

GRAMMAR TERMINOLOGY

This document provides explanations to some important grammar terms in Norwegian and English. The list is intended as a quick reference guide for students of Norwegian as a foreign language, and does not provide precise linguistic definitions. Examples are mostly given in English since they serve to illustrate the term, not Norwegian grammar.

Categories of words

| | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--|---|
| Substantiv | noun | The name of a thing, person or place. | a chair, a friend, the dream... |
| Verb | verb | Word for an action or state. | to sing, to be, to know, will... |
| Modalverb | auxilliary verb | In Norwegian: The verbs <i>kan, vil, skal, må, bør</i> in all their forms. | |
| Pronomen | pronoun | A word that replaces a noun or a name. | Where is my tea? Here <i>it</i> is. Where is Tom? Here <i>he</i> is. |
| Possessiv pronomen | possessive pronoun | A word that shows who owns something. | It is <i>her</i> cat. I know <i>your</i> sister. |
| Adjektiv | adjective | A word that describes a noun or a pronoun | The boy is <i>nice</i> . |
| Adverb | adverb | A word that describes a verb. See also under <i>Sentence structure</i> below. | The boy dances <i>well</i> . |
| Preposisjon | preposition | A word used in front of a noun, often to show place or time. | in, on, at, from |

Tenses and forms of the verb

| | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Infinitiv | infinitive | The basic form of the verb. Gives no information of when the action happens. | to go, to dance, to eat |
| Presens | present | Indicates present action. | He goes, he dances, he eats |
| Preteritum | past tense | Indicates action in the past. | went, danced, ate |
| Presens perfektum | present perfect | Indicates action in the past. | have gone, have danced, have eaten. |
| Perfektum partisipp | perfect participle | The perfect tense without the auxilliary <i>have</i> . | gone, danced, eaten |
| Preteritum perfektum | pluperfect | Indicates action in the past. | had gone, had danced, had eaten |
| Futurum | future | Indicates action in the future. | will go, will dance, will eat |
| Imperativ | imperative | The form use for commands. | Go! Dance! Eat! |
| Passiv | passive | Forms of the verb used when it is not important who performs the action. | The food <i>was eaten</i> . |

Forms of the noun

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|---|--|
| Kjønn | gender | Norwegian has three genders: masculine, feminine and neutral. | <i>This distinction does not exist in English.</i> |
| Hankjønn | masculine | | en mann |
| Hunkjønn | feminine | | ei dame |
| Intetkjønn/nøytrum | neutral | | et barn |
| Entall | singular | Indicates <i>one</i> object. | a car, the car |
| Flertall | plural | Indicates more than one object. | cars, the cars |
| Ubestemt form | indefinite form | | a car, cars |
| Bestemt form | definite form | | the car, the cars |
| Artikkel | article | Word or suffix indicating the distinction definite - indefinite | a (indefinite article) the (definite article) |

Forms of the adjective

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Positiv | absolute | The basic form of the adjective. | He is <i>old</i> . |
| Komparativ | comparative | | He is <i>older</i> than me. |
| Superlativ | superlative | | He is the <i>oldest</i> one. |

Sentence structure and sentence elements

| | | | |
|----------------|------------------------|--|--|
| Setningsledd | sentence elements | What function a word has in the sentence. Subject, objects, verbs and adverbials are sentence elements. | |
| Verb | verb | The action of a sentence. | He <i>buys</i> a book. |
| Subjekt | subject | The performer of the action. | <i>He</i> buys a book. |
| Setningsadverb | auxilliary adverb | In Norwegian: Adverbs like <i>ikke, kanskje, gjerne, heller, alltid, også...</i> | |
| Adverbial | adverbial | An element that says where, when, how or why an action happens. See also <i>Categories of words</i> above. | He buys the book <i>in a shop</i> . He buys the book <i>today</i> . |
| Objekt | object | The thing or person something is done to. | He buys <i>a book</i> . (direct object) He buys <i>her</i> a book. (indirect object) |
| Predikativ | predicative expression | An "object" after <i>to be, to become</i> and some other verbs. | He is <i>nice</i> . She became <i>a teacher</i> . |
| Helsetning | main clause | An independent sentence which gives full meaning alone. | <i>I come today</i> <i>I say that I will come today.</i> <i>I sing and she dances.</i> |
| Leddsetning | subordinate clause | A sentence which is a part of another sentence. It doesn't give full meaning alone. | <i>I say that I will come today.</i> |
| Konjunksjon | conjunction | A conjunction combines two main clauses. | <i>I dance and she sings.</i> |
| Subjunksjon | subjunction | A subjunction introduces a subordinate clause. | <i>I say that it is cold.</i> <i>I will freeze if it rains.</i> |