# 10 Danish

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10.1 Introduction

Danish is spoken by about 5 million speakers. It has developed as a standardized written language with a long tradition. The first law texts in Danish are from around 1200, and in the late fourteenth century, Queen Margaret I decided to change the language of administration from Latin to Danish. As a language of literature it has been used since the fifteenth century. Today speakers of Danish are mostly to be found within the present area of the Kingdom of Denmark, but there is a Danish minority in the Flensburg area in Germany (adjacent to the present Danish–German border), most of whose members are bilingual, very often with German as the dominant language. Until the mid-seventeenth century Danish was used in the Danish provinces of Skåne, Halland and Blekinge which became Swedish in 1658. After that, Swedish became the written language of these provinces, while spoken Danish lingered on for much longer and traces of it can still be found in the dialects of Skåne. During the union with Norway (1389–1814), Danish became increasingly important as a written language in Norway. Danish is still spoken to some extent in the former Danish North Atlantic colonies (Greenland, Faroe Islands), and (to a much lesser degree) it is still retained by Danish emigrants to the United States and Argentine.

Although the area in which Danish is spoken is rather small, the classical dialect picture (corresponding to the situation around the year 1900) shows distinct dialect differences. Perhaps the most striking phonological isogloss runs in an East–West direction. In the area north of this isogloss, speakers contrast 'normal' vowels and voiced consonants with those produced with a specific articulation known as *stød* (literally 'thrust' or 'push'; on *stød* see below). South of this isogloss, the *stød* articulation is not known (see Figure 10.1). A number of morphological-syntactic isoglosses run in a North–South direction. Thus there is a three-gender system for nouns in the East, namely, on the islands (masculine, feminine, neuter), a two-gender system in the Middle, namely the eastern part of the Jutish mainland (common vs neuter gender), and a system without gender contrast in the West (Western and Southern Jutland) (see Figure 10.2). Although the distinctions between the classical Danish dialects are of considerable linguistic and historical interest,

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Figure 10.1   The *stød* isogloss
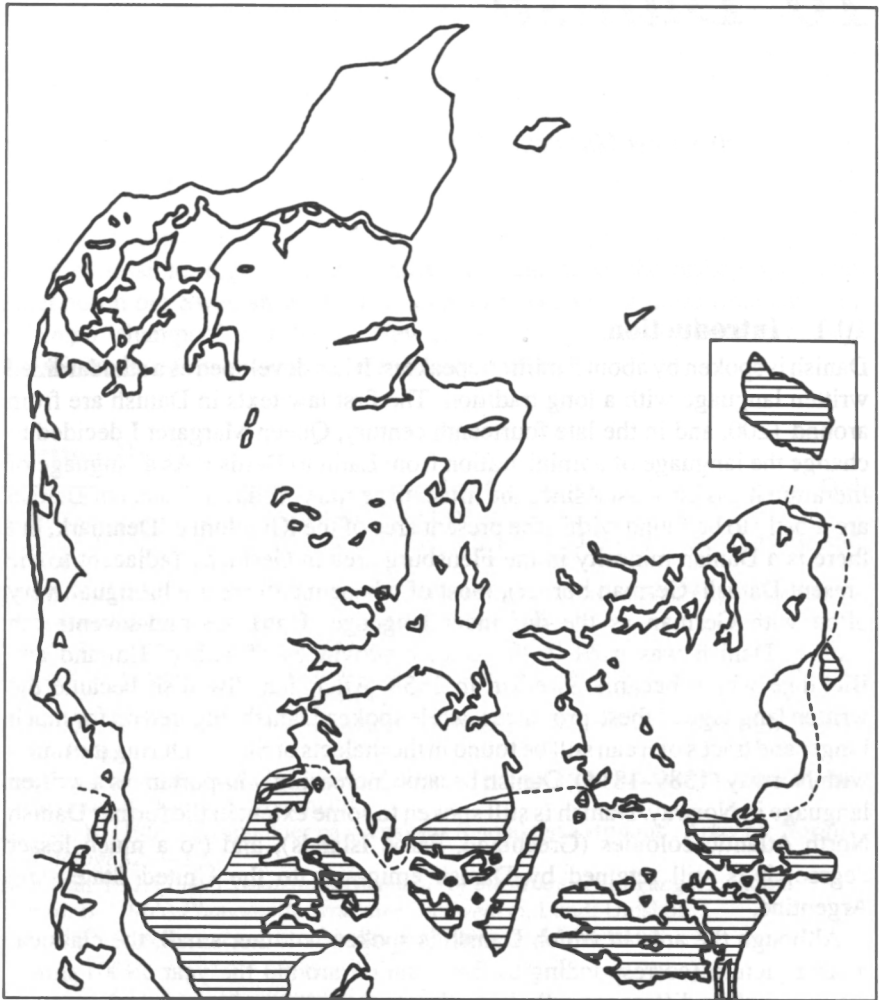
Source: Adapted from Ringgaard 1973.
Note: *Stød* does not occur in the shaded area.

it should be noted that the number of classical dialect speakers today is much smaller than in 1900. It has been estimated that there are at most 500,000 dialect speakers today. Dialects have been retained to a different degree in different areas, and very little is known about the extent of dialect/standard bilingualism especially among the younger generations. Although Danish dialects in principle are mutually intelligible, Copenhageners especially can have difficulties in coping with Western and Southern Jutish dialects.

Figure 10.2 Gender isoglosses in Danish
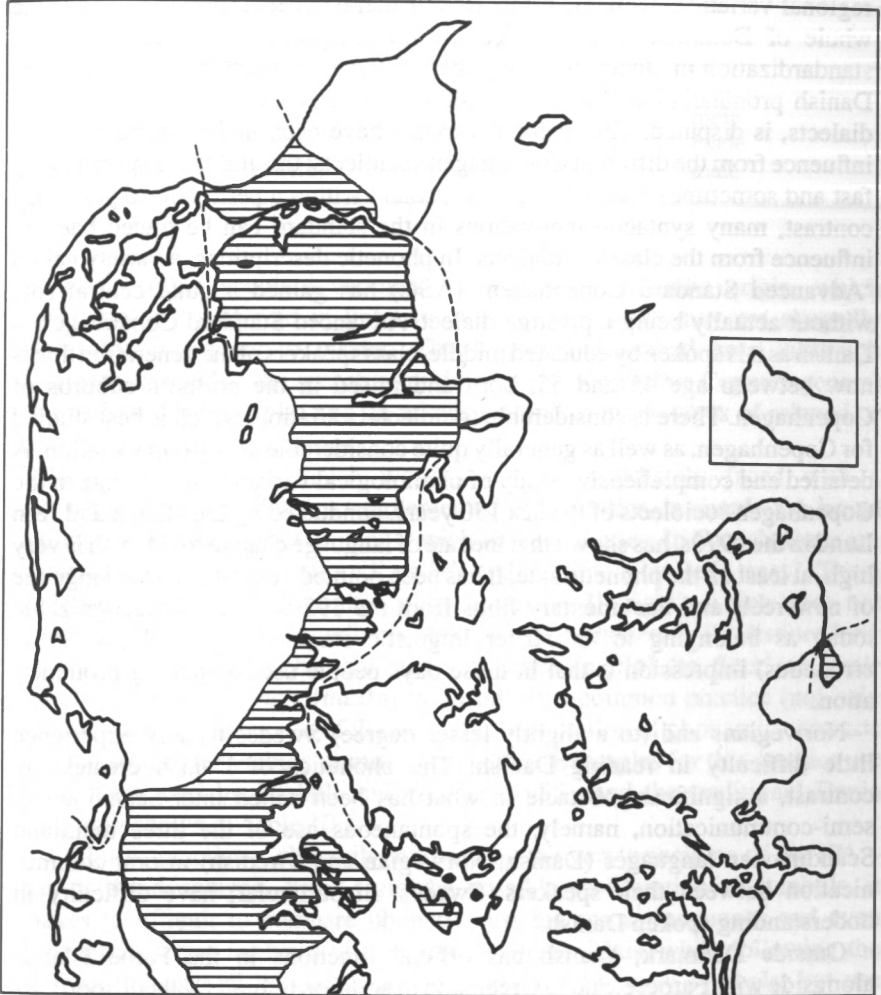
Source: Adapted from Ringgaard 1973.
Note: Dialects in the shaded area have the same gender system as Standard Danish (common gender vs neuter). Dialects to the East have a three-gender system (masculine, feminine, neuter), dialects to the West have no gender difference, but classify nouns as countables vs non-countables.

The written language is fairly standardized. Until recently, some people still used the 'old' spelling from before the last spelling reform in 1948, when the letter ‹å› was introduced as replacement for ‹aa›, and the use of initial capital letters for nouns was abandoned.

There is also a spoken standard, called *rigsdansk*, which has noticeable regional variation. Its name refers to its general acceptability throughout the whole of Denmark. (Danish *rige* means 'kingdom'.) The real extent of standardization in Denmark during the last generations, that is, how uniform Danish pronunciation has become after the relative decline of the classical dialects, is disputed. The regional variants have been under strong phonetic influence from the different Copenhagen sociolects; this influence spreads very fast and sometimes reaches Northern Jutland within a period of 10 years. By contrast, many syntactic innovations in the standard can be traced back to influence from the classical dialects. In phonetic descriptions, a variety called 'Advanced Standard Copenhagen' (ASC) has gained a quite central role without actually being a prestige dialect. Advanced Standard Copenhagen is Danish as it is spoken by educated middle-class speakers of the generation that is now between age 45 and 55, born and raised in the northern suburbs of Copenhagen. There is considerable sociolectal variation, which is best studied for Copenhagen, as well as generally quite considerable age-group variation. A detailed and comprehensive study of phonological variation and change in the Copenhagen sociolects of the last 150 years, conducted by Lars Brink and Jørn Lund in the 1970s, has shown that the rate of language change for Danish is very high, at least on the phonetic side. It has been pointed out that even the language of newsreels and documentary films from the 1950s is clearly recognizable today as belonging to an earlier linguistic stage; the general (but quite erroneous) impression is that in those days people used a spelling pronunciation.

Norwegians and (to a slightly lesser degree) Swedes usually experience little difficulty in reading Danish. The phonetics of Danish creates, by contrast, a significant obstacle in what has been called inter-Scandinavian semi-communication, namely, the spontaneous use of the three mainland Scandinavian languages (Danish, Norwegian and Swedish) in oral communication between their speakers. Swedes, in particular, have difficulty in understanding spoken Danish.

Outside Denmark, Danish has official functions in the Faroe Islands alongside with Faroese, and in Greenland in addition to Inuit (Kalaallisooq). Its teaching as a foreign language in school is largely restricted to Iceland, another former Danish colony. In Iceland, Danish is taught from primary school on. In the bilingual area in Germany near the Danish border Danish is a subject and teaching medium in the education system of the Danish minority. In this area, it is also offered by some majority schools as an optional subject. Danish is an official and working language of the European Community, and in terms of numbers of speakers it is the smallest of these languages.

10.2   Phonology

The variety of Danish described here is Advanced Standard Copenhagen.

Table 10.1   Comparison of three phonetic transcription systems for Danish

IPA	Basbøll-Wagner	Dania	
[miːlə]	[miːlə]	*mi'lə*	mile
[meːlə]	[meːlə]	*me'lə*	mele
[męːlə]	[mɛːlə]	*mæ'lə*	mæle
[mɛ̀ːlə]	[mæːlə]	*mà'lə*	male

There are other standard varieties, especially of Jutlandic origin, which sometimes are preferred in linguistic descriptions since they are allegedly easier for foreigners to master. The language described here (although originally defined as the speech of middle-aged middle-class Copenhageners) can be heard on the radio and on television, and in many types of relaxed or semi-formal speech occasions.

When transcribing Danish words, one is immediately faced with a dilemma. Ordinary IPA, not supplemented by diacritics, is simply too broad a transcription for the notation of Danish vowel qualities. In Danish, there are contrasts like *lidt* [liḓ] 'suffered' vs *lidt* [leḓ] 'little' vs *let* [lęḓ] 'easy'. There is furthermore a vowel quality [ɛ] as in *ret* [ʁɛḓ] 'right', which does not contrast with [ę]. Correspondingly there are four phonemically distinct long vowels: *mile* [miːlə] 'charcoal stack' vs *mele* [męːlə] 'to flour' vs *mæle* [mę̀ːlə] 'to utter' vs *male* [mɛːlə] 'to grind'. It is common practice (not only in Danish) to avoid the use of diacritics for the notation of phonemic contrasts and to use simple symbols as much as possible. Examples for this practice are the system used by Basbøll and Wagner (1985), and the traditional Dania system as shown in Table 10.1.

Still, this practice – although endorsed by the very principles of the IPA – has its disadvantages. Apart from the possible proliferation of symbols, it makes it difficult to compare phonetic systems across languages and even between different analyses of the same language. Thus, while following the analysis by Basbøll-Wagner, I do not introduce any new symbols, but use narrow IPA diacritics where they are necessary to distinguish phonological contrast rather than phonetic detail. But I write [ɔ] and [ʌ] rather than [ɔ⁺ᶜ] and [ʌ⁺ᵓ], although [ɔ] and [ʌ] are not distinguished by their degree of rounding alone; there is also a significant difference of height. I also write [a] rather than [ạ], although the quality of Danish [a] is quite audibly raised as compared with German or French [a]-sounds.

The *Stød* Phenomenon
In Danish phonology, there is one phenomenon that, although maybe not uniquely Danish, is very unusual among the languages of Europe, namely, *stød* (literally 'thrust' or 'push'). Impressionistically, *stød* resembles a glottal

stop without complete closure that occurs with long vowels and sonorants under certain conditions. Nevertheless it should not be considered as a segmental feature, but rather as a prosodic feature of the syllable. The supposed 'glottal stop' does not occur *after*, but *within* the affected vowels and sonorants. A syllable must have a so-called *stød* base in order to be able to carry *stød*, and it is only in syllables with a *stød* base that *stød* and non-*stød* can contrast. In the standard language, this *stød* base is either a long vowel or a sonorant after a short vowel. Vowels with *stød* have about 85 per cent of the length of a *stød*-less long vowel. Thus *stød* occurs at a rather constant temporal distance from the onset of the affected syllable. As notation for *stød* I use [.] in connection with vowels, and simply ['] in connection with consonants and semivowels. The [.] in [.] suggests the length or half-length of the vowel with *stød*. *Stød* is associated with stress and can only occur in stressed syllables; if a syllable loses its stress for morphological reasons (as in compound words), syntactic reasons (as in noun incorporation) or discourse prosodic reasons (as when it does not constitute the kernel of a prosodic stress group), it will not carry *stød*. *Stød* is not articulated in song, except as a stylistic feature in certain cabaret-type chansons.

Stød was originally a redundant feature of stressed monosyllables with either long vowel or final voiced consonant (like *hus* [hu.s] 'house', *land* [lan'] 'land'), and occurs in words etymologically related to Norwegian and Swedish words with tone 1 (the 'simple' tone). But this association with monosyllables does not hold synchronically any more. On the one hand, phonological change has created new monosyllables without *stød* (like *mor* [moːg] 'mother' (contracted from earlier disyllabic *moder* ['moːðɐ]) vs *mord* [moːˀg] 'murder'). On the other, some morpheme boundaries are relevant, some are not, for *stød* assignment. The nominal definite inflection suffix (originally a separate word) does not exclude *stød* from the nominal stem (like in *huset* ['huːˀsəð] 'the house'), while plural suffixes do (*huse* ['huːsə] 'houses'). In loans, *stød* is regularly found in polysyllables: loans with final stress on a long vowel, or ending on a sonorant after stressed vowel, will usually have *stød*: *information* [ɛnfʊmaˈʃoːˀn]. The original association of *stød* with monosyllables has in these words been reanalysed as an association with final stress. (In the part of the Danish vocabulary that is originally Germanic, and disregarding compounds, final stress would only occur in monosyllables.) Loans have *stød* on stressed antepenultimates as well (as in *Akropolis* [aˈkʁoːˀpolis] 'Acropolis'), but never on the penultimate. Even some polysyllabic present finite forms of verbs, like *synger* ['sø̜ŋˀɐ] 'sings', have *stød*.

Vowels

The Danish vowel system in stressed syllables is presented in Table 10.2. All the sounds in Table 10.2 with the possible exception of short [o], whose distribution is highly restricted, can be considered phonemic. ([o] is largely,

Table 10.2 The Danish vowel system in stressed syllables

	Unrounded		*Front* Rounded		*Back*	
high	iː	i	yː	y	uː	u
	eː	e	øː	ø	oː	o
	ęː	ę	ǫː	ǫ	ɔː	ɔ
	ɛː					ʌ
		a				
low	ɑː	ɑ			ɒː	ɒ

but not completely, in complementary distribution with [ɔ].) Some vowel qualities historically have been conditioned by the surrounding consonants, which thus affected their phonemic status. Thus [a] and [ɑ] originally were in complementary distribution, [a] occurring finally and before dentals and alveolars, and [ɑ] occurring before other stops. A preceding [ʁ] conditions [ɑ] as well. This original, neat complementary distribution has now been superseded by [ɑ] sounds that originally were conditioned by a following [ʁ] (not necessarily in immediate contact with [ɑ], but always within the same morpheme). These [ʁ]s are still represented by ‹r› in writing, but have disappeared phonetically, which is why the occurrence of [ɑ] rather than [a] is not phonetically conditioned any more. Thus [a] and [ɑ] enter into minimal pairs now, both word-finally as in *kan* [ka] '(I) can' vs *kar* [kɑ] 'vessel' and word-internally as in *(de to) Anners* ['anɐs] gen. pl. '(of the two) Anns' vs *Anders* ['anɐs] 'Anders'.

There are two schwa sounds that only occur in unstressed syllables, [ə] and [ɐ]. The only other vowels that can occur in unstressed syllables (except in loans) are [e] e.g. *madding* ['maðeŋ] 'bait', and [i] e.g. *dydig* ['dyːði] 'virtuous'; both occur also in stressed syllables.

Since /ə/ is only defined as a neutral, central vowel with a great variability as far as place of articulation and degree of rounding are concerned, it is, especially in less distinct styles, easily affected by assimilation to an adjacent vowel or sonorant, as in *pige* ['piːə], less distinct: [piːi] 'girl', *inde* ['ęnə], less distinct: [ęnn̩] 'inside', or is absorbed into a syllabic semivowel like in *gade* ['gɛːðə], less distinct: ['gɛːð̩] 'street'. This is a very striking feature of relaxed everyday Danish.

With the two schwa phonemes, and counting /o/ as a phoneme, Danish has 27 vowel phonemes. Even without counting allophonic variants, this must be considered a very high number of vowel phonemes for a language. Allophonic variants occur in particular in the environment before and after /ʁ/, or in the first part of diphthongs.

Diphthongs

The Danish phonetic system does not only show a high number of phonemic vowel distinctions, it also shows a quite exceptional number of diphthongs, all of them falling. These diphthongs are one of the most important stumbling blocks for the foreigner who wants to acquire a decent pronunciation of Danish, since they are phonetically very similar but still form contrasts. There are at least the following 19 diphthongs with a short first element, and with [i̯], [u̯] or [ɐ̯] as second element: *mig* [mɑi̯] 'me', *møg* [mʌi̯] 'dirt', *stiv* [sdiu̯'] 'stiff', *peber* ['peu̯ɐ] 'pepper', *levn* [leu̯'n] 'leftover', *hav* [hɑu̯] 'sea', *syv* [syu̯'] 'seven', *øvrig* ['øu̯ʁi] 'other', *støvle* ['sdøu̯lə] 'boot', *tov* [tʌu̯] 'rope', *fog* [fɔu̯] 'snow drift', *hirse* ['hiɐ̯sə] 'millet', *Per* [peɐ̯] 'Per', *bær* [beɐ̯] 'berries', *styrte* ['sdyɐ̯də] 'fall down', *kørte* ['køɐ̯də] 'drove', *smør* [smøɐ̯] 'butter', *purk* [puɐ̯g] 'little boy' and *sort* [soɐ̯d] 'black'. They cannot be considered phonemic, since the first parts of them commute.

There are also 19 combinations of long vowels with non-syllabic [i̯], [u̯] and [ɐ̯]. A few examples of these are: *bøg* [bø:i̯] 'beech', *borg* [bɒ:u̯] and *ord* [o̞:ɐ̯] 'word'.

Consonants

While the number of vowels (and certainly the number of diphthongs) is greater than in many other languages, the Danish consonant inventory is rather simple. There is a set of stops, all of them are unvoiced. [p, t, k] are aspirated and [b̥, d̥, g̊] are non-aspirated. Strictly speaking, [p, t, k] should be transcribed as [b̥ʰ, d̥ʰ, g̊ʰ], or, for younger speakers, as [b̥ʰ, d̥sʰ, g̊ʰ]. There are the following fricatives: [f, s, ʃ, h, v, j, ʁ]. Of these [f, s, ʃ, h] are voiceless, and [v, j, ʁ] voiced. There are three nasal stops [n, m, ŋ], and a lateral liquid [l]. And there are four semivowels: apart from the set of three, [i̯, u̯, ɐ̯], which we have encountered above in our discussion of the formation of diphthongs, one also has to count [ð], the 'soft d' as in *mad* [mað] 'food', as a semivowel. It is normally associated with obstruents like those written as ‹th› in English *this* or *there* or as ‹ð› in Icelandic *maður* 'man', but the English and Icelandic sounds are dental fricatives, while Danish [ð] is phonetically quite different: it is an alveolar voiced sonorant. Its auditive impression is quite close to [l] and it is often confused with it by non-native learners of Danish.

It should be noticed that a voiced/voiceless contrast is almost totally absent from the Danish consonant system. The contrast between [p, t, k] and [b̥, d̥, g̊] really is one of aspiration vs non-aspiration, as is made clear by the narrower transcription [b̥ʰ, d̥ʰ, g̊ʰ] vs [b̥, d̥, g̊]. Although there are voiced fricatives and sonorants, none of them has a voiceless opposite number except for [v] that contrasts with [f], but this is rather a lenis–fortis contrast than one of voice.

Word Structure and Stress

The totality of the Danish vocabulary is made up of inherited Danish words (the bulk of the non-compound vocabulary), on the one hand, and loans, on the other. The main difference between these two groups of words is that the second group shows some phonological structures that are not found in the first. Non-compound inherited Danish words are either monosyllabic (*hus* [huːs] 'house', *rod* [ʁoːð] 'root', *vand* [van'] 'water') or disyllabic with stress on the first syllable and an unstressed /ə/ in the second (*bakke* ['bагə] 'hill', *tidsel* ['tisəl] 'thistle'). Both types occur, of course, in loans aswell, like in *sky* [sgyː] 'gravy' < French *jus*, or *mode* ['moːðə] 'fashion' < Ger. *Mode*, and these loans cannot be distinguished phonologically from inherited Danish words. (*Sky* is phonetically identical to *sky* [sgyː] 'cloud'.) But loans exhibit phonological patterns not found in inherited Danish words, such as non-schwa vowels in unstressed syllables of what at least synchronically are non-compounds: *kursus* ['kuʁsus] 'course', *karma* ['kɑːma] 'karma', or polysyllables with stress on other than the first syllable, like *naiv* [na'iːu̯] 'naive', *habil* [ha'biːl] 'able', *konservativ* [kʌn'sɛʁvatiu̯'] 'conservative'.

Compounds normally bear stress on the first element, if they are of the type free morpheme + free morpheme (*banegård* ['bɛːnəˌgɒː] 'railway station', (lit.) 'rail+yard') or free morpheme + bound morpheme (*venlig* ['vɛnli] 'friend+ly'). Compounds of bound morpheme + free morpheme or bound morpheme + free morpheme + bound morpheme can either carry stress on the first element (*undgå* ['ʌnˌgɒː] 'to avoid', *uhygge* ['uˌhygə] 'eeriness', (lit.) 'un+cosiness'), or on the second (*fortryde* [fʊ'tʁyːðə] 'regret', *uhyggelig* [u'hygəˌli] 'uncanny'). Some verbal prefixes which are loans from Low German never carry word stress, like *betale* [be'tɛːlə] 'pay' or *fortælle* [fʊ'tɛl'ə] 'tell'.

For compounds of three elements, there is a tendency to stress (A+'B)+C even where the compound of the first two elements is stressed 'A+B: although the part of town west of Copenhagen Central station is called 'Vesterˌbro, the name of its main thoroughfare is stressed ˌVester'brogade.

A peculiarity is the accent pattern of some compound adjectives where the first part does not express so much a specification as a degree. These adjectives carry two main stresses in one word. Thus there is a contrast between 'brand ˌfarlig 'dangerous as to fire' (i.e. 'inflammable'), and 'brand'farlig 'dangerous like fire' (i.e. 'very dangerous').

Spelling

Danish uses the Latin alphabet with three letters added: ‹Æ æ›, ‹Ø ø›, and ‹Å å› (before 1948, ‹Aa› and ‹aa› were used instead of ‹Å å›). The relationship between phonemes and graphemes is not one to one, especially for short vowel phonemes; thus ‹i› is used for writing both /i/ and /e̝/. While ‹e› also is used to write /e̝/, mostly in loans, its main function is to write /e̝/, for which

there is also a separate letter, ‹æ›. Danish spelling follows to a high degree the Principle of Greatest Similarity in the spelling of the same morpheme: even where the phonetic shape of a morpheme differs considerably in different contexts, identical, or similar, spelling is retained. Thus the morpheme *sag* 'thing, case' is spelled the same both where it occurs as an independent word with the pronunciation [sɛːˀj], and as the first part of a compound like *sagfører* 'lawyer' (lit. '(s)he who leads your case'), where it is pronounced [sɑu̯]; similarly for present finite *sælge* ['sɛljə] 'sell' vs past finite *solgte* [sʌldə] 'sold'. Sometimes graphemic distinctions which in themselves are not phonemically significant are introduced to compensate for lacking graphemic distinctions in some other part of the word. Thus the only distinction between the verbs *spilde* [sb̥ilə] 'to spill' and *spille* [sb̥elə] 'to play' is in the stem vowel which is represented by ‹i› in both words; the distinction is maintained by using the graphemes ‹ld› and ‹ll› for the same phoneme /l/. (A similar case is the above mentioned example of *mor* 'mother' vs *mord* 'murder', where the phonological distinction is non-*stød* vs *stød*, while the graphemic distinction is ‹r› vs ‹rd›.) In the case of different morphemes which have identical sounds (homophones), one can see a different principle at work which could be called the Principle of Greatest Dissimilarity of different morphemes. Here graphemic distinctions are introduced which do not correspond to some phonemic distinction in some other part of the word, but which have the sole function of distinguishing between phonemically identical morphemes or words, cf. *tigge* 'to beg' vs *tikke* 'to tick', both ['teɡ̊ə], or *løg* 'onion' and *løj* 'lied', both [lʌiˀ]. There are some cases where one phonetic sequence can be represented orthographically in several ways with distinct associated meanings. ['tiːɐ] can thus be *tiger* '(a) tiger', *tigre* 'tigers', *tier* 'keeps one's tongue' (or '(a) tenner'), and ['muːɐ] can be *muher* 'moos (of cows)', *murer* 'does masonry work' (or '(a) mason'), *murere* 'masons', and *muger* 'mucks out'. Homographs which are not homophones occur, though, cf. *steg* which can be [sd̥ɑiˀ] '(a) roast' or 'fry!' or [sd̥eiˀ] '(s/he) climbed'. There are also quite a number of homophones which also are homographs, like *frø* [fʁœˀ] 'seed' and 'frog'.

Clause Prosody

The study of the suprasegmental features of the Danish clause is only in its early stages, but some results have already emerged. The most general overall feature is that sentence types are characterized by consistent patterns of fundamental frequency (F_0) contours. In syntactically unmarked questions, i.e. main clauses with declarative constituent order used as interrogatives (usually echo-questions), the pitch contour is level. In terminal declarative statements, the fundamental frequencies of successive stress groups fall steadily towards the end of the sentence. In syntactically marked questions (both *wh*-questions and yes/no questions) as well as non-final declarative and interrogative clauses, the frequency contour formed by the stressed syllables

will still fall steadily towards the end of the sentence, but not nearly as much as in terminal declarative statements. This means that as far as clause types in Danish are marked by pitch contour, they are marked globally, in the entire clause, and not (like in other Germanic languages like English and German) by a typical contour in the last part of the clause only. This means that Danish has no sentence accent: in neutral sentences without contrast or focus accent, there is no particular stress group that is more prominent than others. In this Danish is different even from a closely related language like Swedish.

10.3 Morphology

The Nominal Group

Nouns
Nouns are inflected for number and definiteness. Case inflection is only found in pronouns; what looks like a genitive (*mandens* 'the man's') has synchronically become a phrasal affix attached to the whole noun phrase.

Gender
There are three regular classes of plural formation and a few irregular plurals. Nouns belong also either to the neuter or the non-neuter class. These classes select inflectional forms of attributive and predicative adjectives, and corresponding pronouns, as well as (in the singular) different definiteness affixes: *-et* for neuter and *-en* for non-neuter. These classes are considered as a grammatical gender system. In some Danish dialects, there is still a three-gender system similar to German, *nynorsk* and the Atlantic Scandinavian languages, and the standard Danish system can be considered as a development of this system where masculine and feminine have been conflated into one category non-neuter (which, accordingly, also is called common gender or *utrum*). The relationship of standard Danish grammatical gender categories to biological sex is mostly historical and remote and, therefore, the semantic content of these categories is vague. The non-neuter gender comprises (as one would expect on the background of the other Germanic languages with a gender system) both nouns denoting physical objects and abstract concepts (like *sko* 'shoe', *å* 'river', *glæde* 'joy') and nouns denoting (male or female) persons (like *ven* 'friend', *far* 'father', *datter* 'daughter'). Neuter nouns denote physical objects or abstract concepts (*bord* 'table', *tab* 'loss'), animals (*får* 'sheep') or young humans (*barn* 'child'). This is common in Germanic languages, but in Danish there are also a few neuter nouns that denote persons (*vidne* 'witness', *postbud* 'post(wo)man', *gidsel* 'hostage', *offer* 'victim'), which is less common. On the other hand, Danish has a gender system semantically based on biological sex in the personal pronouns *han* 'he' and *hun* 'she' (as opposed to *den*

'it [non-neuter]' and *det* 'it [neuter]'), which is discussed below.

The Danish gender system can be called covert since gender is not formally marked on the nouns and shows up only in the different inflectional forms for definiteness in the singular, and in the selection of gender in attributive and predicative adjectives, as well as the selection of gender-specific anaphoric pronouns. There are a number of gender related derivational suffixes. A number of them denote biological sex (for example *-inde*, *-ske* '-ess'), others trigger grammatical gender. Thus nouns with the agent suffix *-er* are non-neuter, as are abstract nouns from adjectives with *-hed*. Abstract nouns derived from verbs by the zero suffix are neuter (for example *beløb* 'amount' from *at beløbe sig* 'to amount').

It should be noted that in the dialects spoken in the west of Jutland, a different, semantically non-arbitrary two-way classification exists. In these dialects, definiteness is not marked by a suffix as elsewhere, but by a preposed definite article (usually spelled æ). The article does not distinguish between genders, but attributive demonstratives (*den*, *det*) and anaphorical pronouns do. This gender system is semantically motivated in the sense that one gender (accompanied by *den* 'this') is used for countables, while the other (accompanied by *det* 'this') is used for non-countables, thus *den fisk a fanget i søndags* 'the fish I caught last Sunday' as opposed to *a fik al det fisk a ku spis* 'I got all the fish I could eat'.

Properly speaking this is not a gender system since these demonstratives and pronouns do not categorize nouns lexically in gender classes but classify occurrences of nouns semantically as countable or non-countable. A similar tendency can be observed in the standard language, too. The noun *øl* 'beer' means 'type, brand of beer' when it selects neuter demonstratives and pronouns, as in *Hof er det øl jeg bedst kan lide* 'Hof is the beer I like best'. When it selects non-neuter elements, it means 'glass, bottle of beer', as in *drik så den øl!* 'come on and finish your (lit. this) beer!'

Definiteness
As in the other Scandinavian languages, nouns are inflected for definiteness: they have a 'bare' indefinite form like *hus* 'house', which, among other functions, combines with the indefinite article: *et hus* 'a house'; and they have a definite form *huset* 'the house'. In the singular, neuter and non-neuter nouns select different suffixes in the definite form (*-en* and *-et*), whereas there is no gender difference in the plural.

Lack of Case Marking
Whereas there is a distinction in pronouns (see below) between a non-oblique (nominative, subject) and an oblique (accusative, non-subject) case, there are no corresponding traces of the historical inflectional system of nouns.

Even the suffix *-s* attached to nouns represents a group genitive, not a genitive case. 'My father's house' is *min fars hus* in Danish which might make one think

that there is a genitive form *fars* 'father's' of *far* 'father'. On closer inspection this turns out to be a misunderstanding. Not only can the possessive marker be attached to a whole noun phrase, as in *Kongen af Danmarks bolsjefabrik* 'the King of Denmark's candy factory', which corresponds to the structure of English 'the King of England's daughter'; it is also actually impossible to attach this marker to a noun if there is a post-nominal modifier in the same noun phrase, as in **kongens af Danmark*, while in colloquial language, this marker -*s* can even be attached to non-nominal morphemes such as stranded prepositions, as *med* 'with' in *det er pigen Uffe bor sammen meds datter* 'that's the daughter of the girl Uffe lives with'. This does not mean that the possessive marker can always be attached to the last word in the post-nominal modifier; thus neither **fuglens på taget vinger* 'the bird's on the roof wings' nor **fuglen på tagets vinger* 'the bird on the roof's wings' are possible. In many cases one prefers the use of a prepositional phrase for denoting possession anyway, like *vingerne på fuglen* 'the wings on the bird'.

The -*s*-affix originated of course as a genitive ending (originally only with strong *a*-stems in the singular). It can still be seen as a genitive in fossilized expressions with preposition + genitive: *til søs* 'at sea'. Other fossilized genitives are harder to recognize as such, like the plural genitive *fædrene* in *mine fædrene hus* 'my (fore)fathers' house'.

Number

Regular noun plurals are formed according to one of the following three processes:

Class 1, plural in -*er* (indefinite), -*erne* (definite):

måned 'month'	*måneder* 'months'	*månederne* 'the months'
ske 'spoon'	*skeer* 'spoons'	*skeerne* 'the spoons'
uge 'week'	*uger* 'weeks'	*ugerne* 'the weeks'

Notice that the *e* of the ending is dropped (leaving -*r* as the plural ending) after *e* like in *uger*. This goes, of course, only for written ‹e› when it represents the schwa vowel [ə]; after long [ẹ:] or [ẹ̇:] as in *ske* [sg̊ẹ̇:], the *e* of the ending is not dropped: *skeer, skeerne* 'spoons, the spoons'.

Class 2, plural in -*e* (indefinite), -*ene* (definite)

dag 'day'	*dage* 'days'	*dagene* 'the days'

Class 3, plural in Ø (indefinite), -*ene* (definite)

år 'year'	*år* 'years'	*årene* 'the years'
forsøg 'attempt'	*forsøg* 'attempts'	*forsøgene* 'the attempts'

There is no correlation between gender and plural formation, although most members of class 3 are neuter nouns that are either monosyllabic or denote abstract concepts (often derived from verbs). There are, of course, counter-examples: *mus* 'mouse' is non-neuter with a definite form *musen* 'the mouse', but it has a -Ø plural: *mus* 'mice' – *musene* 'the mice'.

There are a number of irregular plural formations outside these classes. Some nouns form the plural with umlaut (*mand* 'male person' – *mænd* – *mændene, fod* 'foot' – *fødder* – *fødderne*) or completely irregularly (*øje* 'eye' – *øjne* – *øjnene*, actually an old dual).

A few loans use plural forms calqued on the plural forms of the loan-giving language: *en konto* 'account' – *konti* 'accounts'. Loans from Latin ending in *-um* (and some loans from Italian in *-o*) take the Danish plural affix *-er*, but drop this ending before the affix, thus *et studium* 'study' – *studier* 'studies'. There is a tendency to eliminate these irregularities, though; one hears *kontoer* 'accounts' and *kontoerne*; from the plural *studier* a new singular *et studie* has developed.

Pronouns

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns are deictic elements that refer to speech-act participants: in the singular, the first-person pronoun refers to the speaker (*jeg*), the second-person pronoun to the hearer (*du*), and third-person pronouns (*han, hun, den, det*) to persons as well as physical and abstract objects talked about in the speech act. Only third-person pronouns are pro-nouns in a proper sense, since they – over and above this deictic use – can also be used anaphorically and thus stand for (Latin: *pro*) a noun, or more precisely, a noun phrase.

Danish follows a common European pattern in not distinguishing between different kinds of first and second persons (inclusive vs not inclusive, etc.) in the plural: the first-person plural personal pronoun (*vi*) does not distinguish between 'we (several speakers)', 'we (I, the speaker, and you, the hearer(s))', and 'we (I, the speaker, and my associates – not necessarily present)'. Similarly, the second-person plural pronoun (*I*) is used both in the sense of 'you (several hearers)' and 'you (you, the hearer, and your associates – not necessarily present)'. The plural form of the third-person personal pronoun is *de*.

POLITENESS LEVELS
In the second-person pronouns, Danish distinguishes two levels of politeness both in the singular and the plural, a familiar form and a polite form:

	Familiar	*Polite*
Singular	du	De
Plural	I	De

The use of the polite form is more marked than in either Dutch or German. The familiar form is used not only between friends and family, but also at most places of work at least in the public sector (although some private companies seem to develop a distinctive corporate culture involving the use of *De* among personnel and with customers), between politicians, by journalists and in teaching situations. In recent years, the use of the polite form has been gaining some, though not much, ground again.

GENDER AND SEX

Gender with Danish pronouns is only relevant for third-person pronouns in the singular, and it carves out two distinct subsystems of the third-person singular pronoun system.

One subsystem consists of the pronouns *han* 'he' and *hun* 'she' used for people; these pronouns are semantically distinguished by the natural sex of the person referred to. These pronouns can be used both deictically (referring to people present in the speech situation) and anaphorically (referring to people mentioned in the context). The other subsystem consists of the pronouns *den* and *det* which are distinguished by grammatical gender: *den* is used anaphorically for noun phrases with common gender heads, *det* for noun phrases with neuter heads. Both *den* and *det* (which both can be rendered by 'it') can only refer to physical and abstract objects, not to persons. The pronouns for deictic use referring to physical and abstract objects are written the same way as anaphorical *den* and *det*, but there is a difference in pronunciation. Anaphorical *den* and *det* are usually unstressed and therefore subject to phonological reduction, whereas deictic *den* and *det* usually bear stress. *Den* carries *stød* when used deictically ([dɛn']), while neuter *det* [dɛ] lacks a *stød* base and can therefore not carry *stød* even when used deictically and, therefore, stressed.

In anaphorical usage, we thus get the following set of examples:

Det er min kusine. Hun hedder Emma. (feminine, singular)
'This is my cousin. She's called Emma.'

Det er min fætter. Han hedder Kurt. (masculine, singular)
'This is my cousin. He's called Kurt.'

Det er min ny bil. Den har ikke været billig. (non-neuter, singular)
'This is my new car. It hasn't been cheap.'

Det er vores ny hus. Det er lige blevet malet. (neuter, singular)
'This is our new house. It has just been painted.'

Det er vores nye plader. De er faktisk ret gode. (plural)
'These are our new records. They are actually quite good.'

Table 10.3   The case system for Danish personal pronouns

		Singular Non-oblique	Oblique	Plural Non-oblique	Oblique
1st person		jeg	mig	vi	os
2nd person		du	dig	I	jer
3rd person					
[+ human]	m.	han	ham		
	f.	hun	hende	de [di]	dem
[– human]	non n.	den	den		
	n.	det	det		

It should be noted that when reference is made to the type or brand of something, not to the individual, there is no gender anaphora: *Det er min ny bil. Det er en Toyota* 'this is my new car. It is a Toyota' uses *det*, not *den* to refer to the car in the second sentence.

In recent years, the attempt to avoid sexist language use has led to the creation of new pronouns like *han eller hun* 'he or she', while the 'unmarked' use of *han* referring to a person of unspecified or unknown sex is strongly avoided. In the 1970s, it had been suggested that one should create a new pronoun *høn* 's/he' after the model of gender-unspecific Finnish *hän* 's/he', [ø] being the phonetic middle between [a] and [u], but this suggestion has not caught on.

CASE
Pronouns retain two case forms (as summarized in Table 10.3), sometimes called nominative and accusative, since they typically express subjects and objects, as in *jeg elsker dig* 'I love you' vs *han kysser hende* 'he is kissing her', or in the plural: *I keder os* 'you (pl.) bore us'. The term accusative is misleading, though, since apart from the function of expressing direct and indirect objects, the oblique form has a number of other functions as well, like in prepositional phrases (*jeg stoler på dig* 'I trust (in) you'), predicatively (*det er ham* 'it's him'), and in comparisons (*jeg er større end dig* 'I am bigger than you').

Possessive Pronouns
Adjectival pronouns are possessives and demonstratives. The set of possessive pronouns is slightly heterogeneous (the forms are summarized in Table 10.4). There are two types: one type is inflected similarly to adjectives, and consists of *min* 'my', *din* 'your (sg.)', *vor* 'our', *eder* 'your (pl.)' and *sin* 'his/her/its (refl.)'. (For the usage of *sin*, see below.) The other consists of invariable forms, that is *hans* 'his', *hendes* 'her', *vores* 'our', *jeres* 'your (pl.)' and *deres* 'their' (along with *Deres* 'your (polite)'). The latter all end in *-s* and go back to old genitives. The distribution between the two types is

Table 10.4   Summary of forms of Danish adjectival pronouns

		Inflectable Singular	Plural	Invariable Singular	Plural
1st person		min	vor		vores
2nd person		din	(eder)		jeres
3rd person [+ human]	m. f.	} sin		hans hendes	} deres
[– human]	non-n. n.			dens dets	

asymmetrical, though. In some persons and numbers only one form exists (inflectable in the first- and second-person singular, invariable in the second- and third-person plural), whereas there is competition between *vor* and *vores* whose stylistic values differ in an intricate way. (The inflectable second-person plural form *eder* is obsolete.) The inflectable possessives have neuter and plural forms (like *mit, vort*; *mine, vore*).

Demonstratives
Among demonstrative pronouns, Danish originally had a proximity correlation between *denne* 'this' and *hin* 'that', but *hin* is all but obsolete today and survives only in archaic or jocular language, as well as in some fixed phrases like *dette og hint* 'this and that'. In the written language, one distinguishes between two demonstrative adjectives, *den* and *denne*. Both are only inflected for gender (*den* and *denne* are the non-neuter forms, the neuter being *det* and *dette*) and number (*de* and *disse* are the plural forms; gender distinctions as elsewhere are neutralized in the plural). There are no relics of a case inflection, especially no oblique form, although *denne, dette, disse* of course can carry the *-s* of the group genitive when they form noun phrases of their own. *Den* is usually identified with the so-called 'adjective article' (see below), although it occurs without adjectives, e.g. as a correlate of a relative clause like in *det brød som jeg købte i går ...* 'the bread that I bought yesterday ...'.

In the spoken language, the situation is somewhat more complicated. In a way similar to the two forms of the third-person pronoun *den*, attributive *den* also can be distinguished as to whether it has *stød* or not. (Neuter *det* and plural *de* have no *stød* base and cannot carry *stød* for this reason. Plural oblique *dem* has a *stød* base, but is not lexically marked for *stød*.) *Stød*-less *den* is anaphorical and *den* with *stød* is used deictically.

Unstressed *den, det* and *de* are also used as the so-called 'adjective article' (which is discussed below in connection with the definiteness inflection of adjectives).

Reflexive Pronouns

There are two sets of personal reflexive pronouns (*sig* and *mig selv*, etc.), and one reflexive possessive adjective (*sin*). The personal reflexive pronouns only have an oblique form, for obvious reasons. The first set consists only of the special oblique form *sig* which is used indiscriminately for persons and physical as well as abstract objects in the singular and the plural, that is, it functions as the reflexive oblique of *han, hun, den, det* and *de*. The second set consists of all the oblique forms of personal pronouns (but with *sig* substituting for *ham, hende, den* and *det*) with *selv* 'self' appended.

The difference between these two sets is the following: *sig* is only used with true reflexive verbs, that is, those where *at* V *sig* does not imply *to* V *somebody or something*. To begin with, these are those verbs that can only be used reflexively, like *at brokke sig* 'to complain', *at blære sig* 'to boast', *at skamme sig* 'to be ashamed'. But *sig* also occurs with verbs that can be used transitively, but which have an at least slightly modified meaning when used reflexively, like *at more sig* 'to have fun' (as opposed to *at more nogen* 'to amuse somebody') or *at kede sig* 'to be bored' (as opposed to *at kede nogen* 'to bore somebody'). On the other hand, *mig selv, sig selv*, etc. are used with ordinary transitive verbs under referential identity of subject and object: *jeg spørger mig selv* 'I'm asking myself', *hun hader sig selv* 'she hates herself'.

It should be noted that the reflexive of plural *de* is *sig* or *sig selv*, while the reflexive of the polite second-person singular and plural pronoun either is *Dem* and *Dem selv* or *sig* and *sig selv*.

The possessive adjective *sin* is only used for singular possessor referents, thus *han har glemt sin hat* 'he forgot his hat'. In the plural, *deres* is used: *de glemte deres barn* (not **sit barn*) 'they forgot their child'.

Adjectives

Strong and Weak Forms

Danish adjectives come in two forms, 'strong' and 'weak'. The strong form is inflected for number and gender (the distinction non-neuter vs neuter is neutralized in the plural, though). There is no inflection for case, as one by now would suspect. The suffix of the weak form is invariably *-e*. It occurs after the adjective article and possessive pronouns, and before proper names: *den lange march* 'the long march', *det grådige barn* 'the greedy child', *de gamle dage* 'the old days', *gamle Tobias* 'old Tobias'. Unlike in the other mainland Scandinavian languages, adjectives cannot be combined with a definite noun. If a definite noun phrase contains an adjective, the adjective is in the weak form preceded by the so-called adjective article. Proper names can either take the article before a weak adjective or leave it out: *den gamle Ole* '[the] old Ole' vs *gamle Tobias* 'old Tobias', also with geographical names: *det nye London* 'the new London' vs *dejlige København* 'wonderful Copenhagen'. Geographical names which are inherently definite like *Tyrkiet*

'Turkey', *Østen* 'the East', *Sovjetunionen* 'the Soviet Union', take the neuter adjective article even when their definiteness ending is non-neuter *-en*: *det forhenværende Sovjetunionen* 'the former Soviet Union', *det fjerne Østen* 'the Far East'.

Strong forms are used when the adjective is used predicatively, after the indefinite article, and when the noun phrase is non-definite and has no article: *mine børn er syge* 'my children are ill', *et sygt forslag* 'a sick proposal', *stort besvær* 'big trouble'.

The suffixes are:

	Singular	*Plural*
Non-neuter	-Ø	
Neuter	-t	-e

There are a number of adjectives that show irregular features. *Lille* 'small' has only one form (strong and weak, non-neuter and neuter) in the singular and has the suppletive plural *små*. Most adjectives ending in a vowel like *blå* 'blue', *grå* 'grey', *ublu* 'shameless' do not take the suffix *-e*, although *ny* 'new' sometimes does. Adjectives in *-t*, *-sk* and unstressed *-e* do not take the strong neuter suffix *-t*. Some adjectives in *-d* or stressed vowel take the strong neuter suffix (e.g. *godt* [g̊ɒd] from *god* [g̊oː] 'good', *blåt* [b̥lɒd̥] from *blå* [b̥lɔː] 'blue'), some do not (e.g. *glad* 'happy', *snu* 'smart').

Comparison
Comparison of adjectives is by adding the suffix *-(e)re* for the comparative and *-(e)st* for the superlative. A number of adjectives have suppletive forms like *god* 'good' – *bedre* 'better' – *bedst* 'best', and three adjectives have umlaut in their otherwise regular comparative and superlative: *stor* 'big' – *større* – *størst*, *ung* 'young' – *yngre* – *yngst*, and *lang* 'long' – *længere* – *længst*. Some adjectives (those that have unstressed *e* in the last syllable, like *rusten* 'rusty' or *fælles* 'common', and those formed with the suffix *-(i)sk* '-ish') do not have inflected comparatives and superlatives but have periphrastic forms instead: *mere rusten, mest rusten*.

Verbs
Danish verbs have relatively few inflectional categories. There is no marking of number or person, although the distinction between singular and plural forms of the verb was maintained in the written language until the last century (although even the first Danish grammarians in the sixteenth century had noticed that the spoken language did not make this distinction any more). There is a tense opposition between a non-past (commonly called present) and a past, over and above which forms which usually are considered compound tenses exist as well. There is a synthetic and an analytic passive; some verbs also form a middle form

similar to, but not identical with, the synthetic passive. There are only two moods, a non-marked mood (indicative) and an imperative; in some fossilized expressions, remnants of an old optative can be found. Finite forms (of which there are only two, non-past and past) combine with subjects; the infinitive takes objects, but no subjects. There are two participial forms. The first (for example *leende* 'laughing') is either used as a verbal adjective with the meaning of an active present participle or joins certain verbs in an auxiliary construction, for example *de kom marcherende* 'they came marching'. The second functions both as an adjectival form (and is inflected in this case) and as a supine. The adjectival form is usually only formed from perfective transitive verbs and has a past passive meaning (for example *stegte ænder* 'fried ducks'). From the supine the compound tenses of the perfect system are formed (for example, *spist* 'eaten' in *har spist* 'has eaten').

Danish verbs are usually quoted in the infinitive with the infinitive marker which is written *at*, but (except in the most distinct pronunciation) pronounced *å* [ɒ], like *at svømme* 'to swim'.

Morphological Verb Classes

Danish verbs can be divided into a number of morphological classes on the basis of the formation of the present finite form and the past finite form.

Formation of the present finite form divides the bulk of verbs into two: those with the ending *-(e)r* and those without an ending. The former group is by far the biggest and comprises all verbs with the exception of a group of 'core' modal verbs (e.g. *at kunne, jeg kan* 'I can') and the verb *at vide* 'to know', *jeg ved* 'I know' which can be considered preterite-presents. Not all verbs that syntactically have properties of modal verbs (such as taking infinitives without *at*) belong to the latter morphological class. This group of verbs form their past tense in a number of ways, most of which involve a dental element similar to that of weak verbs (*jeg vidste* 'I knew', *jeg burde* 'I should have', *jeg måtte* 'I had to'), while with others, the dental element is either only present orthographically (*jeg turde* [toːɐ] 'I dared') or has been discarded even in writing (*jeg skulle* 'I should', which was written *skulde* in the pre-1948 spelling).

The group that marks its present finite with *-(e)r* can be subdivided according to the formation of past finite form. The first subgroup are strong verbs that form the past with ablaut, as *jeg giver* 'I give' : *jeg gav* 'I gave'. The second subgroup forms the past finite with some dental element, either *-ede* (the unmarked and only productive subgroup), as in *jeg husker* 'I remember' : *jeg huskede* 'I remembered', or *-te* as in *jeg glemmer* 'I forget' : *jeg glemte* 'I forgot'. Past formation with *-te* sometimes combines with vowel changes, too: *jeg sælger* 'I sell' : *jeg solgte* 'I sold'. Somewhat apart from these group stand the only two modestly irregular verbs *at være* 'to be' and *at have* 'to have', both of which also are used as auxiliaries, and which have some suppletive forms.

Verbs ending on a stressed vowel in the infinitive like *at bo* 'to live (dwell)', *at sy* 'to sow', *at betro* 'to confide', *at bestå* 'to consist of' have some phonetically conditioned peculiarities; they do not take *-er* as a present finite ending, but *-r*. Apart from that, they do not form a consistent morphological class; some of them take dental suffixes in the past tense (*boede, syede, betroede*) while some have strong past forms (*bestod*).

Tense
Like many other Germanic languages, Danish only has a structural opposition between two tenses: a present and a past. The present tense is really a non-past, since it also is the most common way of referring to the future: *jeg kommer i morgen* 'I'm coming tomorrow', *jeg går nu* 'I'm going now'. The past is the narrative tense (*der var engang* ... 'there was one time ...'), but it is also used in general for specific (as opposed to existential) past time reference.

The past tense does not necessarily have past time reference. It is also used in the protasis of counterfactual conditionals: *hvis jeg vandt i lotto, ville jeg købe dig en Mazda* 'if I won in the pools, I'd buy you a Mazda'.

There are additional compound forms that can be used for time reference. The modals *skal* and *vil*, which normally have the full meaning of obligation and volition, can be used with an extremely attenuated modal sense which makes *skal* (or *vil*) + infinitive come close in meaning to a future tense. Thus, a newspaper headline like *Argentina vil vinde i aften* 'Argentine will win tonight' is irresolvably ambiguous between a modal reading 'Argentine wants to win tonight' and a temporal reading 'Argentine is going to win tonight'. However, there is a difference between the latter and the pure future time reference of the non-past: *Argentina vinder i aften* 'Argentine is winning tonight'. The expression using the non-past conveys much more certainty than the modal expression.

It should be noted that this modal expression of future time reference sometimes is expressed by the modal verb alone: *jeg skal i biffen i aften* (lit.) 'I shall into the cinema tonight' (i.e. 'I'm going to the movies tonight') or *jeg vil af* (lit.) 'I want off' (i.e. 'I want to get off') are very common.

Danish has a compound form similar to the other Germanic perfects, which occurs both in a present (perfect) and past (pluperfect) form. It consists of one of the auxiliaries *at have* or *at være* and the non-inflected past participle (supine). The choice of the auxiliary is determined by a basic rule that *at være* is used with perfective intransitive verbs and *at have* with the rest. It should be noted that perfectivity here is not an inherent property of the verb stem (as in German), but can vary according to context. A verb like *at gå* 'to go' can therefore both form a perfect with *at være*: *jeg er gået* 'I'm gone' and with *at have*: *jeg har gået i en time* 'I've been walking for an hour'.

The difference between past reference by the simple past tense and the present perfect is basically that the perfect does not refer to some specific

point of time (as in a narrative chain, or like a point specified by some time adverbial or just by shared knowledge of speaker and hearer about a past course of events), but just to some unspecified point in the past. Thus *har du set Casablanca?* (perfect) 'have you seen Casablanca?' asks if the hearer ever has seen Michael Curtiz' film (at some point of time), while *så du Casablanca?* (past) 'did you see Casablanca?' inquires about watching the film at some established point of time (such as when it was on TV last night).

The perfect is also used when the time span referred to begins in the past but extends to, and includes, the moment of utterance. *hvor længe har I ventet her?* corresponds to English 'how long have you been waiting here?' (with perfect), but German 'wie lange wartet ihr hier (schon)?' (with present).

Aspect

There is no synthetic verbal expression of aspect in Danish, but there are a number of fairly systematic ways of marking aspectual distinctions.

The expression *at være ved at* + infinitive takes on two distinct meanings depending on the *aktionsart* of the verb. With durative verbs, it has a progressive meaning 'to be doing something', as in *han var ved at skrive et brev* 'he was writing a letter'. With perfective verbs it has an ingressive meaning 'to be about to do something' as in *han var ved at dø* 'he was about to die' (*not* 'he was dying').

An alternative to the *at være ved at* + infinitive construction is the combination of a verb of position or movement like *gå* 'walk', *sidde* 'sit', *gå rundt* 'go around', *ligge* 'to lie' followed by *og* 'and' and a verb: *han sad og læste et brev* (lit.) 'he sat and read a letter', 'he was reading a letter'.

Mood

The only mood contrast in Danish is the contrast between the indicative and the imperative. The imperative has one form, which is the same for singular and plural, for example *syng* from *synge* 'to sing'. In some formulae like *længe leve dronningen!* 'long live the queen!', *man tage tre skefuld hjortetaksalt ...* (lit.) 'take (lit. one should take) three teaspoonfuls of potassium chloride ...', and a couple of oaths like *kraft æde mig!* 'cancer may eat me!', an optative survives. Modality is expressed by modal verbs and (as in counterfactual conditionals) by the past tense.

Voice

Danish has two passive voices: a synthetic passive ending in *-s*, and an analytic one with the auxiliary *at blive*; thus *den avis læses af tusinder af mennesker* 'this newspaper is read by thousands of people' vs *avisen blev læst straks efter den var kommet* 'the paper was read right after it had arrived'. The synthetic passive usually refers to generalized or objectively known facts, whereas the analytic passive refers to single specific events, usually within the speaker's experience. Accordingly, the two forms of passive trigger different

readings (usually epistemic vs non-epistemic) of modal verbs with multiple readings: *dette æg kan ikke spises* 'this egg cannot be eaten (i.e. is not edible)' (non-epistemic) as opposed to *dette æg kan ikke blive spist* 'this egg cannot be eaten (i.e. it is inconceivable that it will be eaten)' (epistemic).

Some verbs form a middle which is often spelled like the synthetic passive but is pronounced with a shortened vowel or loss of [ə]. This form has usually a special meaning (sometimes without an associated active), as in: *bilen skal synes* [sy:nəs] 'the car has to be inspected' vs *jeg synes* [syn's] *du har ret* 'I think (i.e. it appears to me) you are right', or it is a reflexive/reciprocal: *vi skilles* [vi sĝ̊eləs] 'we are being separated' vs *vi skilles* [vi sĝ̊el's] 'we part ways', *vi slås* [vi slɔ:s] *altid* 'we always lose (lit. are beaten)' vs *vi slås* [vi slɒs] *altid* 'we always fight'.

The past (and the even rarer compound tenses) of the -*s* form is almost invariably the past of the middle: *vi syntes* 'we thought', but not **bilerne synedes hvert andet år* 'the cars were inspected every second year'.

Summary of Forms
The Danish verb does not have many distinct inflectional forms. The verb *at slå* 'to hit' has the following eight forms; it should be noticed that there are only six orthographically distinct forms and seven phonetically distinct forms:

Infinitive (= Optative)	*slå* [slɔ̈]
Present Finite	*slår* [slʌ̈]
Imperative	*slå* [slʌ̈]
Past Finite	*slog* [slö]
Present Participle	*slående* ['slɔənə] (less distinct: ['slɔɔnə])
Passive	*slås* [slɔ̈s]
Middle	*slås* [slɒs]
Past Particle	*slået* [slɔːð]

In the case of *slå*, infinitive and imperative are written identically, which is not the case with all verbs (cf. *komme* 'to come' vs *kom* 'come!'). On the other hand, not all verbs have all these forms (the middle is only formed by a handful of verbs), and for some verbs there are even more systematic syncretisms. Thus for many verbs whose stem ends in -*r*, the present finite, infinitive and imperative forms are identical: *kører, køre* and *kør!* all are [kø̈ɐ̯]. (The infinitive *køre* 'drive' also has a stylistically marked, more formal variant [kø:ʁə].)

Adjectival adverbs are identical to the neuter singular form of the strong adjective: *hun synger dejligt* 'she sings beautifully', where *dejligt* is identical to the neuter form of the adjective *dejlig* like in *et dejligt hus* 'a beautiful house'.

Adverbs

Adverbs can themselves form comparatives and superlatives very much like adjectives where this makes sense, like *ofte* 'often' – *oftere* – *oftest*. Some adverbs (like *nede* 'down') form adjectival comparatives and superlatives (*nedre* 'lower' and *nederst* 'lowest').

There is, finally, a systematic correlation between static and dynamic adverbs of place that sometimes has been considered a type of inflection. Thus to dynamic *op* 'up(wards)' corresponds static *oppe* 'on top'. Similarly *han gik ud* 'he went out' vs *han var ude* 'he was out'.

10.4   Syntax

Danish belongs to the type of language commonly known as 'verb second', a term that is derived from the placement of the finite verb in the standard constituent order of declarative main clauses.

'Main Clause' Word Order and Constituent Functions

A minimal Danish main clause consists of a subject (which is obligatory in all finite clauses, except in those whose finite verb is in the imperative), and a finite verb: *pigen lo* 'the girl laughed'. The finite verb takes the second position in the clause, i.e. it is (topologically) the second constituent. If the verb consists of a finite and an infinite part, the finite verb (the auxiliary) remains in second position and the non-finite verb follows: *pigen er gået* 'the girl has left'. In a maximal main clause, there are two more positions between the finite and non-finite verb, as well as two positions following the non-finite verb. Adding a '0' position preceding the first constituent, we get as the maximal topological structure of a Danish sentence the following:

Og	ham	havde	Per	ikke	skænket	en tanke	i årevis.
(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

'And him Per hadn't given a thought for years.'

The first position, (0), is external to the clause proper and can only be filled by connectors. Position (1) can be filled by most (though not all) phrases that can form clause constituents. If the subject is not in (1), its only alternative placement is in position (3), as in the above sentence. Position (3), in its turn, can only be filled by subjects. Position (4) is the position of certain classes of adverbials, mostly sentence adverbials, and of negation. Position (5) is the position of the non-finite verb. Position (6) is the position for indirect and direct objects. Finally, position (7) is another position for adverbials, so-called 'content' adverbials.

Strictly speaking, positions (6) and (7) are sequences of positions. They can be multiply filled and there is at least a partial ordering between different

types of potential fillers. For example, indirect objects precede direct objects in (6).

Principles of Danish Main-clause Topology
There are four principles that govern the topology of the Danish declarative main clause. The first principle is that some elements only can occur in fixed positions. For those elements, topological position and grammatical function are directly tied to each other. This is the case with connectors in position (0), finite verbs in position (2), and elements that modify the whole predication rather than the predicate and that can only occur in position (4). (These include focus particles and adverbials that express polarity and degrees of certainty.) In particular, these elements can never occur in position (1).

The second principle is that for some positions, the position determines which grammatical relation the element in this position carries to the sentence, while the element itself can occur in several positions and, accordingly, can carry different grammatical relations. Noun phrases can occur in a number of positions: (1), (3), (4), (6) and (7). Apart from noun phrases in position (1), the grammatical function of the noun phrase is determined by the position it occurs in: a noun phrase in position (3) is a subject. A noun phrase in position (6) is a direct or indirect object. A noun phrase in positions (4) or (7) is an adverbial.

The third principle is that topological position also can mark pragmatic functions. An element that is placed in position (1) rather than (3), (4), (5), (6) or (7), is marked for certain discourse-pragmatic functions.

Finally, as a fourth principle, stress can disambiguate pragmatic functions. (Remember that Danish has no sentence stress; we are talking about emphatic or contrastive stress here.) Thus an unstressed noun phrase in position (1) would usually be a given topic, while a stressed noun phrase in the same position would be a contrasted focus.

These four principles are in part crossed by a principle of a different kind, sometimes referred to as the 'weight principle' which states that under certain conditions, 'light' constituents can occur in a position further to the left from the position they would occur in, according to the principles mentioned before, whereas 'heavy' constituents (most often long subordinate clauses) can occur in extraposition to the right of position (7). The light constituents affected by the weight principle are unstressed pronouns (*ham* 'him') or deictic adverbs (*her* 'here') which can be attached clitically to a finite main verb: *jeg 'kender ham ikke* 'I don't *know* him' as opposed to *jeg kender ikke 'ham* 'I don't know *him*'. Similarly some sentence adverbs which never can carry stress like *jo* (Ger. *ja*), *nok* 'probably', and others, can occur between a finite verb in position (2) and a subject in position (3), if the latter is not an unstressed pronoun.

Syntactic and Pragmatic Function Assignment

The assignment of syntactic and pragmatic functions is not unambiguous, though. On the one hand, in a topologically not maximally filled clause, some positions are indistinguishable. In *han husker hele dagen* 'he remembers the whole day', *hele dagen* 'the whole day; all day' is an object and thus in position (6); in *han synger hele dagen* 'he sings all day', it is an adverb and thus in position (7). When only one of the two positions (6) and (7) is filled, they are not distinguishable topologically (since their only topological difference is their relative order). Therefore, it is not the placement of *hele dagen* that unambiguously determines its grammatical function as adverbial or object. If more positions in the sentence are filled, positions become more easily distinguishable. Neither in

Han	har	arbejdet	på en løsning	hele dagen.
(1)	(2)	(5)	(7^1)	(7^2)

'He has been working on a solution all day.'

nor in

Han	har	hele dagen	arbejdet	på en løsning.
(1)	(2)	(4)	(5)	(7)

(lit.) 'He has all day worked on a solution.'

is it possible for *hele dagen* to be object: in the first case, because it follows a constituent occupying another subposition of position (7) (thus cannot be in position (6), the position for objects), and in the second case, because it is in position (4) which cannot be filled by objects.

On the other hand, since position (1) basically allows itself to be filled by all kinds of constituents that can be marked pragmatically (to the exclusion only of connectors, the finite verb itself which is fixed in position (2), and certain elements otherwise in position (4) that do not allow for pragmatic marking), placement in position (1) neutralizes all markings of grammatical relations:

Hele dagen	var	ødelagt.
(1)	(2)	(5)

'The whole day was destroyed.'

Hele dagen	tænker	han	på dig.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(7)

'The whole day he is thinking of you.'

Hele dagen	huskede	jeg	ikke.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

'The whole day I didn't remember.'

All have *helen dagen* in position (1), while this noun phrase is subject, adverbial and direct object, respectively.

Since position (1), which marks its constituents for pragmatic functions, neutralizes grammatical functions, it is only by other than by topological means that grammatical functions of elements in position (1) can be determined. Infinite verbs are, of course, always recognizable as such, also in position (1). Personal pronouns have special non-subject forms, and since these forms mark a pronoun as object even when they occur in position (1), a pronoun can be unambiguously object even in position (1), as in *ham husker jeg* 'him I remember' as distinguished from *han husker mig* 'he remembers me'. (Strictly speaking, they are marked as non-subjects, and it is the verb and the type of argument it takes that single out these non-subjects as objects rather than, for example, predicatives.) This disambiguation is not possible with non-pronominal noun phrases. *Min tante husker min bedstemor* is ambiguous between 'my aunt remembers my grandmother' and 'my grandmother remembers my aunt'. (In isolation, one would always assume that this sentence could only have the first reading, but this is far from the case in connected discourse.)

Objects and Adverbials

Danish verbs can take two objects as in *han gav hende kurven* 'he gave her the basket' which can be distinguished as indirect and direct object (in that order), although there is no morphological marking on either of them. They are topologically distinguished by internal ordering within position (6), and of course by the different ways in which the two kinds of objects relate to other constructions (passive, etc.). There is also a kind of dative shift since *han gav kurven til hende* 'he gave the basket to her' is possible, too. It is disputed, though, whether *til hende* 'to her' is an adverbial or a prepositional object. Prepositional phrases like *på perronen* 'on the platform' can, in principle, stand in two different kinds of grammatical relations. They can be arguments of the verb, like in *Lars venter på toget* 'Lars is waiting for the train' and they can be non-argument modifiers of the whole clause of the verb like in *Lars venter på perronen* 'Lars is waiting on the platform'. In the latter, *på* has its full meaning of 'on, touching a surface from above', and is in contrast with prepositions denoting other spatial relationships like *i tunnellen* 'in the tunnel' or *ved billetlugen* 'at the ticket counter'. In the former, *på* it is governed by the verb of which it is an argument, hence the verb selects the preposition; *på* is in contrast with zero: *Lars venter toget* 'Lars is expecting the train'.

It is doubtful, though, if a sentence like *Lars venter på toget* can be said to contain a prepositional object. At least topologically we cannot consider *på toget* an object, since it has all the topological properties of a true adverbial. If *på ham* 'for him' in a sentence like *han har ventet på ham hele dagen* 'he has been waiting for him all day' were an object, one could assume that it is

in position (6), followed by *hele dagen* 'all day' in position (7). That this is not possible is demonstrated by the same sentence with an added adverbial like *utålmodigt* 'impatiently'. *utålmodigt* is placed before *på ham*, and since an adverb like *utålmodigt* only can occur in positions (4) or (7), *på ham* must be an adverbial too, since it occurs after an element in position (7), thus having to be in position (7) itself.

Han	har	ventet	utålmodigt	på ham	hele dagen.
(1)	(2)	(5)	(7^1)	(7^2)	(7^3)

Semantically, and as far as government of the preposition is concerned, there is of course a significant difference between *på toget* 'for the train' in *Lars venter på toget* and *på perronen* 'on the platform' in *Lars venter på perronen* because of the difference in the argument status of the constituent. This semantic difference has indirect topological consequences. Prepositional phrases whose preposition is governed by the verb usually 'strand' their preposition when they are pragmatically marked by placement in position (1): thus it is usually *på perronen ventede Lars* 'on the platform, Lars was waiting', but *toget ventede Lars på* 'the train, Lars was waiting for'. These prepositional phrases can hardly occur in position (4) either, although many other prepositional phrases can: *det har han under ingen omstændigheder tænkt sig at gøre* (lit.) 'this he has under no circumstances thought of doing'.

A bare noun phrase functioning as an object is in its expected place, namely, position (6), like *ham* in the following sentence:

Han	har	ventet	ham	utålmodigt	hele dagen.
(1)	(2)	(5)	(6)	(7^1)	(7^2)

'He was expecting him impatiently all day.'

The contrast between zero in this sentence and a preposition (as in the sentence quoted above) is generally used to express *aktionsart* differences, cf. *hun skød pianisten* 'she shot the piano player' (telic) vs *hun skød på pianisten* 'she shot at the piano player' (atelic); or *han skrev en bog* 'he wrote a book' (telic) vs *han skrev på en bog* 'he was writing a book' (atelic).

'Non-declarative' and 'Subordinate Clause' Word Order

The topological schema sketched so far is traditionally associated with declarative main clauses. There is a variant of this topological schema, which is associated with non-declarative main clauses, and a different schema associated with subordinate clauses.

The traditional subordinate clause schema distinguishes itself from the schema discussed so far on three counts. First, the connector position can be filled by both coordinating and subordinating connectors, in that order. Second, pragmatic marking by placement of other elements than subjects into

field (1) is excluded. Third, the adverbials placed in position (4) in the schema above are placed before the finite verb. This results in a new schema:

og	at	han	ikke	havde	set	ham	i går
(0^1)	(0^2)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(5)	(6)	(7)

(lit.) 'and that he hadn't seen him yesterday'

What is problematic with the traditional view that associates this second schema with subordinate clauses and the first one with main clauses is not only that the unrestricted main clause schema only applies to some main clauses (declaratives and *wh*-questions), while other main clauses (imperatives and yes/no questions) block the filling of position (1) which has to be empty. (In declarative main clauses, position (1) has to be filled obligatorily. In *wh*-questions, it is the *wh*-word that fills the position.) The problem is rather that the first schema also occurs in subordinate clauses (complement clauses introduced with *at* 'that'), while its variant with empty position (1) appears in conditional clauses without connector: *kommer han, går jeg* 'if he comes, I'll leave'. To complicate things further, there is a class of emotional and exclamatory main clauses that has subordinate clause topology as in:

Bare	hun	ikke	taber	den.
(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

'If only she doesn't lose it.'

These sentences all have some connector; sentence adverbs like *måske* 'maybe', or frozen verbal elements like *sæt* 'given [that]' in position (1) but negation as well as other sentence adverbs are placed before the finite verb as in subordinate clauses. (Some sentence adverbs like *desværre* 'regrettably' or *næppe* 'hardly' which only occur with declarative sentence mood and whose occurrence in subordinate clauses is restricted, do not appear in this type of main clause either.)

Keeping in mind that both 'main clause' topology (both with and without filled position (1)) and 'subordinate' clause topology can be found both in independent and dependent clauses, we can chart the possible combinations as in Table 10.5. The traditional view is justified by the fact that the two clause types marked in bold are by far the most common ones. Examples like these fit with the traditional assumption that typological schemata code syntactic clause types (root vs constituent clauses). But the other types exist, too. To talk about main-clause and subordinate-clause topology is therefore a misnomer and it is more appropriate to ask what functions the three topological schemata A^1, A^2 and B have, if they do not code syntactic clause types. It appears that type A^2 and B have in common that they represent non-declarative sentence moods: the imperative, the interrogative, and the emotive/exclamatory in main clauses. Type A^1, on the other hand, represents

(in main clauses) either a straightforward declarative, or a *wh*-interrogative. Subordinate clauses do not have independent illocutionary force, so it would be natural to expect them to have sentence types A² or B, but after certain verbs of assertion like *sige* 'say', or evidence expressions *det er tydeligt* 'it's clear', *det viser sig* 'it emerges', the illocutionary force of the main clause carries over to the subordinate clause which motivates the use of the declarative schema A¹ also in subordinate clauses.

The open question is why *wh*-questions, although non-declarative, follow topological schema A¹. If one doesn't consider it accidental that *wh*-questions share their topological model with declaratives (in which case the topological schemata did not represent sentence moods, but were assigned to syntactic and semantic sentence types in a random fashion), one could argue that there is at least one illocutionary property that declaratives share with *wh*-interrogatives. *Wh*-interrogatives presuppose the truth of some open clause for some variable assignment; they do not question the truth of the clause but demand a variable assignment for a clause whose truth is presupposed under some assignment. In this sense they share some sentence

Table 10.5   Danish clause types and topological patterns

	A¹ 'Main clause' topology	A² 'Main clause' topology without position (1)	B 'Subordinate clause' topology
Main clauses	Declarative: *Klaus er ikke kommet.* 'Klaus has not come' *Wh*-questions: *Hvem er ikke kommet?* 'Who has not come?'	Imperative: *Kom ikke hjem!* 'Don't come home!' Yes/no question: *Kommer han ikke?* 'Is he not coming?'	Emotive-exclamatory: *Gid Klaus ikke var kommet!* 'I wish Klaus hadn't come!'
Subordinate clauses	Complements of declarative verbs: *(Hun sagde) at han er ikke kommet i dag.* '(She said) that he hasn't come today'	Conditional: *Er han ikke kommet, (bliver jeg sur.)* 'If he hasn't come, I'll turn sour'	Complement: *(Han tror) at Klaus ikke er kommet i dag.* '(He thinks) that Klaus hasn't come today' Adverbial: *Når Klaus ikke er kommet, plejer han at være syg.* 'When Klaus hasn't come, he is usually ill'

mood with declaratives. Of course there is no reason why a language has to treat declaratives and *wh*-questions alike; but if it does (as Danish does) it makes sense.

Another question is what the motivation is for a different treatment of topological patterns A² and B, namely, whether they can be assigned to two distinguishable, but internally consistent classes of sentence mood. This does not seem to be the case. But it has to be noted that type B is a relatively new development. Superficially, the placement of negation and certain adverbials in a different position from clauses with assertive mood could remind one of the finite-verb-final (SOV) pattern in subordinate clauses in Dutch, German and Old English. But apart from not being exclusively associated with subordination at all, this pattern is not a remnant of an older, more general topological pattern that has survived in subordinate clauses alone. On the contrary, it is a relatively new development. In this sense, schemata A² and B could be said to represent historically different stages of language development (B being younger than A²) and not a mood distinction within the non-declarative illocutionary class. Historically, A² occurred not only (as today) with the imperative, but also with other, now obsolete, inflectional characterizations of mood, like the optative.

Pragmatic Marking in Pre-verbal Position
Previously it was said that position (1) has the function of pragmatic marking. 'Marking' is to be understood both as low pragmatic prominence and as high pragmatic prominence; placement in position (1) can indeed have both functions. Low pragmatic prominence is typical for discourse-induced, i.e. given topics, and very often these topics are found in position (1), such as anaphoric pronouns, time and place adverbials denoting a 'setting', temporal adverbial clauses, and conditionals: *men han kunne ikke huske det* 'but he couldn't remember that', *i går var hun syg* 'yesterday, she was ill', *i Odense drikkes der Albani* 'in Odense Albani is drunk', *når jeg ringer, er hun nok klar* 'when I ring, she's probably ready', *hvis han husker det, skriver han nok* 'if he remembers to, he'll write'. In combination with marked stress, position (1) is for contrast: *Peter så jeg ikke, men Hans* 'Peter I didn't see, but Hans', *Japan er et ørige, men det er Korea ikke* 'Japan is an island empire, but Korea isn't'. Only in the latter case – which resembles the 'external topics' talked about in Functional grammar – does placement in position (1) resemble English topicalization.

By contrast, position (1) is not the place for another kind of pragmatically marked constituents, namely, focus constituents. In *jeg har vundet i lotto* 'I won in the pools', *i lotto* 'in the pools' is pragmatically marked as focus, but a placement in position (1) would sound awkward, *i lotto har jeg vundet*, unless some continuation follows (that is, unless some contrast is involved). The only focus elements allowed in position (1) are *wh*-words in *wh*-questions.

Dummy der *in Pre-verbal Position*

There are clauses that do not contain pragmatically marked (i.e. given or contrasted) elements. If these clauses are in the declarative sentence mood, they have to follow topological pattern A^1 and therefore have to have a filled position (1) lest they be reinterpreted as non-declaratives. In some of these cases, namely, in intransitive main clauses with indefinite subjects, a dummy *der* [dɒ] (phonetically reduced from the distal deictic adverb *der* [dę:ɐ̯] 'there') is introduced in position (1) of the clause. This is the case in sentences that contain only non-presupposed material, i.e. so-called all-new sentences, for example: *der kom en pige ind i huset* 'a girl came into the house' (lit. 'there came a girl into the house'), or in presentative existentials like *der findes mange smitsomme sygdomme* 'there are many contagious diseases'. The dummy *der* can not be used as a position (1) filler in transitive clauses nor in clauses with definite subjects.

Subordinate-clause Constituents Raised to Pre-verbal Position

What is placed in position (1) of a main clause can be a constituent of a subordinate clause, as long as it is not the subject of that clause since a subject cannot be removed from a finite clause. Thus *ham ved jeg du stoler på* 'him I know you trust' shows the following topological patterns for main and subordinate clause:

	Ham$_i$	ved	jeg	du	stoler	på e$_i$.
A^1	(1)	(2)	(3)	(6)		
B				(1)	(2)	(7)

That extraction in Danish works in a less limited fashion than in English (not to speak of languages like Dutch and German) has been noted and discussed by linguists.

Subordination

From what just has been said it has become clear that there is no particular pattern of clause topology that distinguishes main and subordinate clauses except for the lack of possibilities for the pragmatic marking of constituents (which is a consequence of the lack of independent illocutionary force rather than of subordination *per se*), and the presence of subordination markers. Finite subordination markers are the usual set of adverbial clause-introducing connectors like *når* '(always) when', *hvis* 'if', *da* '(then) when' (Ger. *als*), *fordi* 'because', *selv om* 'even though', as well as the complementizers *at* 'that' and *om* 'whether'. Infinite subordination markers are the infinitive marker *at* 'to' as well as a number of complex subordinators of the type preposition + *at*, e.g. *uden at* 'without' and *for at* 'in order to'. It should be noted that the finite complementizer *at* and the infinitive marker *at* are spelled the same but are pronounced differently: the former is [að, a] while the latter

is [ʌ] and thus phonetically identical with a reduced (not stressed) form of the coordinating connector *og* [ʌɰ, ʌ] 'and'.

It was mentioned above that *wh*-words like *hvem* 'who', *hvor* 'where' or *hvorfor* 'why' are the only focus elements that can be placed into position (1) in sentence schema A¹. In subordinate clauses, position (1) is the subject position and not a position for pragmatically marked material. Accordingly, *wh*-words in indirect questions are placed in the connector position (0). This goes even for *wh*-words that are subjects, which leaves an open position (1) to be filled by the dummy *der*:

	De	vidste	ikke	hvem	der	var	kommet
A¹	(1)	(2)	(4)	(6)			
B				(0)	(1)	(3)	(4)

'They didn't know who had come.'

Thus one can distinguish between *de spurgte hvem Peter var* 'they asked who Peter was' where *hvem* 'who' is predicative and *Peter* 'Peter' subject, and *de spurgte hvem der var Peter* 'they asked which (of them) was Peter', where *hvem* is subject but not in subject position and has to be followed by a dummy *der* in position (1).

Relative Clauses

Relative clauses are introduced by the relative particle *som*: *jeg kender en mand som du ville elske at møde* 'I know a man that you would love to meet', *jeg kender en mand som hans søster har været gift med* 'I know a man that his sister has been married to'. If the subject is the target of the relative clause, *som* can take its place: *jeg kender en mand som bor i Helsingør* 'I know a man that lives in Elsinore'. There are also *som*-less relative clauses: *jeg kender en mand du ville elske at møde* 'I know a man you would love to meet', *jeg kender en mand hans søster har været gift med* 'I know a man his sister has been married to'. In their case, the subject position has to be filled with *der*: *jeg kender en mand der bor i Helsingør* 'I know a man that lives in Elsinore'. (Sometimes this *der* is reanalysed as a relative particle, although it is not different from the usual dummy *der* that fills otherwise empty subject positions.)

This applies at least to the written language. In the spoken language and especially in the dialects, *som* can be followed by *der*, where *som* is the subordinator in position (0) and *der* the subject dummy in position (1). Furthermore, like all clauses that follow schema B, relative clauses can contain a pleonastic marker *at* which only occurs with non-declarative sentence mood, as in *jeg kender en karl, som at der har tjent hos ham i fjor* 'I know a farmhand that worked for him last year'. This marker can stand alone as a relative marker as well, as in this example in Bornholm dialect: *brygjninjen va et arbeaj a kvinjfolken skulle passa* (lit.) 'brewing was a work that women should mind'.

This pleonastic *at* occurs in all examples of non-declarative sentence mood, such as in temporal clauses (with *ad* as the pleonastic marker; the dialect is from Skåne): *å då når ad lannsväjjen ble makadamiserad, så ble dänn rättad* ... 'and then when the road was macadamized, then it was straightened ...' or in exclamatory main clauses: *mon ikke at 'vi kunne få startet en slags indsamlingskomité?* 'perhaps we could start a kind of money collecting committee?'

10.5 Lexis

Structure of the Lexicon

It is assumed that Danish has about 2,000 non-compound words inherited from common Indo-European most of which are still in common use in Modern Danish; of these about 1,200 are nouns, 180 adjectives, more than 500 verbs and about 100 words belonging to other word classes. An additional 1,200 words, the lion's share of which are nouns, can be traced back to the common North Germanic period, and about 300 to East North Germanic.

Throughout history, this core stock has been supplemented by compounding, derivation and loans. The first wave of loans came with Christianity from Greek and Latin, usually by way of the languages of the missionaries (Old English, Old Frisian, Old Saxon), and the first loan translations (like the names of most days of the week, cf. *torsdag* 'Thor's day' from Latin *dies iovis*). During the Middle Ages, more Latin loans came into Danish, most of them by way of Middle Low German which also was the major source of loans during this period. Among these loans there was not only a number of nouns that were imported together with new cultural artifacts and institutions like *mur* 'wall' (from Lat. *murus*), *bukser* 'trousers' (from MLG *buxe*) and *krig* 'war' (from MLG *krich*), but also particles and adverbs like *dog* 'though', *ganske* 'quite' and *jo* 'after all'. In older Modern Danish (1500–1700) loans came mostly from High German and French, but in specific areas also from other languages (like words for sea travel from Dutch and Low German or for banking from Italian). After 1700 the first purist attempts can be noted, which very often replace French, Latin and Greek words by loan translations from German (an area in case is grammatical terminology). English loans are rare before 1870, but have become very common in the twentieth century. Their number is still not very big compared with the totality of older loans from Low German and French, but they are extremely visible since many of them, in contradistinction to practically all other loans, are not integrated phonetically and morphologically. As far as spelling is concerned, the degree of integration is low, far lower than e.g. in Norwegian. Norwegian spellings like *sjåfør* 'driver' where Danish has *chauffør* provoke smiles from Danes, and a heated debate in 1986 known as the 'Mayonnaise War' concerning

the spelling of loans showed that a large part of the Danish public still considers the foreign spelling of loans as part and parcel of erudition and refinement.

Compounds and derivations make up the rest of the vocabulary. Compounding is very productive and structurally quite unrestricted; multiple compounds are construed freely especially in administrative language like *Kildeskattedirektoratet* 'Internal Revenue Service', (lit. 'source tax directorate'). Compared with other Germanic languages, it should be noted that often where, for example, Dutch would use derivational processes, Danish has compounds, cf. Danish *velsmagende* 'tasty' (lit. 'well tasting') as opposed to Dutch *smakelijk*, or Danish *småkager* 'cookies' (lit. 'little cakes') as opposed to Dutch *koekjes*. Actually, there is no bound diminutive morpheme in Danish, while *små* 'little', a free form, can form compounds not only with nouns, but also with adjectives (*småskør* 'a little bit crazy'), participles (*småfornærmet* 'slightly insulted') and verbs (*småfnise* 'to snicker' (lit. 'to grin a bit')). Derivative morphology is rich but only a few bound forms are truly productive like the Agent suffix *-er* (possibly itself a loan from Latin *-arius*) in *arbejder* 'worker' < *arbejde* 'to work'. Other bound morphemes like *-me/-ne* that form intransitive verbs from adjectives as in *rødme* 'blush' < *rød* 'red', or *-se* that forms transitive verbs as in *rense* 'to clean' < *ren* 'clean', are no longer productive.

Numerals
Finally, Danish numerals are worth mentioning in a chapter about the lexicon. They are puzzling to all non-Danish Scandinavians and create problems for non-Danes in inter-Scandinavian semi-communication.

Danish numerals up to, but not including, 50 follow a very common pattern in which inherited Germanic roots figure with only modest irregularities:

en, et	'one'
to	'two'
tre	'three'
. . .	
elleve	'eleven'
tolv	'twelve'
tretten	'thirteen'
fjorten	'fourteen'
. . .	
tyve	'twenty'
enogtyve	'twenty-one'
. . .	
tredive	'thirty'
fyrre	'forty'

It does not come as a surprise that the number one has two distinct forms for common and neuter gender; in phone numbers, etc. both forms are used, while counting is usually *en, to, tre.* . . . It is the tens from 50 on that are difficult for non-Danes. Here Danish has replaced the common North Germanic numerals by a vigesimal system, but unlike the French system that actually counts in twenties for numbers above 60, the Danish system counts in tens constructed from a base of twenty by multiplication with elements of the type known from German *anderthalb* '1½' and (obsolete) *dritthalb* '2½'. Thus 50 is *halvtredsindstyve* from *halv tredje sinde tyve* (lit.) 'half-third times twenty', 60 is *tresindstyve* (lit.) 'three times twenty', 70 is *halvfjerdsindstyve* (lit.) 'half-fourth times twenty', 80 is *firsindstyve* 'four times twenty' and finally 90, *halvfemsindstyve* 'half-fifth times twenty'. Except for the construction of ordinals like *halvfjersindstyvende* '70th', the cardinals are now usually shortened to *halvtreds, tres, halvfjerds, firs, halvfems*, a practice that arose at the end of the last century, originally in quoting prices: *to kroner halvfjerdsindstyve øre* '2 kroner 70 øre' > *to kroner halvfjerds*, and has spread from there. Ordinals, which have no short form, are usually avoided. Thus one would say *halvfjerdsårsfødselsdag* '70 years' birthday' rather than *halvfjersindstyvende fødselsdag* '70th birthday'. In some contexts (but mostly restricted to the writing out of amounts on personal cheques) 'Scandinavian' numerals are used like *otti* '80', *niti* '90', and even *toti* '20'.

Further Reading

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