

Language consultations: an insight into Latvian experience

There are several aspects of Latvian language consulting experience observed in this presentation. First, we give an insight into the history of Latvian language consultations during several decades. Institutions responsible for language consultations have changed during this period and since 2009 Language consultation department is a part of Latvian language agency.

Every year the number of given consultations has increased showing that the interest of language users on various language issues has increased as well. Every day we answer questions concerning proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, good writing style etc. Our clients are very different – lawyers, copywriters, marketing directors, Latvian language teachers, secretaries.

We have impression that there are two linguistic flows dominating in linguistic landscape in Latvia and especially in Riga. One flow is very English, i. e., it is trying to use international words or even English words to be well recognized and considered prestigious. The other flow is making Latvian as a stylish way of expressing – they are trying to find Latvian equivalents for English terms, localizing expressions etc.

The cooperation with other colleagues – terminologists, researchers in institutes, professors in universities – helps us a lot when searching for answers and drawing conclusions in discussions about various language issues.

Currently we are working on application based on database of language consultations. We hope that this application would become a useful tool for language users: it would save time when searching for frequently asked questions and also create interest in new questions about language issues.