

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!*

Dear friends

After reading *News & Tips* no. 56, one reader wrote: “*I have a mental image of a cat falling, twisting in mid-air and landing on its feet, shaken but not too badly damaged.*” Well, I’m very fond of cats, so naturally I purred a lot at that! But cats don’t have banks and taxes to pay with money they no longer have, so now it’s back to the business of reconstruction. We have now paid all our debts to our freelance partners, and planning for the future is gathering pace ...



The LANGUAGE SUPPORT CENTRE (version 2.0) begins to take shape!

Quite a few readers have already come with ideas on the kind of content they would like to see in a virtual version of the LANGUAGE SUPPORT CENTRE, and a software supplier for the platform has been found. Among the ideas that have emerged so far are a strong focus on internal networking and mutual support, common standards for peer-reviewed, native-speaker translation, editing and

Progress on Vision 2010

Every year of our existence, we have set out a vision for the coming year (see January issue), but in last three years, the vision has only been partially fulfilled. And last year, we got completely blown off course.

So this year, I am setting out specific goals and deadlines. The plans are ambitious:

| Targets: | End of: | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---|
| No debt to business partners | January | ✓ |
| Initial design of LSCv2* | February | |
| No debt to bank | March | |
| Final design of LSCv2 | April | |
| New EN text for all websites** | May | |
| Finish LSCv2 functionality | June | |
| Website translations complete | July | |
| LSCv2 open for business | August | |
| > 50 partners in LSCv2 | September | |
| > 50 languages offered by Ls*** | October | |
| > 100 partners in LSCv2 | November | |
| Turnover for year up by 50% | December | |

* Language Support Centre (version 2.0)

** English support, Language support & LSCv2

*** Language support

proofreading, inclusion of native-speaker freelancers with other language-related skills such as teaching, technical writing, copy writing and interpreting.

We want to create a powerhouse of top-quality skills in all aspects of language communication.

Technical aspects

Among the suggestions is a server-based platform providing network participants with shared software and private file access from any machine anywhere. It could be just a work station or a mobile phone.

This approach would offer improvements in speed, software functionality and flexibility for language professionals on the move as well as in the office.

Customer benefits

For the customer, the website would offer access to a complete range of top-quality language services, with lists of links to the websites of native-speaker freelancers categorised by language and skills.

We want to be branded as top-quality suppliers from the very beginning!

Suggestions welcome!

If you have ideas or suggestions for the new web-based LANGUAGE SUPPORT CENTRE, please let us know!

You can fill in the form on the *English support* website at this link: www.englishsupport.dk.

From the workshop...

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

Dominant and dominating

These two adjectives started as synonyms, but have grown apart in meaning. They come from the verb *to dominate*, which literally means *to rule over, control, govern*, etc., often with a negative connotation. But when it is used metaphorically, as in “*The huge waterfall dominates the valley scenery*”, or even “*Caroline Wozniacki dominates women’s tennis in Denmark today*”, it carries no negative sense at all.

The adjective *dominating* retains the literal and more negative sense of the verb. It is usually active, deliberate and generally unpleasant for those on the receiving end.

Dominant, on the other hand, has the more metaphorical and neutral sense. It refers more to influence than to will. Genes can be either *dominant* or *recessive*, for instance. And a person can be a *dominant authority* on something without being in any way *dominating*. The reverse is also true (and perhaps even more common). 😊

Demands and requirements

Since many languages (e.g. Danish) use the same word for these two English words, disentangling their usage when teaching English as a foreign language is not easy. A good starting point, however, is that *requirements* are usually made by *people* and these people are in some kind of *authority* in relation to those affected.

For instance, (in most countries, at least) it is a *requirement* that you pay income tax and that vehicles driven on the public roads have brakes that work.

On the other hand, if you feel the tax is a burden (as most of us do at some point or another), you will refer to tax *demands*, and the icy conditions in much of Europe at the moment place extra *demands* on road drivers. Moreover, trades unions and NGOs make *demands* on employers and governments.

There is, of course, some overlap in these distinctions (as in *tax demands*) depending on your point of view (so you might think your employer’s *requirements* make unreasonable *demands* on your time), but the distinction is still useful.

Demand and require

The distinction is less clear with the verbs, where both can be used with non-person subjects. We can talk about the current icy conditions on the roads *requiring* (or *demanding*) extra care when driving. But you can see the distinction at work in a sentence like this:

“*Members of a trade union may be **required** to go on strike to **demand** higher pay*”.

Demanding

Both of the above verbs have *ING*-forms, but *demanding* can also be an adjective. Perhaps you have a *demanding* job, which is a job that makes a lot of demands on your abilities.

But you might also have a *demanding* employer; he makes a lot of demands on you too, but the phrase is no longer neutral and begins to sound as if you feel his demands are excessive.

Would you like to get **Linked in**?

I am currently busy expanding my use of the “social media”, such as *LinkedIn*. If you don’t know about *LinkedIn*, you can find out more here: www.linkedin.com.

Already registered with *LinkedIn*? – Well, you may feel you know me well enough from this newsletter to invite me to join your network. 😊

CARBONITE

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You can try it out here! Use the link below to download a free 15-day trial subscription, and you get an extra free month of service if you buy:

<http://www.carbonite.com/raf/signup.aspx?RAFUserID=213288&a=0>

(2)

Proofreading • Copy editing • Translation • Teaching

Constant, continual and continuous

These three adjectives, and their corresponding adverbial forms, overlap considerably in meaning, but there are some subtle differences that are worth noting.

In the case of *constant* and *constantly*, the difference is between the adjective and the adverb. The adjective *constant* is usually used of something non-stop, while the adverb *constantly* is mostly used of actions repeated again and again: “*He was constant in his love of her*” (no “breaks”), but “*He constantly bought her presents*” (repeatedly).

The adjective *continuous* and the adverb *continuously* both focus more on the non-stop nature of the thing or action described. So while we might use them of a sound that did not stop, we are less likely to use them of things repeated again and again, like banging or visits from your neighbour’s dog.

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.foxitsoftware.com/pdf/reader/>



In these latter cases, we are more likely to use *continual* or *continually*. So if someone is in *continuous* pain, the phrase definitely emphasises the non-stop nature of the pain, whereas *continual* pain is more likely to be pain that comes again and again.

A second difference is that *continual* and *continually* both tend to have a negative meaning, as in “*life is a continual struggle*” or “*he came round to my house continually*” (i.e. it was annoying).

Curiously enough, however, there is something called “continuous assessment”. While this was probably chosen precisely to avoid it sounding negative (“continual assessment”), assessment that *really* never stopped would be truly annoying! So my advice to non-native speakers is to treat this piece of educational jargon as a weird exception rather than the rule. ☺

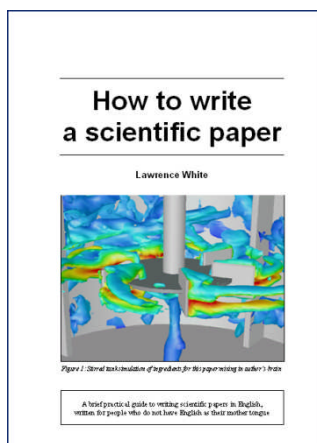
The

I dealt in some detail with that little word “*the*” in *News & Tips* no. 28, but people have problems with it even in the most unexpected places! Here is an example from an invitation to an international conference on translation, no less: “*Globalization and localization process have created tremendous scope for translation activities*”.

The problem is marked in red. Since the process is a *particular* process, the authors should have written “*the localization process*”. But there are other possible solutions without “*the*”:

“*Globalization and localization processes have created tremendous scope for translation activities*”

“*Globalization and localization have created tremendous scope for translation activities*”.



Do you need to write scientific papers?

“*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

You can order it direct from www.englishsupport.dk. Price: DKK 50.

Questions & Answers

(Edited)

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

Millions and billions

Dear Lawrence,
Thank you for your corrections to our website.
I have just one question: I would really like to know why you prefer “million” to “billion”, so that 4.9 billion becomes 4,900 million?

I do so because in British English (and all other European languages) a *billion* means a *million million*, but in US English it means a *thousand million*. My solution is aimed at avoiding any possible linguistic misunderstanding, which is why I recommend it.

How do you set your prices?

Dear Lawrence,
When you have a multi-language project, do you build the cost of managing the project into the per-word price or do you charge a separate hourly rate for this? And, if you charge an hourly rate, are you willing to reveal what this is?

Well, I only charge an hourly rate for teaching or when I go and help a customer negotiate in English. In both these cases, it is clear to both parties before we start what the cost will be.

Going green

So here's another advertisement. We have joined the initiative for CO₂ neutral websites. Find out more here: www.co2neutralwebsite.com.



Comment

Last month saw two terrible events: what appears to have been a religious fanatic's attempt on the life of Kurt Westergaard, and a massive earthquake whose epicentre was very close to Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince with its 2 million inhabitants. Now here's a thought: the perpetrator of the first probably believes that his horribly immoral god was the perpetrator of the second!

The victims in both cases need our solidarity! Hardly anyone nowadays believes that the people of Port-au-Prince brought it upon themselves because of their sins. So there has been a massive response to their plight, and that's good.

But a lot of people seem to feel that somehow Kurt Westergaard “deserves” his fate. Personally, I view every tendency in that direction with horror – as a kind of throw-back to witch-burning and religious courts sitting in judgement on the rest of us. So here's another thought: in Denmark, you are much more likely to be hit by a *fatwah* than an earthquake! *We are all Kurt Westergaard!*

More news and tips (and perhaps views) next month!

Best wishes
Lawrence White
LW@englishsupport.dk

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