

Grammar terms beginning with Letter D

Dangling participle

A dangling participle is a participle which is not grammatically linked to the rest of the sentence. For example, in the sentence 'Standing at the gate, a scorpion bit him', the participial phrase 'standing at the gate' is dangling; it appears to be linked to the scorpion, but it is wrong. Though dangling participles are common in speech, they are considered as inappropriate in formal writing and therefore should be avoided.

Degree

The grammatical category which expresses the degree to which some quality is present. English distinguishes three degrees: the positive, the comparative and the superlative. The comparative is formed with -er or more; the superlative is formed with -est or most.

Degree modifier

A word which modifies an adjective or an adverb and expresses the degree to which some quality is present. Examples are: very, too, so, rather, somewhat etc.

In colloquial English, words and expressions like sort of, pretty, kind of and a number of other items are also used as degree modifiers.

Dialect

A speech variety associated with the people in a particular geographical region or in a particular social group. There are a number of regional dialects in English. There are also several social dialects.

Discourse marker

A word or a phrase which is weakly linked to an adjoining sentence. The purpose of a discourse marker is to keep a conversation or a text flowing smoothly.