Language Barriers for Open Source Contributors

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NI HAO
你好
MARHABA
مرحبا
HELLO
HOLA
Non-native English speakers might not be confident enough about their English skills in a technical environment.
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How to make a face extend until end of line even if there are no enough chars written on it?

PD: I'm not a native English speaker, so please forgive any lack of clarity. I'll gladly receive feedback about them and re-write or correct the question.

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I would use some help regarding Control and Meta keys

First of all sorry for my english I am not a native speaker and I am not sure about vocabulary regarding typing.
Slangs and different native languages may cause misunderstanding...

OMFG - straight is.... straight up bad!

I could not get to MELPA or ELPA behind the corporate firewall, but I had access to git... I came across] straight and in under 5 minutes i have elpy installed even though before I was getting bit in the ass by unsted deps the author failed to provide or mention in his README.

This is a kick-ass package manager for real.

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I'm not a native English speaker but from from the title it sounds to me like you are saying that straight.el is not a good package manager, although from reading your post I think you are actually giving praise to straight.el. But maybe I'm unfamiliar with some slang.

EDIT: never mind, I guess there is such a slang expression. At least I learned something new today.

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I am a native english speaker, I thought the same. But I am British.....

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I've definitely heard "bad" mean "good". A silly example that comes to mind is the song "She's a Bad Mama Jama". I'd say it's a thing that's gone out of style a long time ago, but "badass" has exactly the same usage and is more current sounding :P

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I'm pretty sure it's sarcasm. He doesn't like it.
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Do non-native English speakers face a language barrier in OSS?
Translation can be used as a proxy to identify someone’s language
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Common way to start contributing in OSS
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14 translation projects

2009-2019
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14 translation projects

549 translation contributors

122 languages

14 translation projects

2009-2019
More non-native English speakers contribute to OSS projects than native speakers
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Manual validation
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549 translation contributors

Manual validation

Bar chart showing:
- Gnome: 480 non-native contributors vs 43 native contributors
- OpenStack: 12 non-native contributors vs 14 native contributors
Non-native English speakers are split into different categories based on how dissimilar is the language that they contribute the most to English
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Progress from translation to software development

Factors that could explain differences between (non-) native contributors
In Gnome, *remotely* and *absolutely non-native* speakers together make up to 83.18% to contributions to *just translation*. 
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There are less non-native speakers progressing from translation to code in Gnome.

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Analysis of GitHub activity
In Gnome, native English speakers have more repositories in their GH account than non-native English speakers.
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Analysis of pull requests
In Gnome, *almost native* speakers perform most of the pull requests.
In OpenStack, *native* speakers perform most of the pull requests.
Native English speakers have more comments in their pull requests.
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There is a statistical difference for *OpenStack* data.
The commit messages written by *native speakers* are easier to read.
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There is a statistical difference for Gnome and OpenStack data.
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Researchers could build tools to help (core) OSS members to monitor the progress of developers' contributions.
OpenStack tries to minimize the language barrier by making suggestions to both native and non-native English speakers

OpenStack projects communicate in English, and our documentation is written in US English. However, many documentation contributors have English as a second (or third, or fourth) language. This poses many challenges for non-native English speakers, but there are some things that native English-speakers can do to make it easier to include non-native speakers in our community. This chapter contains some suggestions for both native and non-native English speakers to help make our community more inclusive and welcoming for all people.
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New contributors with English as a second language

Challenges related to language skills are easier to overcome than cultural ones. Cultural differences need to be respected, while English skills can always be improved.

In order to brush up on your English skills, be in contact with the language as much as you can. Do not think about your limitations. Just do your best and you will improve eventually.

Read as much as you can, because this will help you gather vocabulary. Communicating through chat and mailing lists daily helps, too. Some tools, such as real-time dictionaries and translators, are very useful with these platforms.

Talking to others or yourself helps you become comfortable speaking out more frequently. Having one-on-one conversations to express your ideas is easier than discussing in larger groups.

Speak and write your opinion, and ask your questions; this participation is always a good opportunity to exercise your English. Do not be afraid.

OpenStack tries to minimize the language barrier by making suggestions to both native and non-native English speakers
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Working with non-native English speakers

For a native English speaker, it can sometimes be difficult to determine when a non-English speaker is having trouble communicating with you because of a language barrier, or because there are cultural challenges that are making it difficult. This can occur even between different English-speaking cultures. Cultural differences must be respected, while English skills can always be improved.

Here are some general guidelines for making your communications as clear as possible to a diverse audience:

- Speak slowly and use simple words and sentences.
- Do not ever make fun of non-native English speakers if you find something wrong about the English they use.
- Try to encourage newcomers to express their opinions and make them comfortable enough to do so.

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Some specific cultural things to remember

Each culture has different norms when interacting with other people. This section describes some specific cultural differences that you might encounter, along with some practical advice for native English speakers to try and overcome these particular barriers.

Americans and Australians especially are often very direct, even terse, in the way they communicate, which can come across to other cultures quite rudely. Chinese and Brazilian Portuguese speakers like to list the facts first and give the request or action at the end, so you may need to read through emails very carefully to find out what you are being asked for. This structure is also good to remember when you are writing to people who communicate in this way, as it will be easier for them to understand your request.

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@isaferreira_57
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