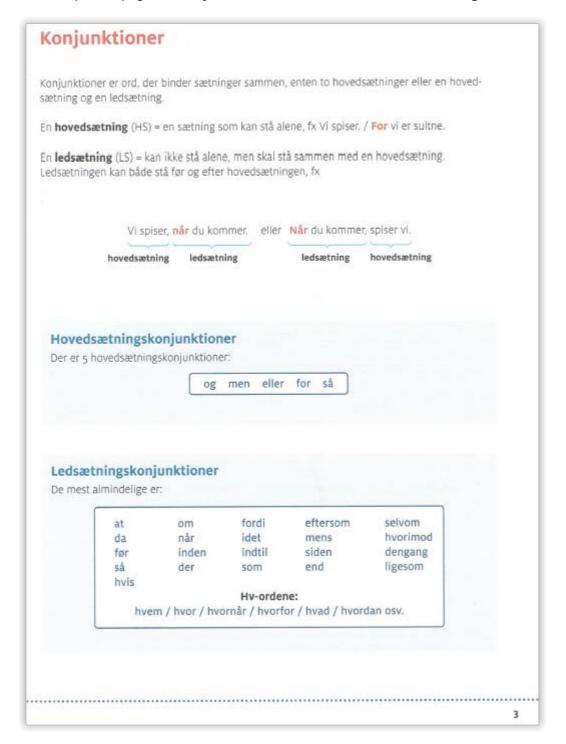
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On Fanny Slotorub's skriveguiden "At Skrive" • Modul 4, Sprogskole, Vejle

Fanny Slotorub's skriveguiden "At Skrive," is by most accounts a very well written book. However, it also contains very serious mistakes that lead to confusion.

For example, on page 3, Fanny defines the main clause/hovedsætning as:



En hovedsætning (HS) = en sætning som kan stå alene, fx Vi spiser. / For vi er sultne.

A main clause (MC) = is a clause that can stand on its own, e.g. We eat. / Because we are hungry.

Fanny's definition of a main clause is correct but *For vi er sultne / Because we are hungry*, cannot stand on its own and, therefore, it contradicts her very own definition of a main clause. This obvious contradiction opens Pandora's grammar box.

Let us examine Fanny's examples more closely by creating a very short dialog.

Dialogue

- 1. Theo:
 - You know something Mary, because we are hungry.
- 2. Mary:
 - What are you talking about, Theo?

It is obvious that *because we are hungry* cannot stand on its own because the information it provides is not sufficient for the context to make any sense, and **that conclusion** has very serious implications because, for one, it renders *because we are hungry* a **subordinate clause / ledsætning**.

So, what Fanny claims to be a main clause is, by her very own definition, a subordinate clause because it cannot stand on its own.

But how can that be? After all, Fanny must be a grammarian on Danish. Her definition of a main clause is correct. What is the problem then? How has she managed to overlook the contradiction?

This is one of my questions.

Furthermore, as you can see on page 3, Fanny lists *for* as a conjunction which introduces main clauses but, as we have already seen, *for* introduces subordinate clauses.

for, then, is a ledsætningskonjunktioner and not a hovedsætningskonjunktioner.

It seems that once a fundamental mistake has been made, it is unavoidable that more mistakes follow.

On page 8, the problem manifests itself again:



Let us create another dialog, this time in Danish, to check whether the clause introduced by *for* can stand on its own / is a main clause:

Dialogue

- 1. Theo:
 - Mary, for han pludselig blev syg.
- 2. Mary:
 - Hvad taler du om, Theo?

Again, it is obvious that the main clause is *Han kom ikke i skole*, and the subordinate clause is *for han blev pludselig syg*.

The question persists: How can Fanny, an experinced grammarian, have overlooked the problem here? (to be continued)