. Note that all these meanings are transitive (you divert *something* or *someone*, even in sentences where this object is not actually mentioned) and they can all be contained in the noun *diversion*.

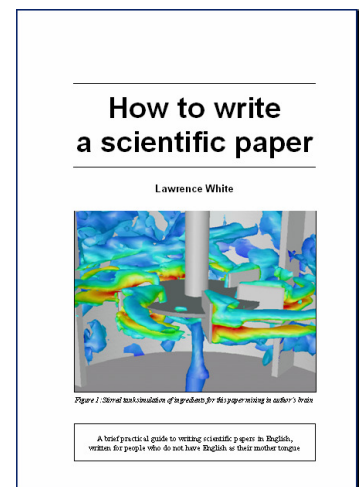
To *diverge* is to *go in another direction from something else*. Here the meaning is intransitive (the verb has no object). It can be literal, as “*the flow of traffic diverged into two streams*”, but again it is often metaphorical, as in “*behaviour that diverges from the norm*”, which means it is *different, at variance, even deviant*, but without the negative connotations of the latter.

The time being

A favourite expression in Scandinavian English is “*for the time being*”. Sometimes the wrong preposition is used, and people write things like “*at the time being*” and “*in the time being*”. The meaning usually intended is best captured by the very common expression “*at the moment*”.

“*At the moment*” often indicates the temporary (time-limited) nature of an action, as in “*the sun is shining a lot at the moment*”. Here the speaker is suggesting that it is just a temporary state of affairs, not the usual situation. Note how “*at the moment*” does not necessarily include the meaning of “*at this moment*” or “*right now*”, although the focus is on a temporary period of time *around about now*.

“*For the time being*”, however, is rather different. It always does include *right now* (and maybe some time before now, too), but its focus is on a temporary period of time *stretching into the future*. E.g. “*A leaf has fallen on the line somewhere near Odense, so all InterCity train services between Copenhagen and Århus have been suspended for the time being*” – i.e. until the problem has been fixed in what is hopefully the relatively near future.



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The last years

This is another favourite. Whenever the “*last years*” may be, they will presumably conclude with the “*last days*” and finally “*the End*”, which some people always seem to think is “*nigh*” (an old-fashioned word for *near*).

What people normally mean is “*recent years*”. Note that if you specify the number of years, etc. there is no problem. So while you can say “*over the last three years*”, you must say “*in recent years*” if you want to avoid sounding weirdly eschatological (speaking of “*the End*”).

More next month!

Best wishes

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Your natural language partner