

A grammar book for student teachers of English at  
Norwegian colleges of teacher education, taking  
half-year and one-year courses

# Wherefore Art Thou Grammar

by

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### **Brief retrospective introduction (December, 2022)**

This English grammar compendium for college students in Norway was mainly written by my colleague Sonni Olsen who I worked together with at Finnmark University College at the end of the previous millennium (around 1996-2000). Sonni asked me to proofread and edit it, and hopefully find a publisher. Unfortunately, we never progressed so far, but used the compendium in our teaching at the college. I also used it during the next twenty years in various colleges and universities where I was employed.

## **Preface**

This book is intended for student teachers of English at Norwegian colleges of teacher education taking half-year and one-year courses. The teaching of English has a twofold goal: students should develop their knowledge of the language and their skills in the use of the language. In addition, they need to acquire the competence that will enable them to teach the subject once they have completed their teacher education. This book has been written with these requirements in mind, resulting in a grammar book with a didactic focus, especially designed to cover the needs of student teachers.

The didactic aspect presented in this book involves students working actively with the material. Teaching methods are integrated into the exercises, which students will work on while progressing through the book. When teaching children in the primary and secondary schools, the students will be able to employ the same methods applied to different material. The individual, pair and group activities in this book include literature and poetry analysis, creative writing exercises, games, oral and role-play exercises.

The book also seeks to give students a thorough grounding in the theoretical aspect of English grammar: its word classes, clause elements and structure. When studying English at college level, it is necessary for students to be able to describe structures and explain why these are used. As future teachers, students need to be able to use the language correctly in order to explain how the language works. Once the pupils have gained insight of how the language works, they will be able to use this knowledge to adopt strategies to improve their own language production.

We have both taught English grammar for a number of years at Norwegian colleges of teacher education, and this book has borrowed much from the everyday teaching situation. The exercises included in this book have been thoroughly tried out by both students and teachers in lectures. A large number of practical exercises are included, and the explanations of linguistic phenomena are based on different contexts in order to make the students aware of the connection between form and content. This context-based approach involves the use of authentic texts taken from different sources, for example the novels, plays and short stories which college students might be familiar with as part of their literature syllabus. Authentic sentences written by Norwegian pupils will also be used in order to discuss typical mistakes made by learners of English.

There is also an emphasis on the special problems, which Norwegian pupils may encounter when learning English. A focus is made on especially those areas of grammar where the Norwegian and English languages differ.

Sonni Olsen

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## Introduction

### *Why study grammar?*

The position of grammar in language teaching has been a topic of discussion and controversy since English was first taught in schools. As early as the nineteenth century, English teaching focused on the grammar-translation method, which involved learners translating texts, and learning rules and patterns by heart. The audio-lingual method introduced in the 1970s drilled in language patterns by focusing on structured dialogues. The students or teacher in the classroom seldom used natural language. With the introduction of the communicative approach, the idea was to create situations where communication could take place between learners. Teachers did not teach grammar explicitly, but learners had to ‘discover’ grammar themselves by working with different types of texts.

The majority of students reading this book will have learnt their English during the era of the communicative approach. This approach placed little emphasis on learning the structural part of the language, so some students often experience difficulties when describing the elements of the language.

### *What is grammar?*

Briefly, we can say that grammar is a set of rules that describes how the language is used. Our approach will be descriptive, which means that we will look at how the language is actually used. This is the way most linguists work today, and not by making rules that users have to observe. Very early grammars were written in that way, which is called a prescriptive approach.

The users make the rules of the language. We can say that these rules are part of our linguistic competence (Chomsky, 1957).<sup>1</sup> Look at this example of how the speaker corrects himself when speaking:

*I tell you, I mean, I have told you that...*

*One of the students have, eh has said that....*

Children have the rules of their first language built in, and we can observe several stages towards producing a standard language. Study the following examples:

*What that was? (=What was that?)*

*Where Jeanne can write? (Where can I write?)*

*I comed and we runned. (I came and we ran)*

Later this child will learn that word order is different in questions, and that all verbs are not conjugated as regular verbs, and by the age of five a native speaker will intuitively have learnt most of the rules of grammar. Norwegian learners of English intuitively know the grammar of their own mother tongue, and this knowledge, and knowledge of English grammar will enable them to be aware when the two languages differ grammatically, and hopefully speed up the learning process, as well as making it more interesting. We hope that this book will serve as an aid to learners of the English language, but we also hope that it will make their study more interesting and enjoyable as well.

# Chapter 1

## The Levels of Language

### 1 Introduction

The study of language may be classified into the following levels:

- **Phonology**
- **Morphology**
- **Syntax**

**Phonology** is the study of the sound system of the language. It deals with the smallest elements of the language that can bring about a change in meaning, the vowel and consonant phonemes. Pronunciation and how to teach correct pronunciation are also important elements in the study of language at a higher level. However, phonology falls outside the scope of the present book.

#### **Hierarchical levels**

Language can be seen as being divided into hierarchical levels:

- **sentence**
- **clause**
- **phrase**
- **word**
- **morpheme**

# 1 Morphology

**Morphology** is the study of the word level, and is concerned with how words are formed from morphemes. A **morpheme** is the smallest meaningful unit of the language. The study of morphemes may be divided into: **lexical** and **grammatical** morphemes. A **lexical morpheme** will normally give meaning or refer to something. A word may consist of a single lexical morpheme. Study the following examples:

**Small** (one morpheme)

**Small-est** (two morphemes)

*Small* is a lexical morpheme, it means “little”. The second morpheme, *-est*, is a grammatical morpheme, denoting the highest degree of “small” in a comparison of the adjective.

**Grammatical morphemes** are **affixes** which cannot occur as separate words. An example of a grammatical morpheme is the **suffix** *-ly*, which can change the grammatical class of a word, eg. *cold* - *coldly* (adjective + *-ly* = adverb).

Other examples of **grammatical morphemes** are:

**-s**: plural of the noun or 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of the verb

**-ing**: present participle

An awareness of morphemes will help a student develop his/her vocabulary, since he/she will understand the processes behind word formation and be able to identify words of the same family having the same core meaning. Consider these examples:

Decide

Deci/**sion** (noun-forming morpheme)

Deci/**sive** (adjective-forming morpheme)

The meaning of the words *decision* and *decisive* can be inferred from the meaning of the first word *decide* when the student has knowledge of the grammatical morphemes *-ion* and *-ive*, which change the word class of the verb *decide* to a noun and an adjective respectively when added as suffixes.

## Affixes

Grammatical morphemes take the form of affixes, i.e. prefixes and suffixes. A **prefix** is a letter or syllable, which is added to the beginning of a word to modify its meaning, such as *uncontrollable*, *unfathomable*, and *undesirable*. The meaning of the grammatical morpheme (prefix) *-un* is roughly 'not'. The morpheme has a German root and is similar to Norwegian *-u*. A **suffix** is a **grammatical morpheme** which can be added to the end of a word. Suffixes may be both **derivational** and **inflectional**. A derivational suffix changes the **word class** of a word. For example, the **noun** *man* can be changed to the **adverb** *manly* when the suffix *-ly* is added. Inflectional suffixes such as plural *-s*, *-ed*, *-ing*, express grammatical relationships.

## 2 Syntax

**Syntax** is the study of the sentence level of the language. Sentences may be divided up into one or more **clauses**, which in turn are divided into **clause elements**. A **simple sentence** consists of one **main clause**. The five clause elements are:

- **subject (S)**
- **verb (V)**
- **object (O)**
- **predicate (P)**
- **adverbial (A)**

For example, consider the sentence:

<i>He</i>	<i>left</i>	<i>the house</i>	<i>open</i>	<i>on Wednesdays.</i>
<b>S</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>

When analysing a clause we study the semantic relations between the elements. We find these by asking questions like: *Who* (subject) *does* (verb) *what* (direct object) *to whom* (indirect object) *when, where, how and why* (adverbials)?

In dealing with syntax we also work with different types of sentences and clauses:

- **Simple sentence:** We have had a nice summer.
- **Compound sentence:** We have had a nice summer and we all got a nice tan.
- **Complex sentence:** I like grammar, which is obvious.
- **Main Clause:** **I like grammar**, which is obvious.
- **Subordinate clause:** I like grammar, **which is obvious**.

### Phrases

Words are grouped into phrases, which means that the elements of these phrases belong together in some way. The phrases are named after what is considered to be the main word in the phrase, as is illustrated below:

- **Noun Phrase:** the small **car**
- **Adjective Phrase:** quite **obvious**
- **Adverbial Phrase:** very **heavily**
- **Prepositional Phrase:** **in** May **after** dinner
- **Verb Phrase:** has been **singing**

Phrases are recognised by the fact that they can be substituted by one single word, and that they are rarely split up if moved:

They saw **the new car**.  
They saw **it**.  
\*They **the new saw car**.

## 3 Word classes

The **word classes**:

**Nouns**: book, table, computer, England, love, Peter

**Adjectives**: good, bad, beautiful, ugly

**Determiners**:

Articles: a, an, the

Numerals: one, two, third, etc.

Quantifiers: several, many, each, every, both, etc.

**Verbs**: sing, write, eat, drink

**Adverbs**: awfully, nicely, luckily, openly

**Pronouns**:

Personal: I, you, he, she, it, etc.

Possessive: my, your, etc.

Indefinite: anyone, somebody, etc.

Reflexive: myself, themselves, etc.

Reciprocal: each other, one another

**Interjections**: oh!, dear!, damn!, etc.

**Conjunctions**: and, but, or, while, whereas, etc.

**Prepositions**: at, on, in, during, without, etc.

### Clause elements and word classes

It is important to distinguish between word classes and clause elements. A word usually belongs to one word class, but some words belong to different word classes, such as: *to open* [verb] and *open* [adjective]. Words in sentences can function in different ways and be part of different clause elements.

For instance:

An *open* door let the thief in. *open* (adjective, part of noun phrase functioning as subject).

The door is *open*. *open* (adjective, functioning as subject predicative).



## **Conclusion**

So far, a lot of grammatical terms have been introduced, which the student may find confusing. When studying grammar, it is necessary to learn some terminology about the language in order to be able to describe it accurately; this is called metalanguage, 'language about the language'. Each chapter will include definitions of new terminology, and a glossary of all the grammatical terms and their Norwegian translations is included at the end of the book.

This book contains the necessary elements of grammar, which need to be learnt at this level. In addition to reading and understanding these chapters, it is important that students work with the practical exercises, which are included at the end of each chapter. 'Learning by doing' is a useful method when working with grammar!

Students will find that many of the examples and exercises are marked with an \* (asterisk). This indicates that the example is grammatically incorrect, and distinguishes this element from correct language.

## Activities

### 1. Morphemes

Try to split these words into morphemes and explain the meaning or function of the grammatical morphemes.

extended	openly	waiting	inclusive
extension	speaks	higher	exclusively

### 2. Affixes and Etymology

Working in pairs write down as many affixes that you can think of. Some pairs can concentrate on prefixes, some on suffixes. What are the 'meanings' of these prefixes/suffixes? What are there equivalents in Norwegian? Using a dictionary, what are the roots of the different affixes you found? Present your results in class.

### 3. Children's humour

Children learn intuitively the morphological rules of their mother tongue between the ages of 2 and 4 yrs. They will tend to overuse these rules in constructions such , *they comed to the party yesterday*, or *they goed to school on Saturday*. Both these examples show an awareness of the past participle grammatical morpheme, *-ed*.

Lewis Carroll who wrote books for children such as *Alice in Wonderland* was well aware of the fact than children found the breaking of grammatical rules amusing and he would consciously include humorous 'rule-breaking' in his writings.

Consider which rule is broken in the extract from the poem, 'The Little Man that had a Little Gun' by Lewis Carroll. What are the diminutive suffixes in Norwegian?



*In stature the Manlet was dwarfish-  
No burly big Blunderbore he:  
And he wearily gazed on the crawfish  
His Wifelet had dressed for his tea.  
"Now reach me, sweet Atom, my gunlet,  
And hurl the old shoelet for luck:  
Let me hie<sup>1</sup> to the bank of the runlet<sup>2</sup>,  
And shoot thee a Duck!"*

*She has reached him his minikin gunlet:  
She has hurled the old shoelet for luck:  
She is busy baking a bunlet,  
To welcome him home with his Duck.  
On he speeds, never wasting a wordlet,  
Though thoughtlets cling, closely as wax,  
To the spot where the beautiful birdlet  
So quietly quacks.*

<sup>1</sup> *hie* (archaic) meaning to go quickly. Children's literature and poetry often uses archaic forms.

<sup>2</sup> *runlet*: a small stream, a rivulet, a brook etc.

#### 4. Analyse the underlined sentences, identifying subjects, objects and other sentence elements.

##### HOMELESSNESS IN NEW YORK

... Homeless people live on my street. They stand in the bank lobby around the corner and watch as the cash machine spews out money on demand. They are at every movie theater every day. Three times a week, they rip through my trash looking for an old shoe, half a meal or some tin they can recycle.

We know all that, I guess. New York has a huge homeless population, possibly more than 70,000. As a percentage of residents, it may be smaller than the District of Columbia's, but in a city of houses, such as Washington, the homeless can become almost invisible. Not here. Here we all live on top of each other so that no matter who you are, the problem never goes away. They are mentally ill, they use drugs, they have no hope. They are a dark reflection of a sick society. They symbolize the housing crisis and the jobs crisis and the uncomfortable Darwinian reality that the strong rarely do help the weak.

... One day not long after I got here I decided to walk to work and give a dollar to every person who asked me for money. Fifty blocks: \$48. The first time we found somebody sleeping in our foyer last Fall, I thought that making it available as shelter might be a good way for us to help the homeless. The next day a psychotic vagrant stabbed somebody around the corner from our apartment. Now I lock the outer door every night.

Slowly, inexorably, I have become acclimated to ignoring the plight of others. I stopped carrying extra quarters. I avoid certain blocks and parts of Central Park. Not out of fear, really. It's just escapism.

... One morning, a black man in a ripped T-shirt and very little else started to motion at me on the subway. I paid no attention, but he kept flicking his wrist at me. Still, I ignored him. He started for me and just as I was deciding whether to run for it or stomp on his barely covered foot, I heard him speak. "Your color is twisted, man," he said to me. "It's all messed up." Oh God, I thought, not this. "Your color," he repeated. "Fix it." A nut, a vicious racist nut. Suddenly, he reached for my neck and smoothed the crinkled collar of my suit jacket.

"There," he said as he turned to walk away. 'Now you're looking good.'

From 'Calcutta on the Hudson' by Michael Specter *Guardian Weekly*, 17 March 1991.

#### 5. Can you identify the sentence elements in the following sentences?

- A: I like cats.
- B: The music stopped.
- C: My brother is in the army.
- D: The teacher gave her favourite student an apple.
- E: I haven't seen her for a long time.
- F: The President is smart.
- G: The people found the President smart.

**6. Using your dictionary find out what word classes these words belong to.**

grammar	telephone
to conjugate	computer
obviously	nationalise
able	between
sang	hopefully
situation	beautiful
teaching	sits
however	wrote

**7. Working in small groups and pairs. Read the text: 'Homelessness in New York' (question 4), and decide what word classes the words belong to. You may concentrate on the first paragraph.**

# Chapter 2 The Noun

## 1 Definition

If you ask a school pupil to give a definition of a noun one probable answer might be: 'It's a name of a thing'. This is obviously not very precise, but still quite a good explanation. We can define a noun in 3 different ways:

1. Semantically: A noun is a word that denotes a thing, a being or a concept.
2. Morphologically: A noun is a word that can take a genitive ('s) or plural (s) morpheme.
3. Syntactically: A noun is a word that fits into the frame: 'The \_\_\_\_\_ seems good' or 'I need a \_\_\_\_\_'.

None of these criteria are good enough on their own to define a noun, although the semantic one is perhaps the best, especially for young learners.

### **Morphology of the noun**

Most nouns can have both a singular and a plural form. We form the plural of a noun by adding an inflection:

a table - two tables  
a book - two books  
a child - two children  
a baby - two babies

For rules of plural formation, refer to your dictionary or a secondary school grammar book.

Nouns can also have a genitive inflection:

the boy's bicycle  
the children's toys  
the boys' bicycles (plural)

There are also other ways of expressing a possessive relationship. We often see that non-personal nouns are used with of-genitive:

the roof of the house  
the top of the mountain

## 2 Common and Proper Nouns

In this chapter we will focus on the different types of nouns and consider how they function in sentences. To do this, we shall study noun oppositions:

- common vs. proper nouns
- countable vs. uncountable nouns

In addition, we shall discuss a special group of nouns called collective nouns.

### **Common and Proper Nouns**

Proper nouns have unique reference. This means that they can refer to unique individuals or places. They are names, and therefore capitalised, such as in these examples:

John, Newsweek, York, Apple Computers, Olsen

Common nouns have class reference, which means that they refer to one or more members of a class or type, or to a concept:

woman, girl, chair, knowledge

The main differences between common and proper nouns is the manner in which they accept articles and plural inflection. We normally find that only common nouns can co-occur with articles (a, the) and be given a plural suffix (-s or others), whereas both common and proper nouns can have case inflection (genitive -s).

However, there are some exceptions to the rules above, as shown in the following examples:

The Johnsons have two Toyotas. (= two cars of the car-make Toyota)

She has two Rembrandts in her office. (= two paintings by the artist Rembrandt)

In these sentences, the proper nouns are used to refer to individual members of a group or a type. The proper nouns have the function of a common noun.

## 3 Countable and Uncountable Nouns

Whether a noun is countable or uncountable, affects many elements of the sentence, as you can see in the following sentence pair:

There **are many** lamps in that house, I have seen **them**.

There **is a lot of** furniture in that house, I have seen **it**.

The first sentence contains the countable noun *lamp*, which has a plural suffix *-s*. This has consequences for several other words as well. For instance, in the second sentence the uncountable noun *furniture* does not take a plural verb.

Uncountable nouns in English often cause problems for Norwegian learners, because countable nouns in Norwegian sometimes have uncountable equivalents in English, such as *furniture* which has already been mentioned. Other examples of these are: *information* (*opplysninger*), *knowledge* (*kunnskaper*), *bread* (*brød*), *work* (*arbeid*), *cash* (*kontanter*), *news* (*nyheter*), *money* (*penger*), etc.

Uncountable nouns can be both abstract and concrete, as the following examples illustrate: love, hate, furniture, snow, information

Nouns can normally be used with determiners such as the indefinite articles (*a, an*) or other small words that quantify them (*one, two, several, many*). This is not possible with uncountable nouns, as they cannot be counted.

Since uncountables are "mass" nouns, they can be measured in different ways, as by reference to shape, type of container, weight, or by using unit nouns such as 'a bit' or 'piece':

A slice of bread, a block of ice

A cup of tea, a teaspoon of sugar

A pint of beer, two kilos of flour

A piece of information

'some' is used with abstract uncountables:

Show some concern for somebody!

She needs some tender loving care.

### Homophonous Nouns

Homonyms are words which are spelt the same but which have different meanings. Some homonyms are related in meaning, other are not. An example of two homonyms with unrelated meaning: *right* - Turn right! *right* - He is always right.

Other homonyms can have different though related meanings. These homonym pairs are often countable/uncountable. The uncountable meaning is often general, whereas the countable meaning is specific. Consider the following examples:

A glass is made of glass. She is writing her paper on recycled paper.

Uncountable: *material*; Countable: *item made of the material*

## 4 Invariable and Collective Nouns

### **Invariable Nouns**

As you have seen in the examples above, most uncountable nouns are singular. But there is a group of words that can be said to be uncountable that are plural only. Study these examples:

Where are my jeans?  
My scissors have disappeared again!  
You have to use opera glasses in the theatre.

These nouns have no singular form, as they denote objects that are made of two parts. Some invariable plurals have no plural ending:

The police are just doing their job.  
The cattle are grazing on the field.

Others have a plural inflection but take a singular verb:

Linguistics is an interesting science.  
Measles is a dangerous disease.

### **Collective Nouns**

This is a special group of nouns. They can be both singular or plural, depending on the reference of the noun in the sentence. Either the speaker is thinking of a unit (singular) or the elements making up this unit (plural).

Our team is winning this year, it's just great!  
Our team are coming onto the field right now, they look tired.  
John's family is big. It is growing every year.  
All his family are coming home for Christmas. They like to be together.

### **Teaching Nouns to Learners**

Nouns are the largest group of words, about 25% of the words used in spoken or written language are nouns. Young children find nouns easy to learn because they need only to remember the meaning of the word, unlike other word classes such as auxiliary verbs and prepositions whose meaning is diffuse. But if nouns are used wrongly, these errors cause more communication problems than other types of learning errors. Nouns are best learnt in a context that stimulates and motivates, such as interesting stories and illustrated books. Reading will enable young learners to distinguish a noun from other words when they repeatedly meet the same word in different sentences.

The noun is not the most difficult element of English grammar. However, Norwegian learners often experience problems when deciding whether to choose the singular or plural form of the verb together with a noun. Therefore student teachers need to bear in mind that it will be useful to spend some time on countable and uncountable nouns when they start teaching.

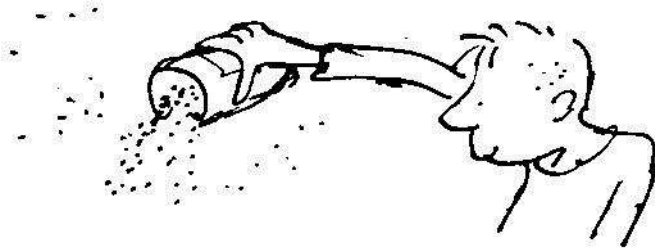


## Activities

### 1. Try to find the nouns in the text below by using the 3 ways of defining nouns (2.1).

The excerpt is taken from Roald Dahl's: *George's Marvellous Medicine*<sup>2</sup>

There was a round cardboard carton labelled FLEA POWDER FOR DOGS, KEEP WELL AWAY FROM THE DOG'S FOOD, it said, BECAUSE THIS POWDER, IF EATEN, WILL MAKE THE DOG EXPLODE. "Good," said George, pouring it all into the saucepan.



He found a box of CANARY SEED on the shelf. "Perhaps it'll make the old bird sing," he said, and in it went.



Next, George explored the box with shoe-cleaning materials – brushes and tins and dusters. Well now, he thought, Grandma's medicine is brown, so *my* medicine must also be brown or she'll smell a rat. The way to colour it, he decided, would be with BROWN SHOE POLISH. The large tin he chose was labelled DARK TAN. Splendid. He scooped it all out with an old spoon and plopped it into the pan. He would stir it up later.

On his way back to the kitchen, George saw a bottle of GIN standing on the sideboard. Grandma was very fond of gin. She was allowed a small nip of it every evening. Now he would give her a treat. He would pour in the whole bottle. He did.

### 2 In the following sentences the underlined word may either be a noun, an adjective or a verb. Identify the nouns and explaining why you think the words you choose are nouns.

This chair is very light.

Can you give me a light?

You can wear light clothing today.

The lights in the room were very bright.

**3. Give the plural forms of these nouns:**

cheese	photo	lady	police	man driver
orange	loaf	guy	mouse	crisis
child	woman	foot	scarf	phenomenon
woman	church	trout	tempo	criterion

**4. Study the following examples and see if you can make the rules to distinguish between these two types of nouns!**

Brian	boy
*a Brian	a boy
*the Brian	the boy
*Brians	boys

**5. Correct and give a grammatical explanation of the mistakes involving nouns in the following sentences:**

1. My Pen is blue.
2. I bought two pens at the narvesen yesterday.
3. He asked her to show him a block of love.
4. Both boys found a France on the map of Europe.
5. The crowd of kids is swarming all over the place.
6. Tina's mother gave her many money for her birthday.
7. A hate is always stronger than a love.
8. She doesn't like wines.
9. Several weathers can be nice in September.

**6. Write down as many uncountable nouns in English as you can. What are their Norwegian equivalents? Try and find uncountable nouns in English which are countable in Norwegian.**

**7. Go back to the text, Roald Dahl's: *George's Marvellous Medicine* (question 1), and group nouns into countables and uncountables. What kind of determiners combine with the uncountable nouns?**

**8. Read the text "Homelessness in New York" again, question 4, chapter 1. Group the nouns into proper and common nouns, and indicate which are countable and which uncountable.**

# Chapter 3 Determiners

## 1. Introduction

Determiners are words that either identify or quantify the noun, which means they are functional words. There are different subgroups, and they are a closed set. Study the list below:

Articles: a, an, the

Possessive pronouns: my, your, etc.

Demonstrative pronouns: this, that, these, those

Numerals: one, two, third, twentieth, etc.

Quantifying determiners: all, many, a few, every, both, each

The three first types in general identify nouns, whereas the two last categories have the function of quantifying nouns. In this chapter we will concentrate on the articles and their co-occurrence with nouns, which is already somewhat familiar from the study of nouns in the previous chapter. There are three types of articles: the indefinite, the definite and the zero article.

# 1 The indefinite article

## Form

The indefinite article has these two forms: **a** and **an**. The choice depends on the initial sound of the following word, in that **a** is followed by a consonant sound and **an** by a vowel sound:

A door, a university, a friendly Englishman  
An open door, an apple, an hour, an MP

## Use

The indefinite article is often used with a noun that is introduced into the context, in other words, the first time we hear about this noun. Look at this example of an introduction to a children's novel where the main character is described for the first time:

Colin Potter was a hungry boy. His mother said he had a hole in his stomach, and one day she'd get a needle and thread and sew it up.

(Maurice Gee: *The Fat Man*)

The noun identified by an indefinite article is always singular, and the basic meaning is "a single member of a class". But it may also have other meanings, as a rephrasing of the following examples will show:

Oranges are 3 GBP a kilo. (*per kilo*)

A cat is an interesting animal. (*all cats are*)

I have a car. (*a specific one, the one I have*)

Would you like a car for your birthday? (*not specified which one*)

This is a grammar. (*distinguishes it from eg. a novel*)

I've only got a pound. (*one pound*)

The following section will attempt to sort the different meanings of the indefinite article into three types of reference: specific, non-specific and generic reference.

The article has specific reference if it is used with a noun which is specified, one particular person or object. If the reference is non-specific, the noun phrase can usually be rephrased with **any** to indicate that no particular person or object is referred to. In the case of generic reference, the singular noun phrase refers to **all** members of this class. Study the examples below:

### Specific reference:

She is an actress.  
I saw a new car outside your house yesterday.  
There is a man at the door who says he has an appointment with you.

### Non-specific reference:

They need a larger house now that they have five children.  
Reading a book gives me a lot of pleasure.  
She wants a man to do the housework.

### Generic reference:

A Norwegian is a person who likes to sit in the snow.  
An actress always washes her hair in the morning.  
A lion will eat other animals for lunch.

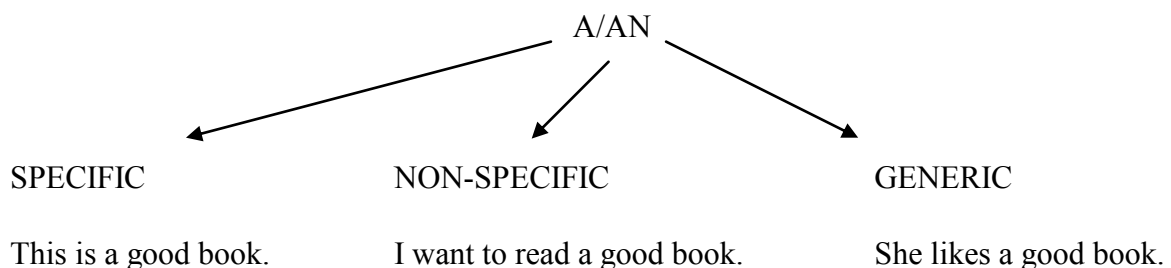
Some cases are not clear cut, which means that they are not clearly specific or non-specific. In many cases they are ambiguous and have to be interpreted by the context. Try to think of two different contexts for this sentence:

She wants to marry a Norwegian.

Depending on whether she has found the man or not, the reference may be specific or non-specific.

### Conclusion

The choice of indefinite article depends on whether the following sound is a vowel or a consonant. It is worth noting that it is the pronunciation that determines this. Although the indefinite article is used with singular nouns, we have seen that it can also refer to whole groups and not only singular members of a group. To sum up, we can draw a tree diagram to illustrate the main uses of the indefinite article. Try to add a couple of your own examples for each type of reference!



## 2 The definite article

### Form

The definite article *the* has only one form, but the pronunciation differs according to the following sound:

/ðə/ + consonant sound

/ði/ + vowel sound

The basic meaning of the definite article is “definite” or “known”.

### Use

The definite article can be used with singular and plural nouns and with all genders.

The boy                      the boys

The girl                      the girls

The dog                      the dogs

Because of the basic meaning of the definite article, we often find that a noun phrase is first introduced with an indefinite article, whereas the definite article is used later in the context to refer to the same noun phrase, as the following example illustrates:

The Wellesleys bought a dog last year, mainly to get some exercise. However, nowadays the poor dog is tied up all day and looks miserable.

Also in dealing with the definite article, we speak of different types of reference for the following noun. It has specific reference when referring to one or more members of a class, for example: *the book on the table, the children in the garden*. The article can be used with a proper noun and have unique reference, such as in *The Thames, The Observer*. And finally, also the definite article can have generic reference and refer to a group or a type of concept, such as *the blind, the wheel*. The following section will give further examples and explanations of these three types of reference.

### Specific reference

When the article has specific reference, this is made clear from the context it occurs in. In the following examples this reference may be expressed in the sentence or just considered known by the participants in the communicative situation.

Who is the man in the picture?

Look at the car, it's going too fast!

Take me to the manager!

He is the best man for the job.

The reference is said to be **anaphoric** if the article points back to something or somebody introduced earlier in the context.

I read a new book this week. The author was unknown to me before I found the book.

He bought a CD yesterday, and when he listened to the music he fell asleep.

In other cases the article can have **cataphoric** reference if the article points forward to something or somebody specified later in the context.

Do you remember the film where people eat themselves to death?

I found the ring you lost yesterday.

### **Unique reference**

Proper nouns (see chapter 2) usually do not occur with an article. In some cases, however, the article is part of the noun, and we say that it has unique reference.

A: Geographical names

The Netherlands, The Alps, The Thames, The Pacific, The Panama Canal

b: Families

The Wilsons, The Johnsons

c: Hotels, restaurants

The Grand, The Hilton

d: Theatres, cinemas

The Theatre Royal, The Globe

e: Museums

The British Museum

f: Newspapers

The Washington Post

g: Ships

The Queen Elizabeth

## Generic reference

The nouns can be both in the singular and the plural and still refer to the whole class, as these examples show:

Who invented the wheel? (*the type of thing*)

The car is important to modern society. (*the type of thing*)

The rich are lucky, whereas the blind are unfortunate. (*all members of the group*)

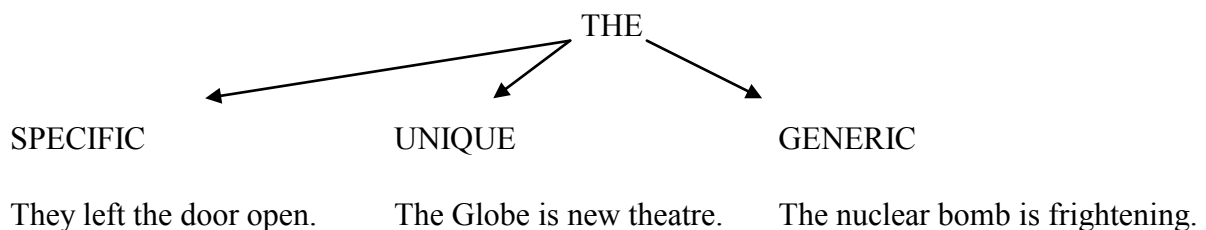
In some cases proper nouns may have generic reference:

The Japanese are a hard-working people.

The English drink a lot of tea.

## Conclusion

The definite article is used about noun phrases that are known or “definite”. There are three main types of reference that the article can give to the noun phrase, as illustrated in this tree diagram. Try to make some more examples of each type!





### 3 Teaching determiners to learners

As determiners appear in connection with nouns, the same piece of advice is given here as in chapter 2. The English lesson should include a lot of different types of texts, depending on the age of the pupils. When to use **a** or **an**, or how to pronounce **the**, is learnt through the input given in class. Repetition is a key word, children will remember better if hearing the same structures several times in an oral or written text. Traditional fill-in exercises can be very boring because there is no motivating or stimulating text to create interest. Many teachers have discovered that their learners can do fill-in exercises quite well, but then seem to have forgot everything when trying to use the same words in natural conversation. Fill-in exercises can be used successfully in some ways, for example by taking out determiners from a known text and making the learners put them back in. This could be a kind of discovery technique, in that learners may discover the rules themselves.

There are some differences in the use of articles in English and Norwegian, which may cause learning problems for Norwegians. For example, the indefinite article is used more often in English in cases like the following:

His mother is a teacher. (mora hans er lærer)

Have you got a bicycle? (har du sykkel?)

We are having a party on Saturday. (vi skal ha fest på lørdag)

We have seen that uncountable nouns do not co-occur with the definite article in English. In Norwegian, the definite article is attached as a morpheme to the word:

Life has a lot to offer. (livet har mye å by på)

She still believes in love. (hun tror fremdeles på kjærligheten)

Although we do not usually compare the languages like in the examples above, it is necessary to be aware of such differences between the native or first language and the target or second language.

## Activities

**1. Work in groups of three. Each member of the group picks one of the opening sentences below and writes a paragraph to elaborate on the sentence. Spend about 5 minutes writing. Then read your paragraphs out loud to the others and discuss how they are different.**

A: Anna is going to marry a Norwegian.

B: Paula wants to marry a Norwegian.

C: To Americans a Norwegian is a brown cheese eating person with a lot of other strange habits.

**2. Do the same exercise again, but this time make your own starting sentences and use the definite article!**

**3. Comment on the reference of the definite and indefinite articles in this excerpt from the short story “The Big Game<sup>3</sup>” by Jenni-Lynne Harris. Also, explain a few cases where there is no article.**

The crowd was working itself into a frenzy. Only ten minutes to go and still the score was tied. The atmosphere was charged with tension, both on and off the field. The referee was doing all he could to keep the game from deteriorating into a full-on brawl. It's like this every year, mused George. Which was understandable. After all, this was The Shield match and both teams wanted The Log of Wood so badly.

When George first came to New Zealand he was warned about the nation's obsession with the game of rugby. Fanaticism even. But it didn't worry him. In fact, in many ways it made him feel like he was back home in Liverpool. Now that was crowd frenzy for you! It made rugby matches look tame. George missed the singing and chanting, which Kiwis seemed reluctant to embrace, but he still enjoyed the feeling of being in a big crowd, urging a team to give its all.

**4. Translate these sentences into English, and explain why they may be problematic for Norwegian learners.**

1. Samvittigheten er den indre stemmen i mennesket.
2. Det lokale selvstyret er en illusjon.
3. Vi ble invitert i selskap til naboene.
4. Mannen i huset er advokat, kona er lege.

**5. If you were a teacher in a class of ten-year-olds, how would you explain the difference between a and an, and how to pronounce the in different contexts?**

**6. This exercise is a typical exam question on determiners. Insert an article or another type of determiner in the correct place in the text below. Explain your choice in 5 cases.**

When I look up something in \_\_\_ dictionary, it's never where I look for it first. \_\_\_ dictionary has been \_\_\_ particular disappointment to me as \_\_\_ basic references book, and \_\_\_ fact that it's usually more \_\_\_ fault than \_\_\_ dictionary's doesn't make it any easier on me. I can't for \_\_\_ life of me figure out where they hide some of \_\_\_ words I want to look up.

At \_\_\_ first sight you might think that nothing goes on in \_\_\_ sleepy village. There is \_\_\_ quietness, almost \_\_\_ drowsiness, hardly any \_\_\_ traffic and \_\_\_ few people about. But Morcott has \_\_\_ life behind \_\_\_ scenes. There is \_\_\_ close community spirit which means that you are well looked after once established in \_\_\_ village.

Finally, after \_\_\_ Hundred Years War with \_\_\_ France, English began to be more widely used. In \_\_\_ last few hundred years \_\_\_ trade and \_\_\_ commerce as well as \_\_\_ colonisation of \_\_\_ large territories all over \_\_\_ world have brought \_\_\_ new words into \_\_\_ English language.

# Chapter 4 Adjectives

## 1 Introduction

An adjective may be defined in the following manner:

Semantic definition: An adjective is a word that describes properties of a noun or pronoun such as appearance, shape, size and colour:

The *fragrant* and *beautiful* flowers

Morphological definition: An adjective is a word that can be compared:

Cold – colder- coldest

Beautiful – more beautiful – most beautiful

Syntactic definition: An adjective is a word that fits into this frame:

The house is \_\_\_\_\_.

Sometimes we need to use a combination of all these definitions to be able to distinguish an adjective from an adverb. Young learners will easily be able to understand the semantic way of defining an adjective, as they will be used to describing persons and objects in their native language.

## 2 Types of Adjectives

How can you identify an adjective? It can be identified according to its morphology or form, or according to its meaning or function in the sentence. In the first case we can put adjectives into three groups, **genuine**, **derived** or **participles**:

**Genuine:** these are short words and cannot be confused with other word classes. Examples are:

*old, young, round, orange, blue, small, open, strange*

**Derived:** these have been made from other word classes, usually by adding a morpheme. The adjective-forming morpheme is underlined in the examples below:

*beautiful, addictive, potential, oppressive, famous*

Words that are related in meaning and have the same stem or core syllable, but belong to different word classes, can be said to belong to word families. A few examples of these are:

fame (noun), famous (adj.)  
beauty (noun), beautiful (adj.), beautifully (adverb)  
addict (noun or verb), addictive (adj.)

**Participles:** these are non-finite verb forms (see chapter 5) that function as adjectives:

*smiling* faces, *smashing* pumpkins, *closed* doors, *clenched* fists

Note the difference between adjective and verb in these examples:

They were *smiling* all over their faces. (verb)  
They had *smiling* faces. (adj.)  
She met a *closed* door after 9 'o'clock. (adj.)  
The shopkeeper *closed* the door at 9 'o'clock. (verb)

However, it is perhaps more interesting to classify adjectives with respect to meaning and function. When doing this we use the terms **descriptive adjectives**, **emphasising adjectives** and **limiting adjectives**.

### Descriptive adjectives

This is the largest group of adjectives. Naturally, they describe a noun or a pronoun. This description may be neutral in that they express a quality that can be objectively observed, as the following examples show:

There is a *round* table in our kitchen.  
The *small* child across the street is our neighbour's.  
We replaced our *old* car this year.

Other examples of typical descriptive adjectives are: *large, heavy, open, blue, slow, fast, international, wooden, modern* etc.

The description may be also evaluative, that is it may be the speaker's opinion that is revealed, and other people may not agree:

They have a *beautiful* cat.  
My chair is the most *comfortable* in the world.  
President Clinton is a *shy* man.

Other examples of adjectives that fall into this group are: *obvious, ugly, pretty* etc.

### **Emphasising adjectives**

These adjectives strengthen the meaning of the noun, and sometimes convey the speaker's feelings as well. However, there is no description involved:

This TV show is *absolute* madness!  
You know that makes *perfect* sense to me.  
This *blasted* PC doesn't work, I will have to get a new one!

Note that the adjective *perfect* may have two different meanings:

That makes *perfect* sense. (emphasising)  
It was a *perfect* night. (descriptive)

Other adjectives that fall into this group are: *sheer, utter, right, mere*

### **Limiting adjectives**

These function like determiners, in that they identify the noun rather than describe it:

*Certain* people do not observe rules.  
She told the *next* student to come forward.

Here again, some adjectives can have two different meanings:

He was *certain* that he could pass the test. (descriptive)  
*Certain* people do not observe rules. (limiting)

### 3 Use and Position of the Adjective

The adjective can be used in **attributive** and **predicative** positions, that means either in front of or after the word it modifies:

**Attributive position:**

a *round* table  
the *tall* man  
the *jealous* wife

**Predicative position:**

The table is *round*.  
The man is *tall*.  
The wife is *jealous*.

As the examples above show, most adjectives can be used in both positions. There is a slight difference in meaning, in that the information in the adjective is known when the adjective is used attributively, whereas it contains new information when put in predicative position. See chapter 8 for a discussion of known and new information in sentences.

However, some adjectives can only be used in one of these positions. These are the emphasising and the limiting adjectives, which only occur in front of the noun:

The *main* problem here is money.  
\*The problem is main.

A *principal* issue is democracy.  
\*The issue is principal.

This is *sheer* nonsense!  
\*This nonsense is sheer!

He is a *mere* child!  
\*The child is mere!

Some adjectives are only used predicatively:

John is *ill*.  
Nina is *afraid*.  
She was *ashamed* of her dog.  
The baby doesn't like to be left *alone*.

Other examples of adjectives that fall into this group are: *alike, asleep, awake* etc.

Sometimes the meaning changes completely with changing position, as illustrated in the pairs below:

We took a late train. (due to leave late)  
The train was late. (too late)

My old friend called me. (the friendship has lasted a long time)  
My friend is old. (his age)

### **Copula verbs and adjectives in predicate position**

Adjectives in predicative position function as subject predicatives (see chapter 7 on sentence analysis), as these examples show:

The house is *red*.  
The dog seems *friendly*.  
Let's keep *quiet*, shall we?  
The grammar book appears *simple* at first glance.

In these sentences there is an intensive relationship between the subject and the subject predicative, and the verb is called a linking verb or a copula verb.

### **Adjectives used as nouns**

Sometimes an adjective can have the function of a noun in the sentence, which means that it does not modify a noun. The adjective takes a plural inflection and behaves like a noun, as in the following examples:

*Norwegians* always sit in the snow.  
*The blacks* in the USA have a special history.  
*The radicals* stormed the building.

In other cases, the nominalised adjectives can have generic reference, referring to a group of people or an abstract phenomenon:

*The blind* are unfortunate.  
*The rich* are perhaps more unfortunate.  
You cannot blame *the dead*.  
They were expecting *the unknown* to happen.

If the accompanying noun is left out, it is called an ellipsis. In these cases, the adjective also behaves like a noun:

I'm taking my *English* tomorrow. (*exam* is left out.)  
He goes to a *comprehensive*. (*school* is left out.)



## 4 Norwegian learners and teaching adjectives

Adjectives occur in certain sentence patterns, which are sometimes different from Norwegian constructions containing adjectives

Adj. + infinitive: I'm happy to see you  
We are ready to go now.

Adj. + that-clause: It's obvious that they know each other.  
He is so hungry that he could eat a horse.

Adj. + prepositional phrase: Everyone was happy for the prize-winner.  
It's nice of you to say that.

### Comments and ideas on the teaching of adjectives to children

The mere sound of some adjectives is often exciting for children! For example, words such as: *preposterous, exquisite, invisible, mysterious, horrible*. They can therefore be fun for learners to learn and use in their own language as well as a foreign language.

Children may be encouraged to find interesting words in the texts they are reading, and be told to find out what kind of words they are. Does the word say something about a person or a thing, for example? If it does then it may be an adjective. Do the words look similar in any way? For example, do they have similar endings such as in -able or -ous? Many adjectives end like that! This way of working will encourage children to discover the rules of the language by themselves, and will make them remember much better than if they are only 'told the rules' by the teacher.

Children will be used to looking at pictures of interesting places or persons, and also to describing these in different ways. Adjectives are very useful for this kind of work. This can be done in class together, in pairs orally or individually in writing. Adjectives can be collected by individuals or groups of learners in lists under headlines such as:

Positive	negative	neutral
friendly	ugly	open
nice	horrible	red

A list such as this can then be used to function as a "bank" of adjectives which can be used when the children are writing texts, and will contribute in developing the vocabulary of the learners.



## Activities

**1. Read this excerpt from *Matilda*<sup>4</sup> by Roald Dahl. Look for adjectives. How can you tell they are adjectives? What definitions would you use in each case?**

### The Trunchbull

In the interval, Miss Honey left the classroom and headed straight for the headmistress's study. She felt wildly excited. She had just met a small girl who possessed, or so it seemed to her, quite extraordinary qualities of brilliance. There had not been time yet to find out exactly how brilliant the child was, but Miss Honey

had learned enough to realise that something had to be done about it as soon as possible. It would be ridiculous to leave a child like that stuck in the bottom form.

Normally Miss Honey was terrified of the headmistress and kept well away from her, but at this moment she felt ready to take on anybody. She knocked on the door of the dreaded private study. "Enter!" boomed the deep and dangerous voice of Miss Trunchbull. Miss Honey went in. (p. 82)

**2. Why are the adjectives listed below derived? Discuss with a partner what they are derived from!**

dependable, dependent, troublesome, existential, wireless, thoughtful, lovely, expensive, global



**3. The two excerpts from *Mathilda* describe the two teachers at *Mathilda*'s school. Study the two texts first and work in pairs to write a new, short description (1-2 sentences) of each teacher. How are your descriptions different from those in the novel?**

### Miss Honey and the Trunchbull

Their teacher was called Miss Honey, and she could not have been more than twenty-three or twenty-four. She had a lovely, pale face with

blue eyes and her hair was light brown. Her body was so slim and fragile that if she fell over she would smash into a thousand pieces, like a porcelain figure.

Miss Jennifer Honey was a mild and quiet person who never raised her voice and was seldom seen to smile, but there is no doubt she possessed that rare gift for being adored by every small child under her care. (pp. 66-67)

(...)

Looking at her, you got the feeling that this was someone who could bend iron bars and tear telephone directories in half. Her face, I'm afraid, was neither a thing of beauty nor a joy forever. She had an obstinate chin, a cruel mouth and small arrogant eyes. And as for her clothes...they were, to say the least, extremely odd. She always had on a brown cotton smock which was pinched in around the waist with a leather belt. The belt was fastened in front with an enormous silver buckle. The massive thighs which emerged from out of the smock were encased in a pair of extraordinary breeches, bottle green in colour and made of coarse twill. (p. 83)

**4. In the three texts in activities 1 and 3, there are lots of adjectives. Find examples of some used in attributive and some in predicative position.**

**5. Go back to the texts again, and look for the different types of adjectives described in this chapter.**

**6. Translate these Norwegian structures containing adjectives, and look out for 'traps'!**

- a. Georg gikk ut for å kjøpe avisa.
- b. Han var glad for at det ikke regnet for en gangs skyld.
- c. Det er sørgelig å lese sånne dramatiske nyheter

# Chapter 5 Verbs

The study of the verb will take up much of our time in this grammar course. It is quite complex and a lot of terminology is involved. It seems that many Norwegian students have problems with English verbs. In English, the person affects the conjugation of the verb, and tenses are used differently than in Norwegian. This chapter will define the different types of verbs and describe the meaning of the various tenses and verb forms.

## Definitions

Like other word classes, the verb can be defined in different ways. A syntactic definition is that verbs may occur in verb phrases:

She **has been singing** in the shower all morning.  
She **will have finished** by now.

A semantic definition would be that verbs denote 'action' or 'state':

She **sings**.  
Her friends **seem** tired of it.

A morphological definition would be that verbs may have inflections of tense:

played, finished

...and person and number:

(she) sings

**CALVIN & HOBBS**

**by Bill Watterson**



# 1 Types of verb

A verb phrase appears as one of the elements in a clause (V), and consists of one or more verbs. If there are several verbs in a verb phrase, then the **main verb** is at the end of the verb phrase and will occur after the **auxiliary verb(s)** at the beginning of the verb phrase:

You *should have* **waited** for your boyfriend yesterday.  
He *must have been* **disappointed** in you.

**Main verbs** express meaning and form the largest group of verbs. These verbs can form a verb phrase without another verb:

His grandfather **bought** a new car.  
He **wrecked** his truck.

**Auxiliary verbs** form verb phrases with main verbs, 'helping' them to express different kinds of meanings. The auxiliaries can be divided into two categories: **grammatical auxiliaries** *be, have, do*, and **modal auxiliaries**, which cannot function alone in a sentence: *may, might, can, could, will, would, shall, and should*:

He **is** riding into the sunset. (grammatical auxiliary)  
I **will** do something about the problem immediately. (modal auxiliary)

The modal auxiliaries, *may, might, ... should* etc. will be dealt with in unit 57.  
The **grammatical auxiliaries**, *have* and *be* can be used to form aspect or voice with the main verb. *Be* is used to form the progressive aspect and passive voice:

It **is** raining today. (progressive aspect)  
The owner **was** prosecuted. (passive voice)

*Have* is used to form the perfective aspect:

The famous writer Graham Greene **has** written a lot of books.  
My friends **have** read all of them.

The auxiliaries *have, be* and *do* can also be used as main verbs:

What do you **do**?  
I **am** a teacher.  
Her friend **has** a cat.

Norwegian and English differ in the construction of negative and interrogative sentences. The grammatical auxiliary 'do' has no equivalent in Norwegian. In Norwegian, interrogative sentences are formed by changing the word order, placing the verb before the subject:

Spiller han fotball?

Does he play football?

## 2 Verb forms

A SUMMARY OF VERB FORMS <sup>3</sup> IN ENGLISH			
Name	Example	Norwegian	Example
Simple present	I eat	Presens	jeg spiser
Present progressive	I am eating	Samtidsform	jeg spiser
Simple past	I ate	Preteritum	jeg spiste
Past progressive	I was eating	Preteritum samtidsform	jeg spiste
Present perfect	I have eaten	Perfektum	jeg har spist
Present perfect progressive	I have been eating	Perfektum samtidsform	jeg har spist
Past perfect	I had eaten	Pluskvamperfektum	jeg hadde spist
Past perfect progressive	I had been eating	Pluskvamperfektum samtidsform	jeg hadde spist

### *Comment*

You will find these described in units 1-16 of Murphy's *English Grammar in Use*.

*Present progressive* = am/is/are –ing

*Simple past* = +ed (if regular verb)

*Past progressive* = was/were –ing

*Present perfect* = have/has + past participle (-ed)

*Present perfect progressive* = have/has been –ing

*Past perfect* = had + past participle

*Past perfect progressive* = had been -ing

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<sup>3</sup> You will find these described in units 1-16 of Murphy's *English Grammar in Use*.

### 3 Verb tenses - the simple present

Most grammarians agree that there are really only two tenses in English, the present and the past. The rest of what we traditionally have called tenses, are actually verb forms that express time. Present tense usually expresses present time, of course, but it can also be used to express both past and future time. There are two ways of expressing the present tense, by using the simple present and the present progressive. The present progressive is formed by the present form of “to be” plus the present participle (-ing form) of the main verb. The simple present uses the -s ending in the third person singular. Questions and negatives are formed using do.

Does he play snooker?  
She doesn't play tennis.  
I talk, she listens.

#### Some uses of the simple present

The **state present** is used to refer to accepted truths and general statements:

Oil floats on water.  
Norwegians like brown cheese.

The **habitual present** is used to refer to events which happen repeatedly, and it is usually used together with a frequency adverb:

He brushes his teeth twice a year.  
I go to the swimming pool every Friday.

The **momentary present** is often used during sports' commentaries and refers to actions that begin and end during the moment of speaking:

Peter passes the ball to John, who shoots.  
I turn the switch, and the power is on.

The **historic present** is used to refer to past events to make a story seem more vivid:

I went up to John very slowly. Then suddenly he turns around and hits me!  
Model dies. (newspaper headlines)

The simple present may also be used in connection with the giving or receiving of information:

Your boyfriend informs me that you work too little.  
I hear that your wife is pregnant.

The present tense can also be used to refer to events in **future** time, often together with a future time adverbial:

John arrives at midnight tomorrow.  
The train leaves at 7 tonight.

## 4 Verb tenses - the simple past

The other tense in English is the past, which is usually used to express past time. There are also two forms of the past; the simple past and the past progressive:

We met your new friend last week. (simple)

We were talking with him for two hours. (progressive)

The simple past is formed by adding the inflection -ed to regular verbs, whereas irregular verbs either have the inflection -t or a vowel change. The past progressive is formed by the past tense of to be plus the present participle (the -ing form of the main verb). The basic meaning of the simple past is 'completed action in the past'. In negatives and questions did is used:

Did he wear a tie to the wedding? He didn't wear a tie to the wedding.

### Uses of the simple past

The past tense is normally used to refer to **actions completed** at a specific point:

She met her uncle last week.

The plane was half an hour late.

The simple past is often used in narratives, for example study the extract from *Nice Work* (activity 50B). The simple past can also be used to refer to the present and future. Like the simple present, it can be used when referring to **habitual** actions:

They played tennis regularly.

She always kissed one as if she were sadly and wisely sending one away forever.<sup>6</sup>

The **hypothetical past** can be used to refer to a supposed situation. When the simple past is used after **if**, it has a **conditional meaning**.

Wish you were here.  
*postcard greeting*

If I had a hammer,  
I'd hammer in the morning,  
I'd hammer in the evening,  
    all over this land,  
I'd hammer out justice,  
I'd hammer out a warning,  
I'd hammer out love between  
    my brothers and my sisters,  
All over this land.

*Pete Seeger*

The simple past can be used when referring to the present or future, expressing attitudes such as **politeness**, **carefulness** or a **wish**:

I wondered if you could help me?

What if we tried to talk about it?



## 5 Verbs and aspect - present progressive

A verb's aspect tells us whether an action or state is completed or still going on. If we want to express that an action is still going on then we can use the progressive form. The **present progressive** is formed with the present of the verb to be plus the present participle (-ing form) of the verb:

We are singing.  
He is dancing.  
I am drinking.

The present progressive usually denotes **action in progress**. This form of the present is therefore used when the speaker wants to describe action that has started, but has not been completed. Some examples to illustrate this meaning:

The students are sleeping in their chairs while the teacher is talking.  
They are learning English this year.  
I am knitting a sweater for my child.

We see that the action can be in progress at the moment or over a longer period.

The present progressive may also have future time reference and have the meaning of planned future action (see also unit 58 'Future time'):

We are leaving for England in April.  
When you wake up tomorrow I'm having breakfast.

When the adverbial 'always' is used, the additional meaning of irritation or at least negative emotion is often conveyed. This is also emphasised in oral language by intonation.

He is always watching TV.  
The telephone is always ringing when we are having dinner.

### Stative and dynamic verbs

Most verbs can be used both in the simple and the progressive form, depending upon whether the speaker wants to emphasise incomplete action or not. Because of the meaning of the progressive, there must be a meaning of action in the verb, the verb must be **dynamic**. In other words, stative verbs should not be used in the dynamic form. Look at the following examples:

I think this country is the coldest in the world.  
\*I am thinking this country is the coldest in the world.  
The famous actor feels love for his girlfriend.  
\*The famous actor is feeling love for his girlfriend.

Some stative verbs, though, can also have a dynamic meaning and thus be acceptable in the progressive aspect:

He didn't go to bed, he was for ever feeling her pulse and applying mustard plasters.

## 6 Verbs and aspect - past progressive

The **past progressive** is used to describe incomplete actions in the past. Study these examples:

She was reading a book when the guests arrived.  
I was waiting in line for half an hour yesterday.

In some cases, the past progressive expresses gradual development:

The bus was coming closer.  
I could see it was getting dark.

Used with **always**, the past progressive may express a negative attitude:

Big brother was always watching you.

The past progressive can be used to mean '**future arrangement in the past**', as these examples show:

She was packing her suitcase because she was leaving the next day.  
We told them we were going to London the following month.

The past progressive is often used when talking about something that happened in the past when in the middle of something else. In these cases the past progressive is often used in a subordinate clause while the simple past is used in the main clause:

John hurt his back (main clause), when he was playing tennis (subordinate clause).  
Susan met John (main clause), when she was working abroad (subordinate clause).

### **Norwegian learners and the progressive aspect**

The Norwegian language does not have a progressive verb form *-ing*, and Norwegians often have difficulty using the *-ing* form, tending to overuse it. In Norwegian, the idea of 'action in progress' can be expressed by using the simple present tense:

Hans vasker bilen.

To make the meaning of this sentence more precise different phrases may be added, such as, 'holder på med'/'er i ferd med' etc:

Hans holder på med å vaske bilen.

## 7 Verbs and aspect - present/past perfect

If we want to say that an action has started in the past and has relevance for the moment of speaking we use the **present perfect**. The present perfect may be considered as being both 'present and past', in that it is made of the present tense of *to have* and the past participle of the main verb:

I have worked.  
She has slept.  
They have spoken.

Students of English often find it difficult to choose between the simple past and the present perfect, therefore it is useful to underline the 'present' meaning in the present perfect. If the action is completed in the fairly distant past, we use the simple past, whereas the present perfect is used for actions that are relatively recent. The examples below show action completed in the past but still relevant, actions completed very recently, actions that are still valid and actions completed at an indefinite time in the past:

He has just left.  
Have you met my wife?  
Fay Weldon has written a book about a witch.  
It has been a long day!  
I have often thought of buying a new house.  
They have listened to several boring lectures this year.  
His son has given him a lot of trouble.

Remember that if the action described in the sentence is still valid, the present perfect is used. If not, choose the simple past:

Her hair has been hopeless for years, one hour was all it took to give it back body!  
(her hair has been hopeless but has now been improved)

Her hair was hopeless, a dishwater blond bird's nest.  
(a permanent state of affairs)

The **past perfect** is often used in conjunction with the simple past. The simple past is used to refer to some event in the past, and then the past perfect is used to refer to an event that occurred before this event, for instance:

*I went to Orlando and I followed him to Orlando West and when I arrived the Chev had already gone.<sup>7</sup>*

## 8 Finite and non-finite verbs

Verbs can be categorised into two categories: **finite** and **non-finite**. A **finite verb** is one which signals contrasts of tense, number, person. The past and present tenses are finite forms:

John *throws* his jacket over his shoulder and *walks* out the door. *throws* - *walks* - simple present tense and finite; the -s ending also signals person and number (third person singular).

She *talked* with her eyes to him. (*talked* - simple past tense - finite)

**Non-finite verbs** take three forms: *-ed* (past participle), *-ing* (present participle) and *infinitives* such as 'to be':

There's never been a better time *to play* multiplayer Brood War. ('to play' infinitive)  
*Singing* in the shower may result in divorce. ('singing' - ing form)  
She gave him a lighted match. ('lighted' - past participle)

In a verb phrase with more than one verb, the first verb is always finite:

They **have** *asked* the Browns to dinner. They **were** *running* away.

**Finite clauses** contain a finite verb phrase, whereas **non-finite clauses** contain a non-finite verb phrase. Subordinate clauses can be both finite and non-finite, whereas main clauses are always finite. This will be discussed in chapter 7.

### Active and passive voice

In **active sentences** the agent is expressed in the subject position:

John kicked the ball.

In **passive sentences** the agent need not be mentioned:

The ball was kicked (by John).

The passive voice is formed by the verb *to be* + the past participle. More will be said about the active and passive voice in chapters 7 and 8.

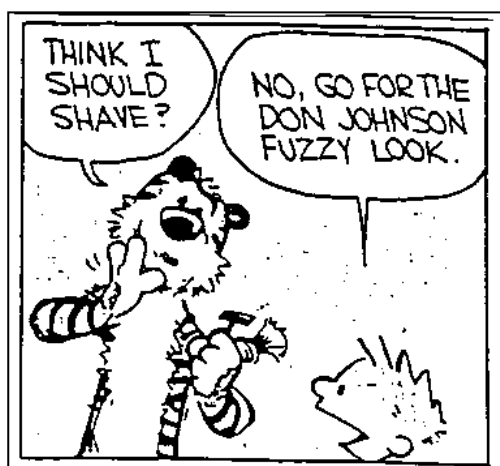
## 9 Modal auxiliaries

The **modal auxiliaries** have **modal meanings** such as: certainty, obligation, prediction, permission, necessity, ability, advice, deduction, possibility and volition. The modal auxiliaries are: *can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must* and *ought to*. The modal auxiliaries have a restricted number of forms, they do not for example take any inflection for number/person:

\*He wills not talk about it.

Only one modal auxiliary may be used in a simple sentence:

\*We must not could do this.



### Modal meanings

There are an indeterminate number of modal meanings, some of which are listed in the table below. Any adequate learner's dictionary such as the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* will give a detailed description of modal meanings.

<i>can</i>	possibility ability	<i>The door can be opened.</i> <i>She can speak Russian.</i>
	permission	<i>Can we go to the cinema?</i>
<i>could</i>	tentative suggestion	<i>You could try working harder.</i>
<i>may/might</i>	possibility	<i>It may/might be a nice day tomorrow.</i>
	permission	<i>You may smoke in here.</i>
<i>shall</i>	prediction	<i>He shall win the championship.</i>
	suggestion	<i>Shall I write your essay for you?</i>
	volition/determination	<i>I shall finish the course.</i>
<i>should</i>	obligation	<i>You should apply for a visa.</i>
	prediction	<i>I should be finished by 5 'o' clock.</i>
	advice	<i>You should work harder.</i>
<i>will</i>	prediction	<i>He will never finish the race.</i>
	indicating willingness	<i>He will drive you home.</i>
<i>would</i>	conditional mood	<i>You would be rich, if you won the pools.</i>
	polite request	<i>Would you close the door please?</i>
<i>must</i>	deduction	<i>This must be the coldest summer possible!</i>
	obligation	<i>The door must be locked before leaving.</i>
<i>ought to</i>	advice	<i>You ought to improve your behaviour.</i>
	tentative conclusion	<i>There ought to be enough time.</i>

## 10 Future time

There is no future tense in English, but there are a number of ways of expressing **future time**. Look at these examples:

I'll try to do my best.

The plane leaves at 8.15 p.m.

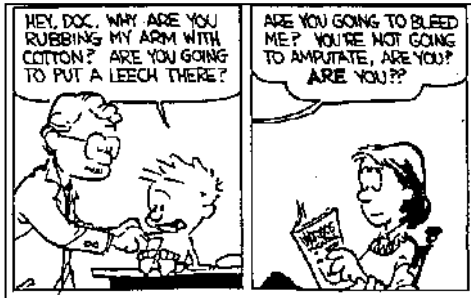
She is going to sing in a choir tonight.

Tomorrow I'll be working with this project.

The students are leaving in an hour.

The sun is just about to rise.

All these sentences express future time by using various verb forms, but some actions are closer to the moment of speaking than others. Also, there are differences in how definiteness and control by the subject are established.



*The different ways of expressing future time:*

### The **present**

The children are to sit quietly **progressive** can be used to refer to a definite arrangement:

I'm taking the dog for a walk this evening.

She is seeing her doctor about her migraine tomorrow.

### **Will/shall + bare infinitive**

This form is sometimes called **pure future** or **future simple**. It expresses intention at the moment of speaking ('I intend now to do it in the future') or neutral prediction.

I know what to do. I'll think about it once more.

Tomorrow will be a nice day.

**Be going to** This form is also used to express the subject's intention, but here this intention is already made before the moment of speaking:

I'm going to start exercising soon.

He told me that he is going to buy a new TV-set.

When this form is used to express prediction about the future, the future is immediate:

Look at those clouds, it's going to rain!

**Will + be + present participle** This form '**future progressive**' can have two different functions. One is to express action in progress in the future:

They will be practising the piano when we come.

I will be working this time tomorrow.

The other meaning is that of more polite requests or open questions:

Will you be coming to the party tomorrow?

Will you be singing for us tonight?

**Be about + infinitive** Immediate future is expressed by using this form:

I'm just about to leave, please come back tomorrow.

He is about to start screaming.

**Be + to** This form is used about arrangements, often beyond control of the subject:

You are to hand in the essay next Monday at the table.

## Activities

### 1. Main and auxiliary verbs. Find the verbs in these sentences and decide which are the main and which are the auxiliary verbs!

1. The famous actor played well in his latest film.
2. His audience likes him.
3. The children have been singing outside all day.
4. He is a teacher who works hard.
5. They are talking to their friends right now.
- 6 Who painted this picture?
7. He has an old car, but it still runs well.

Rousseau: 'To be is to do'  
Sartre: 'To do is to be'  
Rousseau: 'To be is to do'  
Sartre: 'To do is to be'  
Sinatra: 'Do-be-do-be-do'  
Sartre: 'To do is to be'  
Sinatra: 'Do-be-do-be-do'

### 2. Fill in the correct forms of *be*, *have* and *do*

*Robyn Penrose has to apologise - an extract from Nice Work.*<sup>8</sup>

‘Absolutely. The next morning at seven-thirty sharp, Wilcox \_\_\_\_\_ at my door again, with his enormous Jaguar, to drive me to the factory. He \_\_\_\_\_n’t say a word to me for the whole journey. Rushed me into his office, with the secretaries and so on all skipping out of his way like frightened rabbits, and goggling at me as if I \_\_\_\_\_ some kind of terrorist he’ \_\_\_\_\_ put under citizen’s arrest. Then he and two of his cronies took me to a special meeting with the Asian foundry workers, in the canteen. There must \_\_\_\_\_ about seventy of them, including Danny Ram, in their ordinary clothes, not overalls. Danny Ram gave me a scared kind of smile when I came in. There \_\_\_\_\_ some whites there too. Wilcox said they \_\_\_\_\_ shop stewards come to observe, deciding whether to make the strike official. So I laid my piece to Danny, but really to all of them. I must say it stuck in my throat when I \_\_\_\_\_ to apologize, but I went through with it. Then we withdrew into another room, the canteen manageress’s office I think it \_\_\_\_\_, while the Asians deliberated. After about twenty minutes they sent a delegation to say that they \_\_\_\_\_ prepared to go back to work providing Danny \_\_\_\_\_ guaranteed his job back after retraining and on condition they \_\_\_\_\_ given five minutes paid washing-up time at the end of their shift. They went out and Wilcox and his cronies went into a huddle.

### 3. Identifying verb forms

**Verbs illustrate differences in tense (past or present), aspect (progressive or perfective) and voice (active or passive). Use the following text to find out about these differences paying special attention to the words in italics.**

The secret agent *leaned* over and *listened* to the two men at the next table. They *were discussing* something he found very interesting. The American President’s car *had been expected* to arrive at the Plaza Hotel by the front entrance. However, while all the cameras *were waiting* to record this special situation, the car with the famous seal *made* a sharp turn and *drove* straight into the garage. Why *had* this order *been given*? He *became* very curious

and *decided* to find out more. “Excuse me, I couldn’t help hearing what you *were saying*. Why *do you think* this sort of thing *happens* whenever the President *visits* a foreign country?”

#### 4. Sentence pairs

**Comment on the difference in form and meaning between the following sentence pairs. You may imagine a contextual meaning.**

1.     a.       Have you met her husband?  
       b.       Did you meet her husband?
  
2.     a.       He is using the dictionary.  
       b.       He uses the dictionary.
  
3.     a.       You are being difficult.  
       b.       You are difficult.
  
4.     a.       The train leaves a 6 'o' clock.  
       b.       The train is leaving the station.
  
5.     a.       I am playing chess.  
       b.       I play chess.

#### 5. Future time

**Explain with examples different ways of referring to *future time* in English. In your explanations you should draw attention to the meaning expressed by each form.<sup>9</sup>**

#### 6. Uses of the simple present

**How has the simple present been used in the following examples?**

- 1 Margaret usually washes her car on Sundays.
- 2 The train arrives at 7 p.m.
- 3 Best centres the ball to Law who scores with a scorching shot.
- 4 “RUSSIANS INVADE KOSOVO”
- 5 The Scots love eating haggis.
6. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west.
7. I understand that Bill is going to get the job.
8. I run cross country twice a week.
9. Beckham scores as Leeds weep.
10. The exam is on Tuesday next week.



## **7 Underline the verbs**

**Read the extract from *Nice Work (activity 2)* and underline the verbs in the simple past.**

## **8 Oral practice**

**Discuss with your partner what you were doing at the following times in the past using the past progressive wherever appropriate:**

*Example:* What were you doing yesterday evening at around 5 'o' clock? I was eating dinner at the student cafeteria with Rolf and Erling.

1. At 7 'o' clock yesterday evening.
2. At 7 'o' clock this morning.
3. Last Saturday at 9 'o' clock in the morning.
4. Last Saturday at midnight.
5. 2 hours ago.

## 9. Identifying verb forms

**Read this extract from *The Great Gatsby* and find out what verb forms are used. Identify the following three verb forms: the simple present and simple past and present perfect. Explain the meaning in context of these three different verb forms.**

### *Chapter 1*

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

"Whenever you feel like criticising anyone," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had."

"He didn't say any more, but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. In consequence, I'm inclined to reserve all judgements, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran bores. The abnormal mind is quick to detect and attach itself to this quality when it appears in a normal person, and so it came about that in college I was unjustly accused of being a politician, because I was privy to the secret griefs of wild, unknown men. Most of the confidences were unsought - frequently I have feigned sleep, preoccupation, or a hostile levity when I realized by some unmistakable sign that an intimate revelation was quivering on the horizon; for the intimate revelations of young men, or at least the terms in which they express them, are usually plagiaristic and marred by obvious suppressions. Reserving judgements is a matter of infinite hope. I am still a little afraid of missing something if I forget that, as my father snobbishly suggested, and I snobbishly repeat, a sense of the fundamental decencies is parcelled out unequally at birth.

And, after boasting this way of my tolerance, I come to the admission that it has a limit. Conduct may be founded on the hard rock or the wet marshes, but after a certain point I don't care what it's founded on. When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart. Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction - Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. This responsiveness had nothing to do with that flabby impressionability which is dignified under the name of the 'creative temperament' - it was an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person and which is not likely I shall ever find again. No - Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and shortwinded elations of men.<sup>10</sup>

## 10. Find the non-finite verbs

Find the non-finite verbs in the following *Newsweek* article. Define the terms 'finite' and 'non-finite'. Take five active sentences from this text and turn them into passive.



*Stephen King reinvents the Gothic romance*<sup>11</sup> - a look at Stephen King's novel, 'A Scary Look at Love'

Stephen King is the richest man in town. Ok, the town is Bangor, Maine (population: 33,000), but most writers would have trouble being the richest in a town of two. And how many could afford to build a \$1 million ball field for the Little League, or pay to renovate the local public library? But then, who but King, who makes \$40 million a year, has sold enough books to put a copy of one of his novels in the hands of every man, woman and child in the United States? The trouble with having done all that is that you've ... done all that. The idea of being Stephen King, the world's best-selling author, is an idea King says he could live without. "I could see myself writing and just sticking the stuff in a drawer," King abruptly declared in a recent interview. "I care about writing and making stuff up, because it's what I do and I love to do it. But how long does a person want to go running around the country trying to compete with Danielle Steel? I'm 50 and I really don't care that much anymore." Not for nothing is he the master of shock.

Last year King abruptly broke with his longtime publisher, Viking, after the company refused to meet his \$18 million asking price for his next book. After flirting with several publishers, he cut a three-book deal with Scribners, where he takes only \$2 million upfront for each of three books (he had been getting more than \$15 million per book), shares all costs with the publisher and splits the profits more or less down the middle. The weirdness of the deal's structure--which in effect makes King a copublisher of his own work--made it the talk of publishing. But it's a measure of King's boredom with business that he left the dealing to his lawyer while he took off on a motor-cycle across Australia.

Yet as a writer, King has never been more engaged, or more inventive. Two years ago he tried his hand at a serial novel. Last year he simultaneously published two books under different names but with the same characters. And when 'Bag of Bones' (529 pages. \$28) hits the bookstores Sept. 22, his readers will see him take his first crack at a love story.

Scribners is marketing the novel as a literary read. On the advance copies sent to reviewers, the publisher carefully avoided any mention of the word 'horror'. Instead, he is identified as "the O. Henry award-winning author who brought you 'The Shining,' 'Shawshank Redemption' and 'Stand by Me'." Blurbs are supplied by Gloria Naylor and Amy Tan. How strange to see America's best tale-spinner patronized by his own publisher! But the words on the back flap--'A haunted love story'--belong to King, and they are accurate. This is King's most romantic book, and ghosts are up and about from the get-go.

## 11. Finite or non-finite?

Are the verbs in bold type finite or non-finite?

1. David Beckham **walks** into a pub.
2. Since the beginning of the year, 47 children have **run** away from the 15-bed shelter.
3. She **received** tremendous acclaim for her light-hearted novel.
4. Tatiana found what she was **looking** for from the *Irish Times*.

5. Cinderella had **to run** home with only one golden shoe.
6. **Watching** this marvellous adaptation of Christopher Bram's acclaimed novel is much like a filmic epiphany.

## 12. Find the modal auxiliaries.

**Explain what additional meaning they give to the sentences.**

'This is inexcusable, Mrs Trumper,' said Mary Fisher. 'In the first place, there is simply not a train back this evening. In the second, I should have had at least a week's warning, and in the third, what do you think you are doing, allowing a senile woman to wander about the country in this way, taking trains at will? Anything could happen to her.'

'This is not Mrs Trumper,' said Ruth, in an assumed voice, one of impeccable gentility, 'but a senior member of the staff. Mrs Trumper is at a funeral. If there is not a train this evening then the best thing for you to do is to keep your mother overnight and return her in the morning. We could not give you warning because your mother gave us none. She is a human being with full human rights, not a parcel, and can come and go as she wishes. Nor is she senile. She is wonderfully improved in health, lately, for which we are all heartily thankful, and you as her daughter surely must be so too.'

Mary Fisher put down the telephone without attempting any reply, recognising that on the other end of the line she had an equal opponent. Ruth waited. Presently Garcia rang, saying that Mrs Fisher would be back on the morning train the following day and requiring someone from Restwood to meet her at the Central Station.

...

'Incontinence!' cried Mrs Trumper, changing her favourable view of Mrs Fisher, and moved at once to action, lurching to her feet.

'If what you tell me is true,' said Mrs Trumper, as she plodded up stairs, 'this is a serious development. It is my duty to investigate. No one shall say that Restwood is either careless or callous!'

Mrs Trumper felt and smelt Mrs Fisher's mattress.

'This is a long term leakage,' Mrs Trumper said, 'I can always tell. How long has this been going on?'

'About a month,' said Ruth. 'I didn't like to tell you. Poor Mrs Fisher. She can't help it after all.'

extract from Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil*<sup>12</sup>.

## 13. Compare the two texts.

Which text do you think conveys a modal meaning? Can you draw any conclusions about what modality is from studying these two texts?

The president said this morning that he has decided to withdraw from the presidency. All the bad publicity he has been experiencing for the last six months has made it difficult for him to carry on in his position. The vice-president is ready to take over at short notice.

The situation opens up for a lot of speculation on what will happen next. The court case against the president may be dropped, for example. Perhaps Hillary will leave Bill, she can make a future for herself as an excellent lawyer. On the other hand, she may stay with her husband and forgive him for all the trouble he has caused. Anyway, today's decision should mean that the media will leave the family alone and start finding faults with Al Gore's past and private life.

#### **14. Talk to your partner:**

1. Find out three things your partner is going to do this weekend using the construction 'be going to', for example: I am going to the pictures on Saturday with John.
2. Work together with your partner. You're planning a holiday and go to a travel agent to find out about times of trains and planes. The travel agent uses the simple present when answering your questions. The plane leaves for London at 6 'o' clock in the evening. It arrives in London ... . The boat leaves Copenhagen at ... . Take turns in being the travel agent.
3. Using the 'future progressive' form 'will be doing', ask your partner the following (take turns): What will he/she be doing at:
  - 8 o'clock tomorrow evening
  - 7 o'clock this evening
  - 7 o'clock tomorrow morning

# Chapter 6 Adverbs

## 1 Introduction and definition

Adverbs are said to be a "rag bag", if you don't know what to call a word, call it an adverb! Of course, this is not completely true, but the adverbs do have many functions. The traditional definition is that an adverb "says something about the verb", but as you can see from the examples below, they may also modify other elements:

She smiled **happily**.  
He **fortunately** married her.  
John answered the question **wisely**.  
He **wisely** answered the question.

We see that the scope of the adverb is different in the sentences, this means that the adverb reaches further in some sentences than in others. Often, adverbs to the left have wider scope than those to the right, in that they may modify the whole sentence and not just the verb.

In this chapter we shall look into the different types of adverbs and their uses.

### Definition

An adverb is a word class that has the following characteristics:

- a: Most adverbs have the derivational suffix -ly  
mostly, firstly, heavily
- b: Adverbs can have the syntactic function of adverbial:  
He speaks loudly.  
They are probably at home.
- c: Adverbs can have the syntactic function of modifier. The meaning is then "intensifying" or "degree":

She is **extremely** beautiful.  
They are smoking **very** heavily.  
The bullet went **right** through the wall.  
**Nearly** everybody came to our party.  
His room was **rather** a mess.

In the following we will concentrate on the adverb used as an adverbial. There are three types of adverbials: Adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts.

## 2 Use of adverbials

### Adjuncts, disjuncts and conjuncts

#### Adjuncts

The adjunct is integrated with the structure of the clause, at least to some extent:

They are waiting **outside**.

She sings **beautifully**.

We **often** talk about it.

Adjuncts mostly give additional information to the verb in the sentence. They can have different meanings, as shown in the examples below:

Manner:        He spoke **bravely**.  
                     She sings **wonderfully**.

Place:            Come over **here**!  
                     Sit **down**, please.

Time:            They **still** talk about the death penalty.  
                     We are leaving **today**.

Frequency:     They **often** sing all day.  
                     Mary **always** cries on Mondays.

An adjunct can also describe the subject and thus be called subject-oriented:

She **desperately** wanted to go to England.

He **wisely** opened the envelope from the bank.

## Disjuncts

Disjuncts modify the whole clause and express some kind of speaker comment to the sentence. Study these examples:

**Hopefully** the film is good.

**Fortunately** the film was good.

**Luckily** I could go to see it.

I will **probably** be able to go and see it.

You have **obviously** gained weight.

Have you **possibly** gained weight?

In some of the sentences the speaker presupposes the sentence to be true, in others he expresses a degree of certainty about it. See if you can find this difference yourself! In the two last examples the difference is on the pragmatic level. How do you account for that?

Disjuncts can also be called modal adverbs, in that they express a modal meaning in the same ways as modal auxiliaries do:

The students **may** have arrived now.

The students have **possibly** arrived now.

## Conjuncts

Conjuncts have the function of linking what is said earlier with what comes next.

**Similarly**, this book contains 10 chapters.

**Firstly**, the man is crazy. **Secondly**, he is stupid.

**Finally**, he left the country.

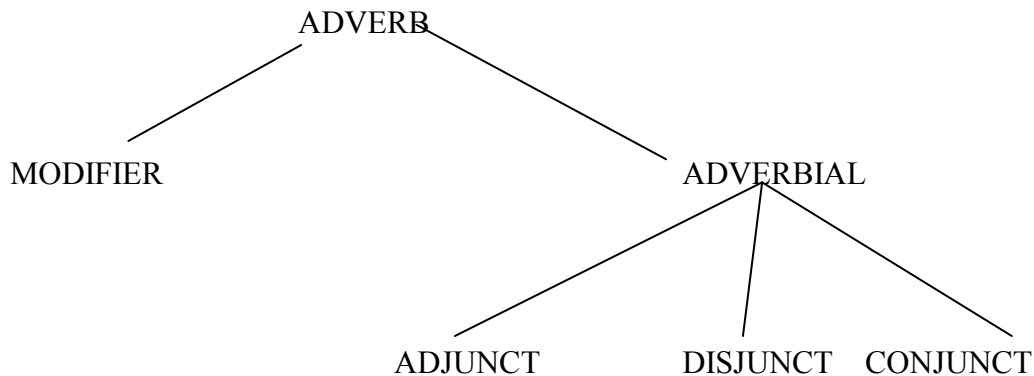
**Alternatively**, you can wait here.

These adverbials are used for syntactic variation, but they also explain for example consequence and sequence. However, they do not express the same speaker comment or truth evaluation as disjuncts do.



## Conclusion

Adverbs can have different functions in the sentence, they do not only "say something about the verb" as some of your learners may think. We can draw a tree diagram to show the different types and functions:



When working with sentence analysis, you will discover that not only adverbs, but a lot of other words and phrases can have the function of adverbial. This may be confusing, but try to replace the element with an adverb if you are not certain whether to analyse it as an adverbial, as illustrated in the following examples:

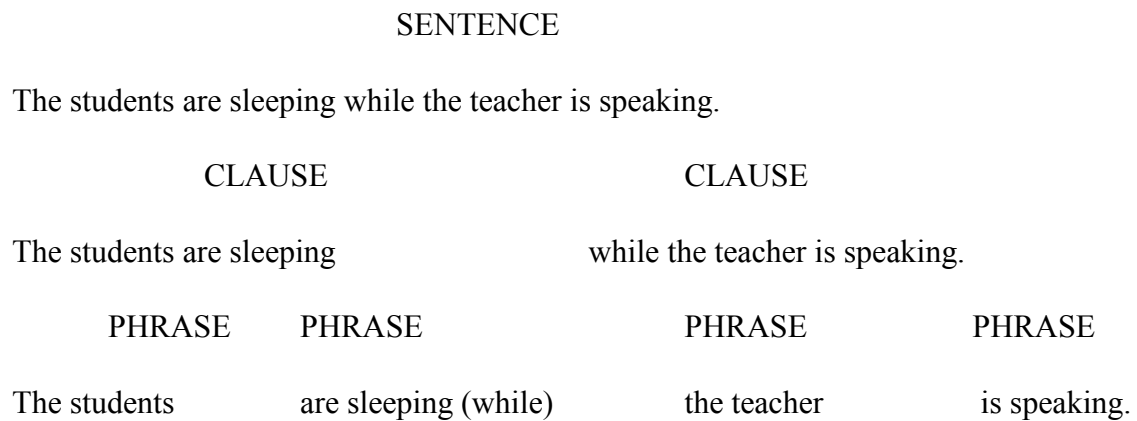
She sings in a beautiful manner. (beautifully)

They go to Spain every winter. (regularly)

# Chapter 7 Sentences

## Introduction

So far we have worked with word classes and their functions in sentences. These words and phrases make up clauses which in turn form sentences. Look at the following diagram that illustrates the different levels:



# 1 Definitions

A sentence is not included in any larger grammatical structure, it is independent. This is marked by punctuation. The sentence consists of one or more clauses, thus the two terms may sometimes be synonymous.

A clause consists of a verb or a verb phrase, and some of these elements: subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, object complement, or adverbial.

Clauses may be:

Main: She always sings

Subordinate: while she is taking a shower

Finite: because it's winter

Non-finite: being in the middle of the winter

A simple sentence consists of only one clause.

A compound sentence consists of more than one main clause. These are often linked by coordinating conjunctions (and, or, but):

Boys will be boys, and girls will be girls.

Jenny wants ice cream, but Tom doesn't like it.

A complex sentence consists of one or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses. The subordinate clauses can be embedded in the superordinate (main) clause, and are often linked by subordinating conjunctions:

The teacher told her class that the exam, which would take place the week after, would be difficult.

## 2 Word Order

This is the normal pattern for a simple sentence in English:

S   V   iO   dO   Adv  
The doctor gave his patient some pills for his pain.

The word order is fixed, since English is an SVO-language. The letters indicate the order of the sentence elements. This has been so since the case system broke down several hundred years ago. There are of course possibilities of word order variation, and these will be dealt with in detail in an advanced course of English grammar. One way of changing the word order of a sentence should be mentioned here, however, namely the passive transformation. When a sentence is in the passive voice, the subject is not expressed, and the focus is on the object or the action expressed by the verb. These are some examples of passive sentences:

The grass was cut by the janitor.

This car has been sold.

The old fire station is being pulled down today.

The fish factory will be closed next month.

## 3 Clauses

### Main clauses

Main clauses can be grouped according to the function they have in discourse, for example they can be questions or commands or just statements. We label them as follows:

Affirmative (statement):	I like chocolate cake.
Negative:	I don't like vodka.
Interrogative (question):	Do you like champagne?
Imperative (command):	Close the window!
Exclamations:	Here comes the bride!

### Finite subordinate clauses

Finite subordinate clauses always contain a finite verb, either in the present or past tense. These clauses can be grouped according to the function they have in the superordinate clause. Therefore we speak of nominal, adjectival and adverbial clauses. In the following we will examine the various types.

### Nominal clauses

These clauses have the same function as a noun would have in the main clause. This means that they function as subjects or objects, or they may have other functions (see E.G., chapter 12).

### That-clauses

Some verbs co-occur with that-clauses, and the clauses can also be interrogative:

That he should be a thief surprised me.  
It surprised me that he should be a thief.  
I know that our students are hard-working.  
Did I tell you that the king has arrived?

### Nominal relative clauses

Relative clauses are usually adjectival, as you will see from the next section. But some are nominal:

They gave him what he wanted.

What we do is think it over.

You can buy what you like in this shop.

## Adjectival clauses

### Introduction

These are often called relative, because they contain a relative pronoun. They are adjectival in that their function is to postmodify a noun in the main clause. Look at these examples:

I know a man who doesn't drive.

He has a car which doesn't work.

This is the best book that I have ever read.

The country, whose flag is unknown, won a medal.

The boy, whose bicycle is stolen, walks to school.

We distinguish between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. Restrictive clauses are integrated with the superordinate sentence and necessary for the meaning. Non-restrictive clauses give additional information, and are marked with intonation and punctuation.

The boys who had left early were punished.

The boys, who had left early, were punished.

### Choice of relative pronoun

WHO: Used about personal antecedents (the boy, Mary, etc)

WHICH: Used about non-personal antecedents (the house, the bicycle, etc.)

THAT: Used instead of which in many cases, but only in restrictive clauses:

Do you remember the story that I told you yesterday?

The story, which was stupid, never ended.

WHOM AND (OF) WHICH:

Used in more formal language, as in these examples:

Have you met the new manager, whom we discussed last week?

This is a problem of which I do not know anything.

Omission of the relative pronoun:

The pronoun can be left out in restrictive clauses where the relative pronoun is not the subject of the clause:

Here is the boy (that, who(m)) I told you about.

I once had a bicycle (that/ which) I'll never forget.

But the sentence does not make sense if we omit the relative pronoun that functions as a subject:

\*I once had a bicycle never let me down.

## **Adverbial clauses**

### **Introduction**

These clauses are a mixed lot, just as the adverbials are. The way to spot them is to see whether they can function as an adverbial in the superordinate clause. In other words: Do they denote manner, time, etc. or modify an adjective? (adjunct), or do they indicate a speaker comment or truth evaluation? (disjunct)

When the sun shines, everyone is happy.

Since you know him, you can talk to him about it.

The civilians, although they have suffered tremendously, still believe in peace.

### **Types of Adverbial clauses**

A: Clauses of time

These establish a temporal relationship between the main clause and the subordinate clause. (Before, after, at the same time).

It always rains when we have our holiday.

The telephone often rings while we are having dinner.

B: Clauses of reason

If placed first, these clauses give the premise for a conclusion given in the superordinate clause. If placed after the main clause, they give the explanation or reason.

Since you are so smart, why don't you think of something to do!  
My car doesn't work because it's too old.

C: Clauses of condition

Conditional clauses are used to express the dependence of an action upon another. The condition in the subordinate clause must be realised for the main clause to be "true".

If you run, you'll catch the bus.  
If you ran, you'd catch the bus.  
If you had run, you would have caught the bus.

D: Clauses of contrast and concession

These are varied, but you will find the meaning of contrast or concession in them:

Although he could not understand anything, the teacher went on explaining.  
While some people like fish, others prefer hamburgers.  
England is a member of the EU whereas Norway said no.

E: Clauses of manner, purpose and result

As the headline suggests, this is also a mixed group. Some examples show the meaning that these clauses convey:

She sings as if she had a voice for it.  
Close your eyes so that you don't see my secret!  
You closed your eyes so that you didn't see my secret.

### Conclusion

All the examples in this section show finite subordinate clauses. It is sometimes difficult to establish what type we are dealing with, but if you know sentence analysis it should be possible to find out the function of the subordinate clause.

Look for more examples in chapter 12 in EG. Also, see the table of subordinating conjunctions used with the different clauses on page 345.



## 4 Non-finite clauses

### Introduction

All the subordinate clauses in 7.5 contain a finite verb. This part of the chapter deals with non-finite clauses. As we have seen, a non-finite verb form does not show tense. Therefore, non-finite clauses contain verbs that do not show tense. Study the following examples:

After taking a shower, she felt much better.

Well prepared, he managed to answer all the questions.

To go abroad you need time and money.

The non-finite clauses can be said to be reduced from finite clauses, thus we could imagine the following sentence as a "sub-structure" for the first example above:

After she had taken a shower, she felt much better.

The following pairs of sentences show other examples of such reduced subordinate clauses.

While she is having a shower, she always sings.

While taking a shower, she always sings.

As I didn't have any money, I couldn't go out.

Having no money, I couldn't go out.

Non-finite clauses are more common in English than in Norwegian, and they occur more in written than spoken language.

## 5 Types of non-finite clauses

### Infinitive clauses

All these clauses contain a verb in the infinitive.

There are several forms of the infinitive, as the following examples show:

She demanded to see the manager.

The thieves are observed to have been on board the ship.

Very much remains to be done.

Bare infinitive, without “to”, occurs with verbs like make, let, see, hear, feel, watch and help:

She made them see the problem.

We felt the ground give way under our feet.

Let them try to do it on their own!

### ing-clauses

Several forms of ing-clauses can be used:

Washing the car, he found some change in the seats.

Having washed the car, he became rich.

She resents being spoken to in that way.

Having been spoken to like that, she protested wildly.

The embedded subject may be expressed by a personal pronoun or a possessive determiner:

His being accused of theft is nonsense.

I hope you don't mind my /me asking about your age.

The genitive form is most common in writing.

### **Past participle clauses**

These clauses express a passive meaning, and are also passive syntactically:

Once elected, he will never resign.

We got the letter sent today.

We keep our documents hidden away.

### **Verbless clauses**

These are even shorter than the non-finite clauses, but they show another way of expanding the sentence. They do not have any verb at all, but are clearly added to the sentence:

Red all over, he arrived late as usual.

Try, if possible, to be on time next time!

Clever students, they read a lot of secondary literature.

### **Conclusion**

The main point here is to be aware of this way of reducing the sentence, especially in written English. But it is also important to realise that this is advanced use of language and your young learners should rather concentrate on using the finite clauses correctly. A reason for this is that it is often a problem to maintain clear connections between subjects in the superordinate and subordinate clauses. The sentence can then be ambiguous, as shown below:

? Sitting in the sun all day, the dog wanted her to take him for a walk.

To translate English ing-clauses, we often have to make infinitive constructions or adverbial clauses in Norwegian:

Being in the middle of the winter, it was cold.

Fordi det var midt på vinteren, var det kaldt.

Singing in the rain is a pleasant experience.

Å synge i regnet er en hyggelig opplevelse.

## *Activities*

### **1. Discuss with your partner:**

*What is meant by:*

**simple sentence**

**compound sentence**

**complex sentence**

**Make up one sentence of each type.**

### **2. Read the 2 following short story extracts.**

**a. Working in pairs, read one story each.**

**b. Retell your story to your partner.**

**c. Study the sentences together. What kind of sentences do you find: simple, complex and compound.**

**Does the choice of sentence types illustrate the theme of the short story in any way? Present your results to the rest of the class.**

#### **The Big Game<sup>13</sup>**

THE CROWD WAS working itself into a frenzy. Only **ten** minutes to go and still the score was tied. The atmosphere was charged with tension, both on and off the field. The referee was doing all he could to keep the game from deteriorating into a full-on brawl. It's like this every year, mused George. Which was understandable. After all, this was The Shield match and both teams wanted The Log of Wood so badly.

When George first came to New Zealand he was warned about the nation's obsession with the game of rugby Fanaticism even. But it didn't worry him. In fact, in many ways it made him feel like he was back home in Liverpool. Now that was crowd frenzy for you! It made rugby matches look tame. George missed the singing and chanting, which Kiwis seemed reluctant to embrace, but he still enjoyed the feeling of being in a big crowd, urging a team on to give its all.

Suddenly, cheering erupted as a pass by the opposition went astray and was intercepted by a red jersey. A short burst, followed by a quick flick out to the wing, and it looked as if a try was a certainty. But just ten metres out from the tryline the winger was taken in a brilliant flying tackle and the ball went into touch. The opposition won the ball from the lineout and regained twenty metres before a player was dropped in a tackle and the physio was called on. Both captains called their teams aside and desperate words were spoken. The

injured player recovered and the game continued. The crowd yelled itself hoarse. Then, seemingly from out of nowhere, one of the opposition players scooped up a loose ball and charged for the line. Two red jerseys dived at the same time. There was a tense hush as all eyes went to the referee. The whistle blew and . . . 'Held up!' he called. Sighs of relief and disappointment filled the air. No victory dances yet. George looked at his watch. Only two minutes to go. 'Come on, red!' he yelled, sensing that The Shield would be heading north once again.

Fulltime, score tied. Into injury time. A lineout. Red ball. Great take and tip out. A long pass to the number 8 and the home crowd holds its breath in disbelief. The ref's arm goes up. The drop goal is o-ver! The referee signals fulltime and the field becomes a sea of people.

George searched for the number 8 and gave him a great bear hug. 'Brilliant. just brilliant,' he gushed. 'Aw, Dad,' said the embarrassed teenager. 'I just remembered Zinny's last droppy and I thought, if he can do it, I can give it a go too.'

'Thanks to you, The Shield's staying here this year, son. Go and get your prize.'

And as George watched him go, his heart swelled with pride, Obsession? Maybe. But this was worth it.

JENNI-LYNNE HARRIS

### **The Hat**

THE PRIEST LOOKED up from the psalms on the lectern cast his eyes over the hats bowed before him. Feathered, frilled, felt hats in rows like faces. One at the end of the row different. A head without hat. A cat without fur. A bird without wings. Won't fly far.

Voices danced in song with the colours of the windows. Red light played along the aisle, blue over the white corsage of Mme Dewsbury, green on the pages of the Bible. Reflecting up on the face of the priest.

He spoke to the young lady afterwards: 'You must wear a hat and gloves in the House of God. It is not seemly otherwise.'

The lady flushed, raised her chin, strode out.

'That's the last we'll see of her,' said the organist.

The organ rang out, the priest raised his eyes to the rose window. He did not see the woman in hat and gloves advancing down the aisle as though she were a bride. The hat, enormous, such as one might wear to the races. Gloves, black lace, such as one might wear to meet a duchess. Shoes, high-heeled, such as one might wear on a catwalk in Paris.

And nothing else.

JUDY PARKER

# Chapter 8 Word Order

Word order deals with how the elements of the sentence follow each other. English is a language with a strict system, and the word order is governed by several principles. We shall first look at these, and then see when the principles are "violated". We shall also compare with Norwegian.

## Syntactic principles

### The contact principle

The contact principle is the basic word order principle, saying that elements belonging together are placed together. Examples are the verbs in the verb phrase (VP), and the modifier and head of the noun phrase (NP).

Our new neighbours have arrived this week.

The little cat sat on the high fence all night.

The clause elements are often identified by the order they appear in. These examples show a neutral word order, used if no other principles are at work:

SV: She sings.

SVsP: He is a teacher.

SVdO: He closed the door.

SVdOoP: They found him stupid.

SViOdO: She gave her teacher an apple.

But other principles may work in the sentence and change the word order.

### The information principle (end focus)

This principle reflects our tendency to present information so that given or known information comes before new information in the sentence. In the following example "the book" is known to the speaker and the addressee:

The book is about the development of an artist.

This example also leaves the new part of the message to the end:

I would like to tell you a story about my new house.

In these cases the word order is not changed, but look at this example:

There is a man at the door.

Here the information principle changes the neutral word order.

"a man" is new information, and we would not normally start the sentence or utterance with an unknown element.

### **The principle of end-weight**

This principle describes how speakers place long and heavy elements at the end of the sentence. Often this happens to a subject, and then the word order is changed.

This book is written by the very famous and intelligent author Salman Rushdie.

What else has happened to this sentence except for the change in word order? The voice has changed, from active to passive.

The principles described in this section can be used to explain sentences where the normal word order has been changed. The information and end weight principles can be said to be pragmatic, because they explain how language is used in communication. The next section will show how we can vary the word order of our sentences in several ways and for different reasons.

### **Word order variations in declarative sentences**

The most common word order is of course the neutral one, described as SVO. The most common variations are the following:

- fronting
- inversion
- postponement of the direct object
- passivisation
- clefting

## **Fronting**

Fronting means that an element is put in front which usually does not occur in this position. When fronting occurs, it is often because of the information or end weight principles. In the following examples, the context makes the first piece of information known, but none of the initially placed elements are subjects:

You asked me a question. That I can answer, but first...

Especially nice is the smell of fresh flowers.

Whole clauses can be fronted:

Whether you like it or not I don't know.

The effect seems to be that of double focus.

See pp 307-311 in E.G. for further examples.

## **Subject-verb inversion**

This occurs in sentences like:

Here comes the bride!

In the hall was a huge angry dog waiting to greet guests.

Off the roof jumped the young man, unable to face life.

What do these sentences have in common?

-adverbial of place in initial position

-intransitive verb

-long subjects

Inversion may also occur in reported speech:

“I don't like fish,” said the little girl.



And with initial -ing or -ed groups:

Sitting on the fence was a grey lovesick cat.

Hidden behind the curtains sat his girlfriend.

Subject-auxiliary inversion is also found with certain adverbial phrases that have a negative or restrictive meaning:

Never had I seen such a bad TV-program.

Under no circumstances must you reveal this secret.

Elliptical clauses can also cause inversion:

I don't like fish. Neither do I.

Some fixed expressions are used with inversion:

Long live the Queen!

Be that as it may...

### **Postponement**

This means to leave one element for the end of the sentence, usually to comply with some of the word order principles:

She wore, and kept indoors, a broad-brimmed hat with a yellow ribbon.

Millions at home would regard as fraudulent a Commonwealth which had room for a racist South Africa.

The examples above contain very long objects.

### **Passivisation**

An English sentence can be either in the active or the passive voice. In case of passivisation, we get a change in word order. The following section will describe how we make passive sentences, and how these are used in communication.

## **Form**

The passive can be expressed through different tenses and verb forms, as shown in the following examples:

The butter is kept in the fridge.

You have been treated nicely here.

The window was broken

The houses are being repaired after the storm.

Their house was being built up after the last storm when it happened.

This book should be read by everyone.

What these sentences have in common, is that there is a form of to be, and that there is no subject that "commits" the action. The object of the corresponding active sentence is moved to subject position and takes the role of affected subject.

## **Use of passive**

When the subject of the action is unknown, or the speaker doesn't want to reveal the subject:

The window was broken.

The author wrote that a murder had been committed.

If the subject is obvious, and therefore not necessary:

Six million Jews were killed in the war.

At school they are told to work hard.

In bureaucratic and scientific language:

The matter was discussed in the department.

The problem of AIDS has not been solved yet.

When the action is more interesting than the subject:

Look, that man is being robbed!

A new house has been built next to ours.

Where do we find most passive constructions?

Educated, scientific language makes frequent use of them. Also politicians use them a lot, often to manipulate.

The terms must be approved.

Taxes have been raised this year.

The problem of AIDS is not yet solved.

Constraints on the passive:

1. Some verbs do not take the passive transformation.

He has a blue car. \* A blue car is had by him.

They lack a fighting spirit. \* A fighting spirit is lacked by them.

2. prepositional verbs:

Her boyfriend looked at her.  
\*She was looked at by her boyfriend.

They drove straight into the wall.  
\* The wall was driven straight into.

3. Objects containing a reflexive or reciprocal pronoun:

John stretched out his hand.  
\*His hand was stretched out by John.

4. With two objects in the active, only one is possible in the passive:

She was congratulated on her victory.  
\* Her victory was she congratulated on.

## **Clefting**

Cleft sentences have two functions: they make the sentence longer and focus on one element. Thus they change the word order of the 'original' sentence.

Study these examples:

Fred needs a new car. (original sentence)

It's a new car that Fred needs.

It's Fred who needs a new car.

What Fred needs is a new car.

The one who needs a new car is Fred

There are two types of clefting: IT and WH-clefting.

IT: the focused element is usually a NP in subject or object position, or an adverbial.

**It** wasn't Jim who left early, it was John.

**It**'s the dog that barks all night, not our neighbour.

**It**'s in the morning she likes to sleep.

WH: often an NP, but also a that-clause or a verb phrase.

**What** you need most is a good rest.

**What** they have done is ruined the economy.

**What** you are saying is that the whole story is a lie.

## *Activities*

### **1. The Passive**

**a: Change these sentences into the passive voice. Decide whether the agent should be expressed in any way.**

1. You never take me to a restaurant.
2. We choose you as our spokesman.
3. They don't sell this drug without a prescription.
4. Somebody shut the door in my face.
5. The dog bit several people badly.
6. I must do this exercise again.
7. We can see the signal clearly from here.
8. Nobody could beat him in those days.
9. The municipality is building two new bridges.
10. They were driving the cattle into trucks.
11. Someone has eaten all the bread.
12. The storm has sunk two of our boats.

**b: Explain why the passive would be a good choice in sentences 3, 7, 9, and 11 above.**

# Chapter 9 It and There

## 1 Introduction

The beginning of chapter 8 described the information principle, which deals with our way of organising our messages.

The information principle is basic for our use of language. It is also called the principle of end focus. This means that we arrange our utterances so that the new information comes last in the sentence.

Theme: the first constituent in the sentence.

Focus: The new information in the sentence.

Which is which in the following sentence?

He drives his dogs too hard this week.

Look at these 3 sentences. Which of the 2 last ones would you use to follow the first?

1. The PM stepped off the plane.
2. She was immediately surrounded by journalists.
3. Journalists immediately surrounded her.

No. 2 would be more acceptable: she = theme

Here the passive is used for pragmatic purposes.

Since we have this tendency in our use of language, we often put in an empty subject if we don't have a theme:

There were journalists all over the place.

It's a long way to Tipperary.

It and there are called anticipatory.

This is a problem area for Norwegian learners, and they tend to make 'Norwenglish' sentences. To teach pupils the difference between it and there, teachers have often given them a rule of thumb: If 'det er' can be replaced by 'det finnes', use there.

We shall now go into the topic more systematically.

## 2 The uses of it

### **It as a reference pronoun**

This is a central function of a pronoun, to refer to a noun phrase introduced earlier in the context (anaphoric reference):

She gave him a present, and it was nice.

They asked her to bake a cake, and she said she would think it over.

Or it refers to something explained later (cataphoric reference):

It's known among all his friends. He is leaving town this summer.

It's as I always told you, you will succeed.

### **Anticipatory it: represents the subject appearing later**

A: The real subject is a finite clause:

It's true that he is leaving.

It's sad what you just told me.

B: The real subject is an infinitive clause:

It is lovely to see you again.

It is dangerous to walk alone down there.

C: The real subject is an ing-clause:

It was nice working with you.

**Empty it: where there is no subject, it can be put in a subject position, as in:**

A: about the weather: It's cold out today.

B: about time: It's an hour until lunch.

C: about distance: it's a long way to London.

These sentences are impossible without it:

\* Cold out today is.

### **It in cleft sentences**

We have seen this also in chapter 8.

'Normal': I like pizza best.

Cleft: (it) It's pizza that I like best.

'Normal': Tina gave her teacher some flowers.

Cleft (it) It was Tina who gave her teacher some flowers.



### 3 The uses of there

#### **There as a place adverbial:**

In this function, the pronunciation is different in that the word is stressed and pronounced /ΔE□/

There you are, I couldn't find you.  
There, on the roof, is your cat.

#### **Existential there**

There when used in this sense is weakly stressed (pronounced /□□/, and therefore has reduced pronunciation. There functions as an anticipatory subject, and is used with to be = exist. The real subject of the sentence is an indefinite noun phrase. There is subject-verb agreement with the verb and the real subject.

There is a cat on the roof.  
There were 6 students absent yesterday.  
There is a time for everything.  
There are a lot of problems to be solved.

The fact that the real subject is an indefinite noun phrase, is part of the explanation of the pragmatic function of the existential there. It is used to bring new pieces of information into the context (discourse), and we don't start with this new information. So there is used not to violate the information principle. The following examples attempt to illustrate how the sentences would look without there:

\*A time is for everything.  
?A cat is on the roof.

#### **There with other verbs of existence**

There remains another problem to be solved.  
There comes a time to reconsider.  
Once upon a time there lived a king...  
There appeared some strangers in the class today.

But we can't say:

\*There disappeared some strangers from the class today.

This can be explained by the definition of existential there, which brings something new onto the scene. If the strangers disappeared, they must have been in the class, and everyone would have been aware of them before.

To sum up the functions of it and there, you can try to draw a tree diagram like those in chapter 3 on the articles.

## *Activities*

**1. Some of these sentences are wrong, and others are correct. Explain what makes them right or wrong, and correct the wrong ones.**

- a. It will of course last many years still before it is absolute peace.
- b. There broke out a fight between Catholics and Protestants.
- c. There might also be difficult to make the older people accept people from the opposite group.
- d. There's a chance we may never see him again.
- e. There is very easy to answer this question.
- f. It seems that he is quite likely to let you down.
- g. It was a large cellar beneath our house.

# Glossary<sup>14</sup> of grammatical terms

**active voice - (aktiv):** the agent is expressed, passive voice - there is no agent, e.g.: *He drove the car.* (active) - *The car was driven (by him).* (passive)

**adjective (adjektiv):** The word class of adjectives can be defined semantically, morphologically and syntactically. Semantically, an adjective is a word that describes properties (looks, size, shape, colour etc.) of a noun or a pronoun. Morphologically, an adjective is a word that can be compared like this: cold- colder- coldest or: beautiful- more beautiful- most beautiful. Syntactically, an adjective is a word that fits into these frames: a \_\_\_\_\_ house, The house is \_\_\_\_\_ .

**adverb (adverb):** The word class of adverbs is a heterogeneous group. Adverbs may say something about the verb, answering the questions how?, when?, why?, and where?, e.g. He wrote the essay quickly (how), yesterday (when). The **suffix** *-ly* can be used to form adverbs, e.g. *man - manly*. Adverbs may also be used to **modify adjectives** and other **adverbs**, e.g. a *very* big house, and he did it *very* quickly.

**adverbial (adverbial):** One of the five clause elements. 'A word or phrase (typically a prepositional phrase) functioning as a major clause constituent and typically expressing place (*in the garden*), time (*in May*), or manner (*in a strange way*)' (NODE).

**affix (affiks):** An affix may be a **prefix** or **suffix**.

**antonym (antonym):** A word which is opposite in meaning to another. E.g. heavy - light, right - wrong, beautiful - ugly.

**article (artikkel):** An article is a type of determiner. See **definite** and **indefinite** articles.

**aspect (aspekt):** Form of the verb denoting continuing or completed action, as in: I am writing - progressive aspect, I have written - perfective aspect.

**auxiliary (hjelpeverb):** 'A verb used in forming the tenses, moods, and voices of other verbs. The primary auxiliary verbs are *be, do, and have*; the modal auxiliaries are *can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, and would*' (NODE).

**clause (setning):** A clause consists of a verb or a verb phrase, and some of these elements: subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, object complement, or adverbial. Clauses may be: Main: *She always sings*. Subordinate: *while she is taking a shower*; Finite: *because it's winter*; Non-finite: *being in the middle of the winter*; A simple sentence consists of only one clause. A clause consists of at least a subject and a verb.

**clause element (setningsledd):** Clauses may be divided up into clause elements. The five clause elements are: **subject (S), verb (V), object (O), predicate (P), and adverbial (A).**

**collective noun (substantiv med kollektiv betydning):** Collective nouns may be both singular or plural, depending on the reference of the noun in the sentence. Either the speaker is thinking of a unit (singular) or the elements making up this unit (plural). For example: *Our team is winning this year, it's just great!* (singular) *Our team are coming onto the field right now, they look tired.* (plural).

**common noun (fellesnavn):** Common nouns have class reference, which means that they refer to one or more members of a class or type, or to a concept: *woman, girl, chair, knowledge.* See also **proper noun.**

**comparative (komparativ):** '(f an adjective or an adverb) expressing a higher degree of a quality, but not the highest possible (e.g. *braver; more fiercely*). Contrasted with **positive, superlative**' (NOAD).

**complex sentence (helsetning med leddsetning):** A complex sentence contains one main clause and at least one subordinate clause, e.g. *The game was lost, because the team played poorly.*

**compound noun (sammensatt substantiv):** A noun which is made up of two or more existing words or elements, e.g. *housewife, fireguard, houserom.* Compound nouns may be made up from nouns but also other word classes. The rules regarding when a hyphen is used are vague in English. In Norwegian compound nouns are often written as one word, whereas in English they can be written as two words with or without a hyphen.

**compound sentence (to eller flere helsetninger):** A sentence consisting of at least two main clauses which are co-ordinated usually by means of conjunctions such as *and* and *but*, e.g. *The door it opened slowly and my father he came in.*

**concord (samsvar):** 'Agreement between words in gender, number, case, person, or any other grammatical category which affects the forms of words' (NOAD). The term is most commonly used to refer to agreement between subject and verb in relation to person and number. Norwegian learners often have problems concerning the third person singular -s ending in the present tense, e.g. *He/she/it runs.*

**conjunction (konjunksjon - bindeord):** A word used to conjunct clauses or sentences, e.g. *and, but if.* Conjunctions may be either co-ordinating or subordinating. *And, but and or* are the co-ordinating conjunctions. Examples of subordinating conjunctions are: *when, if, because, since, as and that.*

**continuous form (samtidsform):** see progressive aspect.

**copula verb (uselvstendig verb):** A linking verb, e.g. *to be*, connecting the subject to the subject predicative. Other typical copula verbs: *look, seem, appear* etc.

**countable noun (tellelig substantiv):** Countable nouns can be both singular and plural and can refer to things which can be counted, e.g. *book/books, wheel/wheels*. Countable nouns can be used together with determiners such as *a, an, two, many* etc. Compare with **uncountable noun**.

**definite article (bestemt artikkel):** 'A **determiner** (*the* in English) that introduces a noun phrase and implies that the thing mentioned has already been mentioned, or is common knowledge, or is about to be defined (as in the *book on the table; the art of the government; the famous public school in Berkshire*)' (NODE).

**derivational (ordavledning)** Used in morphology. **Affixes** can be either derivational or **inflectional**. Derivational affixes help in the formation of new words, such as *unfathomable, undesirable*. The addition of an inflectional affix does not make a new word, but gives a different form of the same word, eg. plural *-s*, gives the plural form of words, and third-person singular *-s* gives a different form of a verb, eg. *play - plays*.

**determiner (bestemmerord):** 'A modifying word that determines the kind of reference a noun or a noun group has, *for example a, the, every*' (NOAD).

**diminutive (diminutiv):** In morphology, a suffix which usually means 'small'.

**direct object (direkte objekt)** 'The object that expresses the primary object of the action of the verb, e.g. *He sent a present to his son*' (OGEU).

**dynamic verb (dynamisk verb):** A verb that denotes action: speak, write, sing, etc.

**finite verb (finitt verb):** Verbs can be categorised into two categories: **finite** and **non-finite**. A **finite verb** is one which signals contrasts of tense, number, person. The past and present tenses are finite forms: John *throws* his jacket over his shoulder and *walks* out the door. *throws - walks* - simple present tense and finite; the *-s* ending also signals person and number (third person singular).

**grammatical morpheme** A grammatical morpheme can be any one of a number of affixes which cannot occur separately, such as plural *-s*, third person singular *-s, -ing*: present participle or gerund form and *-ly*: adverb-forming unit etc.

**homonymy (homonymi):** Two words which have the same spelling but have different meanings, e.g. close (verb)/close (adjective).

**idiom (idiom / fast uttrykk):** An expression whose meaning is not clear from the individual words which go to make up the expression. For example 'It's raining cats and dogs', 'name your poison' (what would you like to drink). Idioms cannot as a rule be translated word for word, e.g. '*It's raining cats and dogs*' cannot be translated into, '*det regner katter og hunder*', but may be translated by using an idiom in Norwegian with the same or similar meaning such as, '*det regnar tolleknivar*'.

**indefinite article (ubestemt artikkel):** 'A determiner (*a* and *an* in English) that introduces a noun phrase and implies that the thing referred to is non-specific (as in *she bought me a book; government is an art; he went to a public school*). Typically the indefinite article is used to introduce new concepts into a discourse.

**infinitive (infinitiv):** 'The basic form of the verb, without an inflection binding it to a particular subject or tense (e.g. *see* in *we came to see, let him see*)' (NODE).

**inflectional (bøyning) - see derivational**

**intransitive verb (intransitivt verb):** A verb that takes no object, eg. *jump, sit, walk, travel*.

**irregular verb (uregelmessig verb):** A verb which does not inflect according to the usual rule. For example the past tense and the past are formed by adding the ending *-(e)d*. Examples of irregular verbs: *run ran, ran; drink, drank, drunk* etc.

**language (språk)** The various systems of signs and sounds used by human beings to communicate with each other.

**lexical morpheme** Lexical morphemes contain lexical meaning and unlike grammatical morphemes can occur as separate words, such as *house, man, tree* etc.

**linguistics (lingvistikk)** The study of **language**.

**main clause (helsetning/hovedsetning):** Each **sentence** contains at least one main clause.

**modal auxiliary (modalt hjelpeverb):** The modal auxiliaries are: *can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must* and *ought to*. The modal auxiliaries have modal meanings such as: certainty, obligation, prediction, permission, necessity, ability, advice, deduction, possibility and volition.

**modifier/modification (beskriverledd):** A word, often an adjective or an adverb, which adds to or restricts the meaning of another word, for example: a very (adverb) red (adjective) dress.

**morpheme (morfem)** A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit of the language (*dog, -est, -s* etc.). Morphemes may be divided into **lexical morphemes** and **grammatical morphemes**.

**morphology (morfologi)** Morphology is the study of the word level of language. A **morpheme** is the smallest meaningful unit of the language, e.g. *small* (one morpheme), *smallest* (two morphemes). 'Small' is an example of a lexical morpheme, it means "little". The second morpheme, 'est', is an example of a grammatical morpheme, denoting the highest degree of "small" in a comparison of the adjective. Examples of other grammatical morphemes are: 's': plural of the noun or 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular of the verb, 'ing': present participle or gerund form, 'ly': adverb-forming unit.

**non-finite verb (ikke-finit, infinit verb):** Non-finite verbs take three forms: *-ed* (past participle), *-ing* (present participle) and *infinitives* such as 'to be': There's never been a better time *to play* multiplayer Brood War. ('to play' infinitive) *Singing* in the shower may result in divorce. ('singing' - ing form) She gave him a lighted match. ('lighted' - past participle) In a verb phrase with more than one verb, the first verb is always finite: They **have** asked the Browns to dinner. They *were running* away.

**noun (substantiv)** Noun is a word class. It can be defined **semantically**: a noun is a word that denotes a thing, a being or a concept, eg. *a house, a dog* and *love* respectively. Morphologically, a noun is a word that can take a genitive *'s* or plural *-s* morpheme. Syntactically, a noun is a word that fits into the frame: 'The \_\_\_\_\_ seems good'.

**object (objekt)** One of the five clause elements. A noun phrase which is governed by an active transitive verb.

**object predicate (objektspredikativ)** See **predicate**.

**participle (partisipp)** 'a word formed from a verb, ending in *-ing* (*present participle*) or *-ed, -en, etc* (*past participle*). Participles are used in verb phrases (eg *She is going* or *She has gone*) or as adjectives (eg *a fascinating story*): '*Hurrying*' and '*hurried*' are the present and past participles of '*hurry*'.<sup>15</sup>

**parts of speech** - see **word class**

**passive voice (passiv):** In passive sentences the agent need not be mentioned, e.g. *The ball was kicked (by John)*. The passive voice is formed by the verb *to be* + the past participle.

**past tense (preteritum):** The past tense is used to describe actions/events/states in the past. There are two forms of the past; the simple past and the past progressive: *We met your new friend last week.* (simple) *We were talking with him for two hours.* (progressive) The simple past is formed by adding the inflection *-ed* to regular verbs, whereas irregular verbs either have the inflection *-t* or a vowel change. The past progressive is formed by the past tense of *to be* plus the present participle (the *-ing* form of the main verb). The basic meaning of the simple past is 'completed action in the past'. In negatives and questions *did* is used: *Did he wear a tie to the wedding? He didn't wear a tie to the wedding.*

**perfective aspect (perfektiv aspekt):** Denoting completed action considered in relation to the present. The present perfect as being both 'present and past', because it is formed using the present tense of *to be* and the past participle of the main verb: *I have worked; She has slept; They have spoken.*

**phonology (fonologi)** Phonology is the study of the sound system of the language. It deals with the smallest elements of the language that can bring about a change in meaning, the vowel and consonant phonemes.

**positive (positiv)** '(of an adjective or an adverb) expressing a quality in its basic, primary degree. Contrasted with **comparative** and **superlative**' (NOAD).

**predicate (predikativ)** One of the five clause elements. 'An adjective or noun that has the same reference as either the subject (as *mad*) in *he drove her mad* or *manager* in *they appointed him manager*' (NODE).

**prefix (prefiks, forstavelse):** An affix, a letter or syllable, which is added to the beginning of a word to modify its meaning, such as *uncontrollable*, *unfathomable*, and *undesirable*. The meaning of the grammatical morpheme (prefix) *-un* is roughly 'not'. The morpheme has a German root and is similar to Norwegian *-u*.

**preposition (preposisjon):** 'A word governing, and usually preceding, a noun or pronoun and expressing a relation to another word or element in the clause, as in 'the man *on* the platform', 'she arrived *after* dinner', 'what did you do it *for*?' (NODE).

**present progressive (presens samtidsform):** The **present progressive** is formed with the present of the verb to be plus the present participle (-ing form) of the verb: *We are singing* - *He is dancing* - *I am drinking*.

**present tense (presens):** The simple present uses the *-s* ending in the third person singular. Questions and negatives are formed using *do*. Examples: *Does he play snooker?*; *She doesn't play tennis.*; *I talk*, *she listens*.

**progressive aspect (samtidsform):** 'Denoting an aspect or tense of a verb that expresses an action in progress, e.g. *am writing*, *was writing*. Also called 'continuous' (NODE).

**pronoun (pronomen):** 'A word that can function as a noun phrase used by itself and that refers either to the participants in the discourse (e.g. *I*, *you*) or to someone or something mentioned elsewhere in the discourse (e.g. *she*, *it*, *this*)' (NODE).

**proper noun (egennavn):** Proper nouns have unique reference. This means that can they refer to unique individuals or places. They are names, and therefore capitalised, such as in these examples: *John*, *Newsweek*, *York*, *Apple Computers*, *Olsen*. The main differences between common and proper nouns deal with how they accept articles and plural inflection. Common nouns normally co-occur with articles (*a*, *the*) and can be given a plural suffix (*-s* or others), whereas both common and proper nouns can have case inflection (genitive *-s*). See also **common noun**.

**regular verb (regelmessig verb):** A verb which has the normal inflection. The normal inflection for the past tense and past participle is *-ed*. See also **irregular verb**.

**relative clause (relativsetning):** 'A relative clause tells us which person or thing (or what kind of person or thing) the speaker means:

- The woman **who lives next door ...** ('who lives next door' tells us which woman)
- People **who live in London ...** ('who live in London' tells us what kind of people)<sup>16</sup>



**semantics (semantikk - betydningslære)** The branch of **linguistics** which is concerned with the study of the meanings of **words**.

**sentence (uavhengig setning, periode):** Linguists are not always in agreement concerning the definition of what a sentence is. For our purposes it will be defined as a set of words which bear some meaning. A sentence normally starts with a capital letter and is completed with a full stop, question mark or exclamation mark. It contains a **subject** and a **finite verb**. Sentences may be divided into statements, exclamations, questions and commands.

**simple sentence (helsetning , særsetning):** consists of one **main clause**.

**stative verb (statisk verb):** A verb that denotes state/condition or emotion: feel, think, remain, etc.

**subject (subjekt)** One of the five clause elements. 'A noun phrase functioning as one of the main components of a clause' (NODE).

**subject predicate (subjektspredikativ):** see **predicate**.

**subordinate clause (bisetning)** 'a clause, usually introduced by a **conjunction**, that provides further information about something in the main sentence, eg *when it rang* in *She answered the phone when it rang*' (OALD).

**suffix (suffiks)** is a **grammatical morpheme** which can be added to the end of a word. Suffixes may be both **derivational** and **inflectional**. A derivational suffix changes the **word class** of a word. For example, the **noun** *man* can be changed to the **adverb** *manly* when the suffix *-ly* is added. Inflectional suffixes such as plural *-s*, *-ed*, *-ing*, express grammatical relationships.

**superlative (superlativ)** '(of an adjective or an adverb) expressing the highest or a very high degree of a quality (e.g. *bravest*, *most fiercely*). Contrasted with **positive** and **comparative**.

**synonym (synonym):** A synonym is a word which has the same or similar meaning as another word, for example: *big/large*, *wrong/incorrect* etc.

**syntax (syntaks)** is the study of the sentence level of the language. Sentences consist of *sentence elements*. This is where we look at what words build up a sentence, the *sentence elements*, such as *subject*, *object*, *subject predicate*, *object predicate* and *verb*.

**tense (verb tid):** Most grammarians agree that there are really only two tenses in English, the present and the past. Present or past time are shown by the verb: he sits (present), he sat (past).

**transitive verb (transitivt verb):** A verb that takes one or more objects, e.g.: sing, write, give, take.

**uncountable noun (utellelig substantiv):** Also referred to as 'mass noun'. Uncountable nouns can only be treated as singular, e.g. snow, information, and news. Uncountable nouns in English often cause problems for Norwegian learners, because countable nouns in Norwegian sometimes have uncountable equivalents in English, such as *furniture*. Other examples of these are: information (*opplysninger*), knowledge (*kunnskaper*), bread (*brød*), work (*arbeid*), cash (*kontanter*), news (*nyheter*), money (*penger*), etc. Uncountable nouns can be both abstract and concrete, as the following examples illustrate: *love, hate, furniture, snow, information*. Uncountable nouns cannot combine with determiners which presuppose countability, such as: the indefinite articles *a, an* and quantifiers such as *one, two, several, many*.

**verb (verb-ordklasse, verbal-setningsledd):** The term 'verb' in this book is used to define both 'verb' as a **word class** and as a **clause element**. See chapter 5 for definition of the word class verb.

**voice (diatese):** In English there are the active and the passive voices. In active sentences the agent is expressed in the subject position: *John kicked the ball*. In passive sentences the agent need not be mentioned: *The ball was kicked (by John)*. The passive voice is formed by the verb *to be* + the past participle.

**word (ord)** A combination of letters and sounds forming a distinct unit in a sentence (with a space on either side), e.g. *egg, face, tomato, run* etc.

**word class (ordklasse) (traditionally labelled parts of speech)**

Dictionary compilers normally categorise words into word classes. Word entries in dictionaries, for instance the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* will include the phonetic transcription of a word, and then an abbreviation denoting what class a word belongs to. For example, 'house' would have the abbreviation 'n' written after denoting that it is a noun. Word class classification may vary from grammar to grammar. Word class identification is also by no means straightforward in many cases. Traditional grammars tended to give too simplistic definitions, such as 'nouns' being the 'name of something'. Modern grammars give more detailed descriptions of word classes rather than prescriptive definitions, but these can also tend to confuse the student because of their complexity.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup>Chomsky, A.N. 1957. *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton.
- <sup>2</sup>Dahl, Roald; *George's Marvellous Medicine*, Jonathan Cape, London, pp. 26-27.
- <sup>3</sup>Extracts from: Metro fiction : a short story selection / introduced and edited by Graeme Lay, Auckland, N.Z, Metro Publishing Partnership, 1987.
- <sup>4</sup>Dahl, Roald; *Matilda*, Heinemann New Windmills, Oxford, 1991.
- <sup>5</sup>Comic strip at: <http://benzie.com/users/dataylor/tbeh/index.html>
- <sup>6</sup>Cather, Willa, *My Ántonia*, chapter 4, <http://www.litrix.com/antonia/anton039.htm>.
- <sup>7</sup><http://www.truth.org.za/amntrans/98060810JHB/thandaku.htm>
- <sup>8</sup>Extract from: Lodge, David, *Nice Work*, p. 157, Penguin, London, 1989.
- <sup>9</sup>Taken from examination paper given at Sogn og Fjordane College: *Engelsk grunnfag: grammatikk/feilretting*, 28 May 1998.
- <sup>10</sup>Extract from chapter one of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, chapter one.
- <sup>11</sup>Article by Malcolm Jones JR, in *Newsweek*, September 1998.
- <sup>12</sup>Weldon, Fay; *The Lives and Loves of a She Devil*, Coronet Books, 1984, pp. 91-93.
- <sup>13</sup>Extracts from: Metro fiction : a short story selection / introduced and edited by Graeme Lay, Auckland, N.Z, Metro Publishing Partnership, 1987.
- <sup>14</sup>Several excellent grammar glossaries are available, some free on the Internet. A good dictionary will also include grammatical terms. This glossary has used different sources, often involving a rewriting of the definitions, in some cases an editing of the term, and in other cases a more detailed definition. The following reference works were freely employed: *The New Oxford Dictionary of English*, Pearsall Judy (ed.); Clarendon press, Oxford, 1998. (referred to as NODE). *The Oxford Guide to English Usage*, compiled by Weiner, E.S.C. and Delahunty, Andrew; Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994. (referred to as OGEU). *The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* is referred to as OALD.
- <sup>15</sup>Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995.
- <sup>16</sup>Murphy, Raymond; *English Grammar in Use*; Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1994, p. 182.