

LESSON NOTES

Beginner S1 #1

Talking About Your Strengths in Danish

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#1

DIALOGUE - DANISH

MAIN

1. Stine : Nanna, du er god til matematik, er du ikke?
2. Nanna : Jo... Sådan da.
3. Stine : Fedt! Kan du hjælpe mig?
4. Nanna : Ja, selvfølgelig. Nå, du er næsten færdig?
5. Stine : Ja, jeg skyndte mig. Jeg vil gerne have mere tid til mit valgfag.
6. Nanna : Åh, hvad er det nu, det er?
7. Stine : Idræt! Jeg er dårlig til matematik, men god til sport.
8. Nanna : Det er rigtigt! Jeg er derimod ikke så vild med idræt.
9. Stine : Så er det godt, du er god til matematik!

ENGLISH

1. Stine : Nanna, you're good at math, aren't you?
2. Nanna : Yes... Sort of.
3. Stine : Cool! Can you help me?
4. Nanna : Yes, of course. Oh, you're almost done?
5. Stine : Yes, I hurried. I'd like to have more time for my elective.
6. Nanna : Oh, what is it again?
7. Stine : Sports! I am bad at math, but good at sports.
8. Nanna : That's right! I, on the other hand, am not so crazy about sports.
9. Stine : Then it's a good thing you're good at math!

VOCABULARY

Danish	English	Class
matematik	math	noun
dårlig	bad	adjective
idræt	sport, physical education	noun
valgfag	elective	noun
at gerne ville	would like to	phrase
at skynde sig	to hurry, to hurry up	phrase
selvfølgelig	of course, naturally, certainly, obvious	adverb, adjective
at kunne	to be able to	verb
sådan da	sort of, more or less	phrase
derimod	on the other hand, in contrast	adverb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Drengens yndlingsfag er matematik. "The boy's favorite subject is math."	Filmen er dårlig, men bogen er god. "The movie is bad, but the book is good."
Klassen klarer sig dårligt i idræt. "The class is doing badly in physical education."	Hans valgfag i år er billedkunst. "His elective this year is art."
Jeg vil gerne have mine penge tilbage. "I would like to have my money back."	Skynd dig! Vi kommer for sent! "Hurry up! We're going to be late!"
Selvfølgelig må du det! "Of course you may!"	Kvinden kan ikke vente længere. "The woman cannot wait any longer."
Manden følger stadig med i samtalen. Sådan da. "The man is still following the conversation. Sort of."	Min ven derimod kan godt synge. "My friend, on the other hand, can sing."

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

***selvfølgelig* "of course," "naturally," "certainly," "obvious"**

Selvfølgelig as an adverb means "of course," "naturally," or "certainly."

Selvfølgelig as an adjective means "obvious."

As an adverb, this is used to express that you think something is obvious, completely normal, or expected. It is also used to express a faint confession before saying something contradicting. When emphasizing that you are fully aware of the certain way something stands, you can also use *selvfølgelig*. Finally, you can use *selvfølgelig* to express that something stands as expected, even though you had hoped something else.

As an adjective, it is used to describe when something is completely natural, expected, or in other words, obvious. When using *selvfølgelig* as an adjective to describe neuter gender nouns or verbs, remember to add a *-t* so it becomes *selvfølgeligt*.

For example:

1. *Selvfølgelig må du komme med.*
"Of course you may come along."

***sådan da* "sort of," "more or less"**

Sådan is an adjective and means "such" or "like that." *Da* as an adverb means "then" or "at that time." As a conjunction, it means "when," "as," "since," or "then."

Sådan da is used to express when something is fairly good or within reasonable boundaries. Some people might find *sådan da* too vague when describing a status or condition. They might prefer the adjective *nogenlunde*, which means "fairly good." Both are equally casual, but *sådan da* has a more negative sound to it. So if someone asks you whether or not you have recovered from an illness, you might want to use *nogenlunde* instead if you want to indicate that you are on your way to recovery.

For example:

1. *Vi er snart færdige - sådan da.*
"We'll be done soon—more or less."

***derimod* "on the other hand, against it"**

Der as a formal subject means "there" or "it." As a pronoun, it can mean "who," "which," or "that." And finally, as an adverb, it means "there." *Imod* as an adverb means "against," and as a preposition it means "towards."

Derimod is used when something is contrary to or goes against what was just mentioned. You will often find *derimod* used in formal situations to mean something or someone is opposed to what was just mentioned. For example, it might come up in a political or judicial context when some people might be against what is being stated or proposed.

Other synonyms for *derimod* that you can use in both formal and informal situations are *tværtimod* or *til gengæld*. *Tværtimod* is an adverb which means "on the contrary" and *til gengæld* is a phrase which means "in return."

For example:

1. *Derimod kan katte ikke flyve.*
"On the contrary, cats cannot fly."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of this Lesson is Discussing Skills and Desires

Jeg er dårlig til matematik, men god til sport.

"I am bad at math, but good at sports."

In this lesson, we will learn how to:

1. Talk about what you are good or bad at
2. Talk about what you would like to do, using the phrase *at gerne ville*
3. Use the modal verb *at kunne*

1. Talking about what you are good or bad at

Let's take a look at three of the most common sentence structures to talk about your own skills, focusing on the first person singular. The first one is:

Jeg er god til [noun].

This means "I am good at [noun]." *Jeg* is the pronoun "I," *er* is the noun *at være* in present tense meaning "is," *god* is the adjective "good," and *til* is the preposition "at." Simply add a noun indicating what you are good at.

For example: ***Jeg er god til fodbold.***

This means "I am good at soccer." The noun *fodbold*, which means "soccer" or "football," has been added to complete the sentence.

The second most common sentence structure is:

Jeg er ikke god til [noun].

This means "I am not good at [noun]." Basically, the adverb *ikke*, which means "no" or "not," has been added between the verb *er* and the adjective *god*, so the sentence becomes negative. Let's complete the sentence with a different verb this time:

Jeg er ikke god til madlavning.

This means "I am not good at cooking." The noun *madlavning*, which means "cooking," has been added to complete the sentence.

The third most common sentence structure is:

Jeg er dårlig til [noun].

This means "I am bad at [noun]." The adjective *god* has been replaced with *dårlig*, which means "bad." Other than that, the sentence pattern is identical to the previous two. So if you are bad at chess, the sentence becomes:

Jeg er dårlig til skak.

This means "I am bad at chess." The noun *skak* is the Danish word for "chess."

Let's take a look at the sentence structures when using a verb instead of a noun.

Jeg er god til at [verb].

This means "I am good at [verb]." The meaning is more or less the same, except we have added the infinitive marker *at*, meaning "to." Then simply add a verb in the infinitive form that indicates what it is you are good at.

For example: ***Jeg er god til at læse.***

This means "I am good at reading." The verb *læse*, which means "read," has been added to complete the sentence.

The second sentence structure becomes:

Jeg er ikke god til at [verb].

This means "I am not good at [verb]." Again the adverb *ikke*, which means "no" or "not," has been added between the verb *er* and the adjective *god*, so the sentence becomes negative. Let's try a different verb this time:

Jeg er ikke god til at stave.

This means "I am not good at spelling." The verb *stave* is the infinitive form of "spell." Of course, you can always add further details about what it is you are not good at.

For example: ***Jeg er ikke god til at stave lange ord.***

This means "I am not good at spelling long words." *Lange* is the adjective "long" modifying the noun *ord* in plural form, meaning "words."

And the third sentence structure becomes:

Jeg er dårlig til at [verb].

This means "I am bad at [verb]." The adjective *god* has once again been replaced with *dårlig*, which means "bad." So if you are bad at singing, the sentence goes:

Jeg er dårlig til at synge.

This means "I am bad at singing." The verb *synge* in its infinitive form, which means "sing," has been added to complete the sentence.

2. Talking about what you would like to do, using the phrase *at gerne ville*

The phrase *at gerne ville* is the most common way to express what you would like to do. It consists of the adverb *gerne*, which means "with pleasure," "gladly," or "willingly," and the verb *ville*, which means "will" or "shall." So put together we have *gerne ville* which means "would like to." Let's take a closer look at the sentence pattern, focusing on the first person singular:

***Jeg vil gerne* [verb]. ("I would like to [verb].")**

Jeg is the pronoun "I" and *vil gerne* is the phrase *at gerne ville* in present tense. Please note that *gerne* should be placed after *ville* whenever the verb is not in infinitive form. Then simply add a verb in the infinitive form that indicates what it is you would like to do.

For example: ***Jeg vil gerne sove.***

This means "I would like to sleep." *Sove* is the infinitive form of the verb *at sove*, which means "to sleep." Of course, you can also modify the sentence even further by adding more details about what you would like to do.

For example: ***Jeg vil gerne sove på sofaen.***

This means "I would like to sleep on the couch." *På* is the preposition "on" and *sofaen* is the common gender noun *sofa* in definite form meaning "the couch" or "the sofa."

3. Using the modal verb *at kunne*

The modal verb *at kunne* is used in the sentence *Fedt! Kan du hjælpe mig?* which means "Cool! Can you help me?" *Fedt* is slang for "cool," *kan* is *at kunne* "to be able to" in present tense, *du* is the pronoun "you," *hjælp* is the verb "help" in the infinitive form, and *mig* is the pronoun "me." *At kunne* is most commonly used to express ability, like in the sentence from the dialogue, but the verb has several other usages.

In this case, it is used to ask someone if they are able to help with something. *Kan* is usually followed by a verb in infinitive form that indicates what it is someone can or is able to do. Here that verb is *at hjælpe*, meaning "to help." So put together we have *kan hjælpe* which means "can help." *At kunne* does not change according to person and is conjugated in the chart below:

Infinitive	Present	Past	Participle
<i>kunne</i>	<i>kan</i>	<i>kunne</i>	<i>kunnet</i>

Let's take a look at some examples:

Jeg kan spille klaver.

This means "I can play the piano." *Jeg* is the pronoun "I," *kan* is *at kunne* in the present tense, *spille* is the verb "play" in infinitive form, and *klaver* is the neuter gender noun "piano."

Han kunne fløjte.

This means "He could whistle." *Han* is the pronoun "he," *kunne* is *at kunne* in the past tense, and *fløjte* is the verb "whistle" in infinitive form.

Hun har kunnet forstå dansk.

This means "She has been able to understand Danish." *Hun* is the pronoun "she," *har* is the auxiliary verb "have" used to form the past participle together with the modal verb, *forstå* is the verb "understand" in the infinitive form, and *dansk* is the noun "Danish" used when referring to the Danish language.

Examples from the dialogue:

1. *Idræt! Jeg er dårlig til matematik, men god til sport.*
"Sport! I'm bad at math, but good at sports."
2. *Ja, jeg skyndte mig. Jeg vil gerne have mere tid til mit valgfag.*
"Yes, I hurried. I would like to have more time for my elective."

Sample Sentences

1. *Drengen er rigtig god til at spille skak.*
"The boy is really good at playing chess."
2. *Pigen er dårlig til dansk.*
"The girl is bad at Danish."
3. *Forældrene vil gerne være alene.*
"The parents would like to be alone."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Electives in the Danish School System

From the 7th grade students can choose between one and three electives. Some university courses also feature electives or supplementary subjects. Today, students can choose between foreign languages, art, home economics, shop, music, sports, math, psychology, science, and many more electives. Taking specific electives is often necessary in order to be admitted to your desired university course.