

Danish so-called "pronunciation"

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20031228-00

December 28, 2003



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Of course my real goal in studying German and Swedish is eventually to have all of Denmark surrounded. (After Swedish, the next most likely nearby targets are Norwegian and Dutch.) All I know about Denmark I learned from Swedes. Well, if you don't count one Danish co-worker, who moved back to Denmark several years ago. The Swedes tell me, "The Danes would be so much easier to understand if they would only take the hot potato out of their mouth before they started talking." (Two Swedes have told me that Danish sounds "drunk".) I thought this was just friendly Scandinavian pick-on-your-neighbor-ism until I actually listened to some Danish closely. Believe it or not, the odd collection of sounds that comes out of their mouths (1) counts as a language, and (2) is comprehensible to other Danes. Listen for yourself: Rødgrød med fløde. That "soft d" I will never, ever learn to pronounce properly. It appears to require the use of throat muscles that most people are content to use only for swallowing. This site has a longer sample of Danish speech. You thought swallowing a word was just a figure of speech? Check out the pronunciation of Sverigesfærgen which sounds to me something like "Svesfæn".

Okay, now that I've publically made fun of Danish, my punishment will probably be that I will be called upon to study it seriously at some point.

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