# B

# Glossary of Grammatical Terms

**adjunct**
An optional element adding circumstantial information (time, place, manner): *She resigned **last week**.*

**agreement (concord)**
Matching of grammatical features, chiefly subject and verb in number and person.

**anaphora**
Reference back to something already mentioned: *Maria arrived late. **She** apologized.*

**aspect**
The viewpoint on an event's internal structure — progressive (ongoing) or perfect (retrospective) — as opposed to tense, which locates it in time.

**auxiliary verb**
A helping verb (*be, have, do*, and the modals) that supports tense, aspect, voice, negation, and questions.

**bare infinitive**
The infinitive without *to*: *let him **go***.

**case** The form a pronoun takes by function: subjective (*I*), objective (*me*), possessive (*my/mine*).

**cataphora**
Reference forward: *Before **she** spoke, **Ana** checked her notes.*

**causative**
A construction expressing that the subject causes an action to be done: *have the car repaired*.

**cleft sentence**
A structure splitting one clause in two to focus an element: *It was Jo who called.*

**collective noun**
A singular noun denoting a group: *team, committee*.

**comparative**
The form of an adjective or adverb expressing "more": *faster, more useful*.

**complement**
An element required to complete a head's meaning: *She became **a judge**. He relied **on luck**.*

**conditional**
A sentence linking a condition (*if*-clause) to a result.

**conjunction**
A linking word: coordinating (*and, but, or*) or subordinating (*because, although, if*).

**constituent**
A word or group of words functioning as a single unit within a hierarchy.

**coordination**
Joining elements of equal rank: *tea **and** coffee*.

**countable noun**
A noun with singular and plural forms that can be counted: *book/books*.

**determiner**
A word specifying a noun's reference: *the, this, some, every, my*.

**direct object**
The entity directly affected by the verb: *She wrote **a letter**.*

**ellipsis**
Omission of recoverable words: *She can sing and (she can) dance.*

**ergative verb**
A verb usable transitively and intransitively with the object becoming subject: *open, break, sell*.

**extraposition**
Moving a heavy subject clause to the end, leaving *it*: ***It** helps **that you came**.*

**finite verb**
A verb form marked for tense and agreeing with a subject: *she **writes*** (vs. non-finite *writing, to write, written*).

**fronting**
Moving an element to initial position for emphasis or cohesion.

**gerund**
The *-ing* form functioning as a noun: *I enjoy **swimming**.*

**head**
The word that determines a phrase's category: the noun in an NP, the verb in a VP.

**hedging**
Grammatical and lexical softening of claims: *may, appear, arguably*.

**imperative**
The base-form clause type used for directives: ***Sit** down.*

**indirect object**
The recipient/beneficiary: *She gave **him** a book.*

**infinitive**
The base form, usually with *to*: *to write*.

**intransitive verb**
A verb taking no object: *arrive, sleep*.

**inversion**
Reversal of subject and (auxiliary) verb: *Never **have I**. . .*

**modal verb**
An auxiliary expressing possibility, necessity, permission, etc.: *can, must, might*.

**mood**
The grammatical marking of factuality: indicative, imperative, subjunctive.

**nominalization**
Recasting a verb or adjective as a noun: *decide* → *decision*.

**noun phrase (NP)**
A phrase headed by a noun or pronoun.

**participle**
The *-ing* (present) or *-ed/-en* (past) verb form used in compound tenses, passives, and as modifiers.

**particle**
: The adverb-like element of a phrasal verb: *give **up***.

**passive voice**
: The construction promoting the object to subject: *The law **was changed***.

**perfect**
: The aspect relating an event to a later reference time: *has finished, had left*.

**phrasal verb**
: A verb + particle combination with (often) idiomatic meaning: *put off*.

**predicate**
: What is said about the subject; the VP.

**preposition**
: A word relating a noun phrase to the rest of the clause: *in, on, despite*.

**pronoun**
: A word standing in for a noun phrase: *she, it, themselves, who*.

**quantifier**
: A determiner or pronoun of quantity: *many, few, all, several*.

**register**
: The variety of language suited to a situation — formal, neutral, informal.

**relative clause**
: A clause modifying a noun, introduced by *who, which, that*, etc.

**reported speech**
: Conveying utterances without quoting: *She said she was tired.*

**stative verb**
: A verb of state rather than action, resisting the progressive: *know, belong*.

**subjunctive**
: The mood of non-factuality: *I insist that he **be** present; if I **were** you*.

**subordination**
: Embedding a clause inside another: *I left **because it was late***.

**superlative**
: The "most" form: *fastest, most useful*.

**tense**
: Grammatical location of an event in time — in English, past vs. present, with future expressed periphrastically.

**transitive verb**
: A verb requiring a direct object: *take, make*.

**uncountable (mass) noun**
: A noun with no plural, treated as an undifferentiated mass: *water, advice*.

**valency**
: The number and type of complements a verb selects.

**voice**
: The active/passive alternation.

**zero article**
: The meaningful absence of an article: *Ø Life is short.*