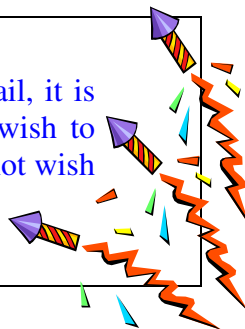


NB: If you received this newsletter by e-mail, it is (hopefully) because you have expressed a wish to do so. If this is not the case, and/or you do not wish to receive it in future – *please let us know!*



No. 57 – January 2010

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**Happy New Year
to all our readers!**

Dear friends

When you've received a hard punch and are down on the canvass, the only way forward is *up*. The year 2009 was a tough one for many of us. But the problems that hit this company in the second half of the year were not due to the financial crisis. On the contrary, they were entirely of my own making. I got blown off course by what seemed (and not only to me!) like a good idea, but proved to be a financial disaster. So this year, the main task ahead is recovery and renewed growth.

Back to basics

Last year, *News & Tips* no. 50 summed up our progress in 2008 with the headline: **Good, but could do better!** We had experienced only rather modest growth in turnover (17%).

Perhaps a fitting summary for 2009 might be: **Bad, but could've been worse!** We lost the modest gains of 2008 (see right),

but this loss was similarly modest. Our turnover represents our impact in the world, and the decrease is a natural result of the two months when I was unable to work. We lost some market share, because we were unable to deliver our normal service, but we lost no customers.

We did lose all our start-up capital for the *Stændertorvet* project, but that loss had no effect on our turnover or impact. What it did affect was our financial situation. We were unable to pay some of our key freelancers, which is enough to shake anybody's confidence! But they were kind enough to accept a delay in payment to help out. (For more on what went wrong, see last month's issue).

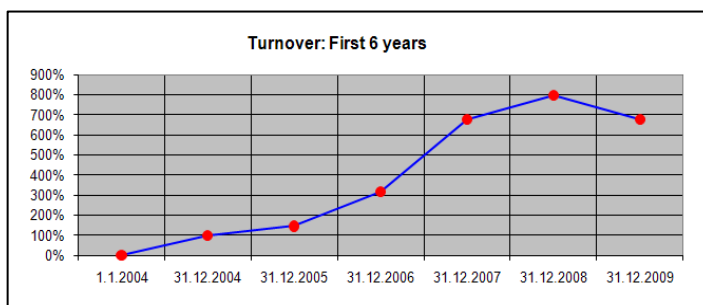
Vision for 2010

So the first thing to be done is to get out of immediate debt. This is already well under way and we expect to be able to pay our remaining creditors in the course of this month. The first instalment on our start-up loan is not due until the end of June, and no problem is anticipated there either.

The collapse of the *Stændertorvet* project should not obscure the fundamental solidity of the core business of the company, which is the supply of high-quality language services. Last year I wrote, "*this business is as solidly based as any company our size could hope to be in the current economic climate*". That is still true, thanks to the loyalty of our customers and freelance partners.

But we have to get back on course – the course set in January last year (see *News & Tips* no. 50), including the reworking of our web pages to more fully reflect the range of our activities and services. We also want to take the *Language Support Centre* concept forward, but with *Version 2.0* being built in cyberspace. I now have a nice, but quite small (and rather packed) office in Business House. Future expansion will mostly take place on the Internet.

Your ideas for that expansion are very welcome. If you would like to help in any way or want to become one of our freelancers, please get in touch! Further information at: www.englishsupport.dk.



Discussion

If you received this newsletter in the post, you will need to subscribe if you want it again. See web site for how.

What might LSC Version 2.0 look like?

One of the big problems with the *Language Support Centre* as conceived and tried out last year was the obvious financial one that the rent for the premises was high (due to the location and quality). And while the rent for freelancers was set as low as possible, it still introduced a financial criterion for selection for participation in the project: *ability to pay*.

The second problem was that of time. A lot of people wanted to see how the project would work out before committing themselves – but this actually meant that it did *not* work out. ☺

Thirdly, large as they were, the premises could only ever house a small fraction of our range of more than 250 freelance partners. Inevitably some would feel left out of what might appear an “inner circle” of those who *a)* lived within range of Roskilde, and *b)* felt able and willing to pay.

These three problems will disappear with an LSC on the Internet. Costs and “rents” can be much lower; people will be able to see the project unfold before committing themselves; and even our overseas freelance partners will be able to take part just as easily as anyone else. The only criterion for participation would be *proven competence*.

Some ideas

The key to success in the language field is *quality*. A poor translation remains a poor translation, no matter *how much* or *how little* it cost. And a teacher who can't teach is no use to anyone, no matter how many degrees he or she may have.

And from the language professional's point of view, a customer who respects you for the quality of your work is worth more than any number that don't – and rewarding to work for in more ways than one. Most of us want to *make a difference*, not just *earn a living*.

So how do we achieve quality our customers can trust? Our approach is to use only native speakers and check their work with other native speakers. Over the years, we have built up confidence in both customers and freelance partners.

A portal to quality

So the fundamental idea for a web-based *Language Support Centre* would be for it to become a kind of portal to selected top-quality native-speaker language professionals committed to common standards and quality assurance. It would create both a marketing platform to attract customers and an internal network of mutual support and assistance for language professionals.

We want to create the best virtual environment we can to generate the best quality we can, both for the customer and for our freelance partners.

This means that right now we need some feedback from our readers. Some of you will have ideas on *what* you think the LSC Version 2.0 should offer (i.e. in terms of *benefits* to customers and freelancers) and others will have ideas on *how* it might be done (i.e. in terms *technical solutions*).

Further information at this link: www.englishsupport.dk.

How to write a scientific paper

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“How to write a scientific paper” is an excellent guide – even for the experienced author of scientific articles and reports. It is easy to read and gives good advice about the structure of such papers, the writing process, and a number of the many linguistic traps that authors who do not have English as their mother tongue tend to fall into.

Kurt Lauridsen, MSc, PhD
Danish Decommissioning, Risø

(2)

**How to write
a scientific paper**

Lawrence White

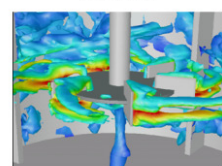


Figure 1: Global distribution of population for the paper writing to author's home

A brief practical guide to writing scientific papers in English, written for people who do not have English as their mother tongue

Proofreading • Copy editing • Translation • Teaching

From the workshop...

Accomplish

Extreme caution should be exercised before using the verb *accomplish*. In modern English, its general meaning is to *manage to do* or *achieve* or *finish doing* something, but it is rarely used.

The first thing to note is that *accomplish* cannot be followed by the *to*-infinitive. You cannot say “He *accomplished to read* the book”. Instead, say: “He *managed to read* the book”.

The gerund (*ING*-form) is just about possible after *accomplish* (“He *accomplished reading* the book”), but this would sound odd in most contexts, so it is better to replace it with “He *finished reading* the book”.

And while you can *achieve* fame, popularity, success, wealth, etc. (see *News & Tips* no. 46), very few native speakers would use *accomplish* here. In short, the verb *accomplish* is almost archaic. Here is an example, however, where it can still be used:

He worked very hard all day, but he didn't accomplish anything!

Note the vagueness of the object (*anything*) and the fact that *achieve* could have been used with no change in meaning at all. So the clear recommendation for non-native speakers is to avoid using *accomplish* altogether. Yes, I know many of you are really fond of using this word, but my advice is: *Don't!* ☺

Accomplished and accomplishment

On the other hand, the adjective *accomplished*, as in “She is an *accomplished* musician”, is an excellent word to know how to use. It means *expert* or *skilful*.

And the noun *accomplishment* is also quite common, meaning either *achievement* or *skill*.

Advocate

The verb to *advocate* means to *recommend* or *argue for* a course of action of some kind, as in “He does not *advocate the use* of violence”. The object can also be a gerund (“He does not *advocate using* violence”) or a *that*-clause (“He does not *advocate that violence should be used*”).

Note that the verb to *advocate* cannot be followed by a preposition or a *to*-infinitive. So it is *not* correct to write “*advocate for*” (use “*argue for*” instead) or “*advocate someone to do*” (use “*recommend someone to do*” instead).

We've gone over to Foxit!

Regular users of our website may have noticed that we have switched to *Foxit* as our standard pdf-software. We have done so because it is much smaller and faster than Adobe! The pdf-reader is free, and you can download it at the link below:

<http://www.englishsupport.dk/EN/backindex.htm>



Career and carrier

These two words have quite different meanings, but it is common for non-native speakers to write the second when they mean the first.

A *carrier* is (literally) *someone who carries*, e.g. a company that supplies transport services, i.e. carries goods or passengers from one place to another. An *aircraft carrier* is another example of the same fundamental idea, and the word can also be used as an adjective, as in a *carrier bag*.

A *career*, on the other hand, is a series of jobs you might have, perhaps in a particular area of work. So we might speak of a *career in the army* or *in journalism*.

The common confusion between the two words arises from the fact that *career* comes from a French word *carrière*, which has come more recently into a number of other European languages (e.g. German and Danish) with the spelling almost unchanged.

Both *carry* and *career* are etymologically connected with *carts* and *chariot racing*. A *career* is a *course through life*, and the verb to *career* means to *move very fast* or *hurtle out of control*.

From the workshop...

Almost and nearly

These two words mean *exactly* the same, but there are some important *usage* differences to note.

One thing they have in common is that they are usually described as adverbs, but both are used adjectivally on occasion:

e.g. “*They lost almost/nearly everything*”

This adjectival use is quite common, especially with *almost*, as in “*almost a woman*” or “*almost progress*”, and with some nouns with a definite article too, as in “*It was almost the truth*”.

Note the word order with the articles.

One important difference is that we do not use *nearly* in front of *like*, negative words, or adverbs ending in *-ly*:

e.g. “*It was almost like a dream*”

“*He almost never went there*”

“*She played almost perfectly*”.

On the other hand, you cannot modify *almost* (e.g. with *very*). So if we want to use *very*, we must also use *nearly*, as in “*very nearly a woman*”, “*very nearly perfectly*”, etc.

Special, specially, especially and in particular

If something is *special*, it has features that make it unusual in some way (usually positive), as in “*a special day*” or “*special tools*”, which might have been “*specially designed*” for the purpose for which they are used. So the adverbial form *specially* means *for a specific purpose*.

The word *especially* is different. It is used as an intensifier, as in “*an especially grey day*”, or as a particulariser, as in “*It was a wonderful experience, especially for the children*”. Another word that plays exactly the same role is *particularly*. So *especially* = *particularly*.

The adverbial phrase, *in particular*, means the same as *especially* and *particularly*, but because it consists of more than one word, the word order is different (see also *News & Tips* no. 7):

e.g. “*I would especially like to thank the Chairman ...*”

“*I would particularly like to thank the Chairman ...*”

“*In particular, I would like to thank the Chairman ...*”

“*I would like to thank the Chairman in particular ...*”



The adjective *particular* means *specific* rather than *special*, so a “*particular tool*” is not a special tool, but a specific one. In negative statements, these two meanings amount to the same: “*There was nothing special/particular about his appearance*”.

Finally, there is another (special) meaning of the adjective *particular*. If someone is described as “*particular about his appearance*”, it means he takes care about it.

Live, stay and remain

Where you *live* is your permanent address, whereas where you *stay* is only temporary (for the night, while on holiday, etc.). So I *live* in Denmark, and *stay* with friends when I am in England.

The verb *stay* can also mean to *remain in one place*. So there is clearly some overlap in meaning between *stay* and *remain*: “*He stayed where he was*” = “*He remained where he was*”. However, when the focus is not on *place*, but on the *continued existence* of something, you must use *remain*, as in “*When I have drunk half my beer, the other half remains*”. The verb to *stay* is also more active: contrast “*He remained silent*” and “*He stayed awake*”.

So that’s it for this month!

Best wishes

Lawrence White

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www. **English support** .dk
Your natural language partner